



Rogate and Tullecombe Fyning Common, River Rother

Distance: 7½ km=4¾ miles

easy walking

Region: West Sussex

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Refreshments: Rogate

Map: Explorer 133 (Petersfield) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

Problems, changes? We depend on your feedback: feedback@fancyfreewalks.org

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Pinewoods, easy field paths, river, village, woodland, bluebells, views

In Brief

This is a walk of great variety taking you through some fine woodland down into the Rother Valley where you meet the river and some easy field and meadow paths, before taking some refreshment in the village of Rogate. More noble pine woods lead you back to the start using a hidden path through the gorsy heath. In late spring there are bluebells, including a local secret copse.



There are no nettles to speak of on this walk and very little undergrowth.



Boots are preferable because of the fields, where the paths are generally good and clear but could be muddy in wet weather. This walk would be fine for your dog too, with a lead because of the sheep and the short section of road.



The walk begins at the **Tullecombe car park**, near Rogate, West Sussex, *approximate* postcode **GU31 5BU**, grid ref SU 807 256. **Warning! isolated car park: leave car visibly empty - see [Guidelines/Getting There](#).** For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

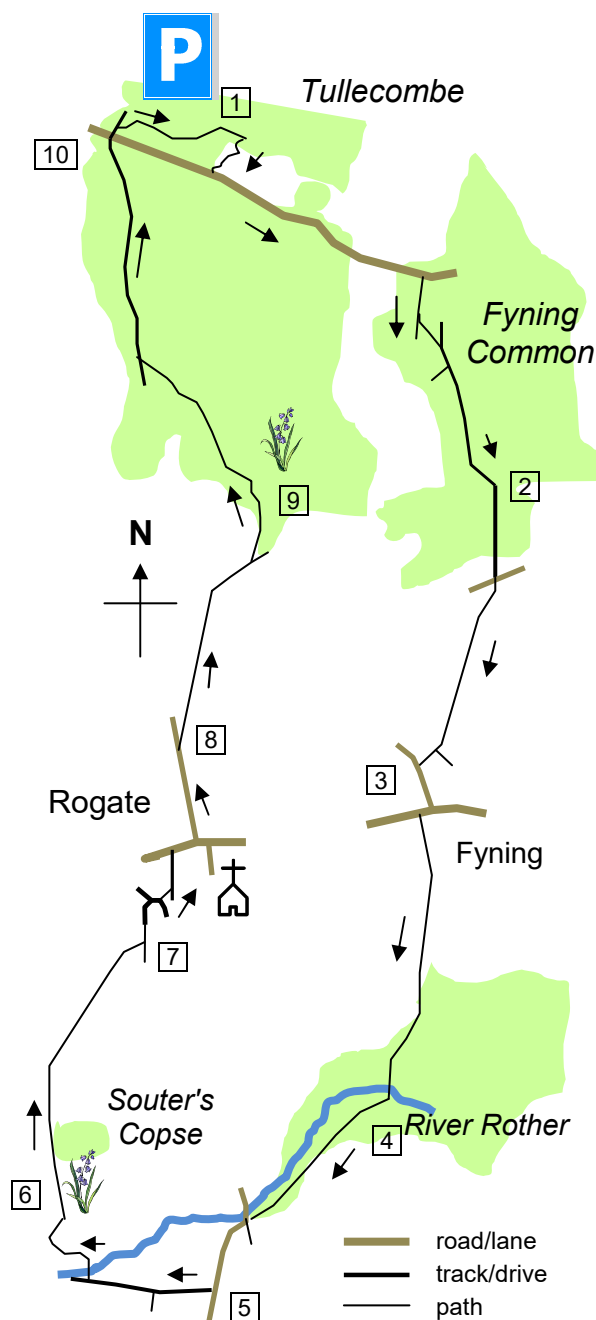


The Walk

1 Starting from the Tullecombe car park, go back out to the road and turn **left**. After 400m on this pleasant wide quiet road, in a left curve, you will see a signpost pointing right. **Ignore** it and continue another 150m, passing the gates of Wiseland Stables, to a **second** signpost pointing right. Turn **right** here on a bridleway into the beech woods, passing a sign for *Fyning Recreation Ground*. In 100m, at a fingerpost, fork **left** as indicated. In 100m, your path merges with a wider path from your left. Immediately ignore a minor path that branches off right and keep straight on through Fyning Common along the main path with wire fencing on your right. On your right is a coppice, whilst tall pines dominate the landscape to your left. Your path begins to descend, gradually more steeply, and comes down to a small settlement.

2 Keep straight ahead along a gravel drive, passing more scattered houses, to reach a tarmac lane. Cross straight over onto a tarmac drive signed as a footpath leading to Acorn Ridge. After the last house, the route is downgraded to a woodland path. *Note the tree house up on your left*. At a wide gap on your left you can take a sneaky peek at the view of the South Downs and the sculpture in the garden you passed. Your path is buried between high banks through hollies and under tall beeches. At a fingerpost by a thatched cottage, ignore the left turn and press on to reach a lane in the hamlet of Fyning. Turn **left** to the main road.

3 Turn **right** along the main road and, in only 20m, go **left** at a signpost on a footpath down the left-hand side of a crop field, with great views of the South Downs. Where the fence of the property on your left ends, there is a choice of two paths ahead. Take the **right** fork, almost straight ahead on a path across the field. (If there are no crops, just follow the tractor marks.) As you approach woodland, there is a pond on your left. Your path enters the wood and runs along its right-hand edge. **Bluebells are evident here in late spring**. After passing a marker post, your path continues ahead in a more open area. You come over a new plank bridge with rail, down into woodland and over a long bridge across a wide section of the River Rother. *For a little more info about the River Rother, see the adjoining walk "Durford Abbey, River Rother, Durleighmarsh"*.



