



Route Summary

Summary:This circuit heads around spectacular Stac Pollaidh (often anglicised to Stac Polly) with an optional ascent up to the ridge. The whole walk has great views over Assynt to the north and the Summer Isles and Achiltibuie to the south and west. Reaching the true summit of Stac Pollaidh involves a tricky scramble.**Terrain:**An excellent pitched path makes the going good underfoot. The climb up to the ridge is steep. The route described does not reach the true, western summit of the mountain which requires a high level of scrambling expertise.

Route Overview



Category: Walking
Rating: Unrated
Surface: Rough
Date Published: 19th April 2011
Difficulty: Hard
Length: 4.400 km / 2.75 mi
Last Modified: 27th April 2017

Description

Summary:

This circuit heads around spectacular Stac Pollaidh (often anglicised to Stac Polly) with an optional ascent up to the ridge. The whole walk has great views over Assynt to the north and the Summer Isles and Achiltibuie to the south and west. Reaching the true summit of Stac Pollaidh involves a tricky scramble.

Terrain:

An excellent pitched path makes the going good underfoot. The climb up to the ridge is steep. The route described does not reach the true, western summit of the mountain which requires a high level of scrambling expertise.

Time: 2 - 4 hours

Gaelic pronunciation and meaning: Tap to listen

Route description

Stage 1

From the car park cross the road and head north along the path, soon passing through a gate. The path climbs uphill through shrub and young woodland before reaching open moorland. The path is well constructed and takes a new route around the mountain to try and stop the erosion on the relatively soft sandstone. The route of the old path which headed straight up the face of the mountain is now grassing over well.



Stage 2

Continue uphill with good views of Sgurr Tuath across Loch Lurgainn below, and of Cul Beag to the east. Ignore a path off to the left (this is the return route) and continue climbing as the path contours round the main mass of Stac Pollaidh. Pass through another gate in the deer fence and continue up the open moorland.



Stage 3

The path curves round to the far side of Stac Pollaidh. Cul Mor soon joins Cul Beag, and eventually there are stunning views of Suilven across the wilderness of Assynt. Soon you reach the junction where the circuit path continues around the base of the mountain and the main path climbs to the ridge. If walking to the ridge, keep to the left at the fork and follow the well-made path as it climbs steeply to the lowest point of the ridge.



Stage 4

As Stac Pollaidh stands alone in a relatively flat landscape, the views from here are breathtaking. To the south-west the summer isles are easily visible and to the north the Point of Stoer with Suilven and the long waterway of Loch Veyatie to the north west. The high point at the eastern end of the ridge can be easily reached with only a short easy scramble



Stage 5

The true summit of Stac Pollaidh is at the western end and is more difficult to reach, and out of bounds for normal walkers. There are a succession of rocky towers requiring climbing or scrambling skills to ascend; most of these can be avoided to the north side but the final tower - which has to be reversed - is a short but steep pitch above a big drop. It requires a high level of scrambling expertise, making the summit at 613 metres rank alongside the Cobbler as the most difficult mainland summit in Britain.



Stage 6

Descend back down the path back to the junction with the circuit path. Here turn left to continue around the base of Stac Pollaidh. There are good views of the tower at the western end of the ridge and then of the pinnacles as you head back.



Stage 7

Eventually you pass through a gate in the deer fence and rejoin the same outward path which is followed back to the car park.



Waypoints