4 Your path goes right through a metal kissing-gate. Keep the same direction, not too far from the river bank, through a meadow of tuft grass and dandelions. The meadow narrows to a track beside a hedge on your left and leads through a large metal gate (avoiding the broken disused stile). You come through another large metal gate (or, if chained, over the adjoining stile) to a road with the Rother bridge on your right. Your route, however, is **left**, avoiding the drive for *Fair Oak* and joining the road.

5 In 200m, just before a house on the left, turn **right** on a narrow lane by a sign for Mizzards Farm. Ignore a footpath sign on your left and, about 300m from the turning, look right and take a footpath **right** over a bridge across the River Rother. It leads into a ragged water meadow. Keep **left** in the meadow. Looking half right, you can see the wooden fence and stile into a field, but your route is circuitous. The waymarked path steers round a stream bed by diverting **right** through tuft grass and then **left** over a 2-plank bridge. Continue onwards and turn **right** just after a fingerpost. This path leads to the stile on a course which includes planks over the marsh and an expanse of large stones.

6 Go over the stile into the field. There is a good path across the field, leading to the near corner of woodland straight ahead, marked by previous boots or by a tractor. But you need to shift diagonally about 20m to the **right** to find it. Don't miss the path and end up traipsing over the clumpy soil! At the far side, keep straight ahead beside the copse on your right.



You have stumbled upon a precious local secret: Souter's Copse. In late spring it is a glorious bluebell grove: in about 10m turn **right** into the copse and you can follow a 400m circular route coming back to the original path a little higher up.

Now go over a 2-plank bridge with rail and straight ahead across the next field on a clear path. At the other side, go through a modern kissing-gate and diagonally **right** on a clear path across the next field, heading for the houses of Rogate in the valley. The path gradually meets the right-hand edge. As the path curves right, turn **left** on a crossing path, leading through a kissing-gate to a residential road.

7 Follow the pavement for 100m, curving right to a T-junction. Turn **right** and, in only 30m, as the road bends right, leave the road by turning **left** through a pedestrian passageway. At the end, turn **left** on a lane by a school, leading out to the main road in Rogate. Turn **right**, quickly reaching the centre of the village with the church on your right and the *White Horse* on the left. Your route is **left** on the road just before the pub, but you may like to stay awhile.



St Bartholomew's church dates at least from the 1200s and its rare timber belfry, dated just before 1400, survived Victorian reconstruction. The church is built of local sandstone ashlar (cut masonry) and roofed with tiles. The village has no entry in the Norman Domesday Book, being treated in those days as a part of Harting. The "White Horse" came under new management from March 2019 and now serves a satisfying menu, including home-made scotch egg (hope the inside is nice and runny!), their own burger and a steak sandwich; beer is Harveys plus guests.

8 Having turned **left** before the pub on a road in the direction *Rake, Liss*, follow the road for nearly 200m, passing the village hall and two more houses. Now fork **right** on a narrow signed footpath, through a wooden swing-gate out in a field. Take a well-marked path [1 May 2019: ploughed over: to be re-made soon, we hope], at only a narrow angle away from the left-hand edge. In case the path is not clear, your direction is towards a house



in the distance but it will not be visible for a while. Don't mistake it for a house on the hill further to the right. At the far side, go over a stile and take a narrow woodland path beside a wattle fence on your left. In 120m, at a fork in the path, take the **left** fork, staying close to the property on your left. The winding path is quite narrow at first before suddenly entering a wide spread of woodland, thick with bluebells in late spring, one of the most enchanting parts of this walk.

- 9 Stay on the main path, very gradually ascending, avoiding all paths off. On your right is a forest of tall pines, on your left an equine centre. 600m from the fork, you come to an oblique T-junction with a bridleway on the edge of a great cedar wood. Veer **right** on the bridleway. You now have a scenic 500m on a wide easy path through an absolutely magnificent forest of mature conifers and rhododendrons. Keep following the signposts, finally walking beside a garden hedge on your right, leading to a road.
- 10 Cross straight over the road onto a signed bridleway between low wooden fences. In *less than 20m*, at the end of the wooden fence on your right, turn sharp **right** on a narrow path. The path curves left and, in 30m, reaches a marker post. Keep **right** here, following the *Serpent* symbol, for you have joined a small section of the *Serpent Trail* long-distance path. The path leads through a handsome section of gorse. Keep following the serpents on a twisty path, finally leading to the Tullecombe car park where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: You can reach Tullecombe via the main A272 Petersfield-Midhurst road (turn off in Rogate, direction *Rake, Liss* and turn right in 1 mile, direction *Chithurst*). If coming on the A3 from the London/Guildford direction, another good way is through Liss, as follows. Take the A3 as far as the big roundabout where the B3006 (Selborne-Liss) road crosses. Follow signs **left** to Liss and go through the town as far as the wide fork in front of the *Whistle Stop* pub. Take the **right** fork, in the direction *Rogate, Rake*, and follow the main road for just over 1 mile to a T-junction with a major road, the B2070 Rake-Petersfield road at Hill Brow. Turn **right** and immediately **left**, by the *Jolly Drover*, in the direction *Rogate*. Go just over 1 mile to a T-junction. Turn **right** as for *Rogate* and immediately **left** as for *Chithurst*. The car park is $\frac{1}{4}$ mile on the left.

By bus/train: bus 91 / 92 / 93 from Petersfield station to Rogate, bus 54 from Petersfield or Chichester, mon-sat. Check the timetables.

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