



ASCENSION ISLAND

CODE OF CONDUCT

Many of our species and habitats are protected by the Wildlife Protection Ordinance and Protected Areas legislation – it is an offence to deliberately harm or remove them without written authorisation.

- Please be aware that you walk on these paths at your own risk, so take sensible precautions. The paths do not have guiderails in place and there are steep drops in many places so please take care and closely supervise children at all times.
- Respect all marine and plant life - look but don't touch
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Do not create fire hazards
- Place all litter in the bins provided or take it home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Only park vehicles in designated areas
- Always choose a walk that suits your level of fitness
- Take plenty of water
- Apply high-factor sunscreen

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Ascension Island Conservation Department; Anselmo Pelembe



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ASCENSION ISLAND

GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK WALKS

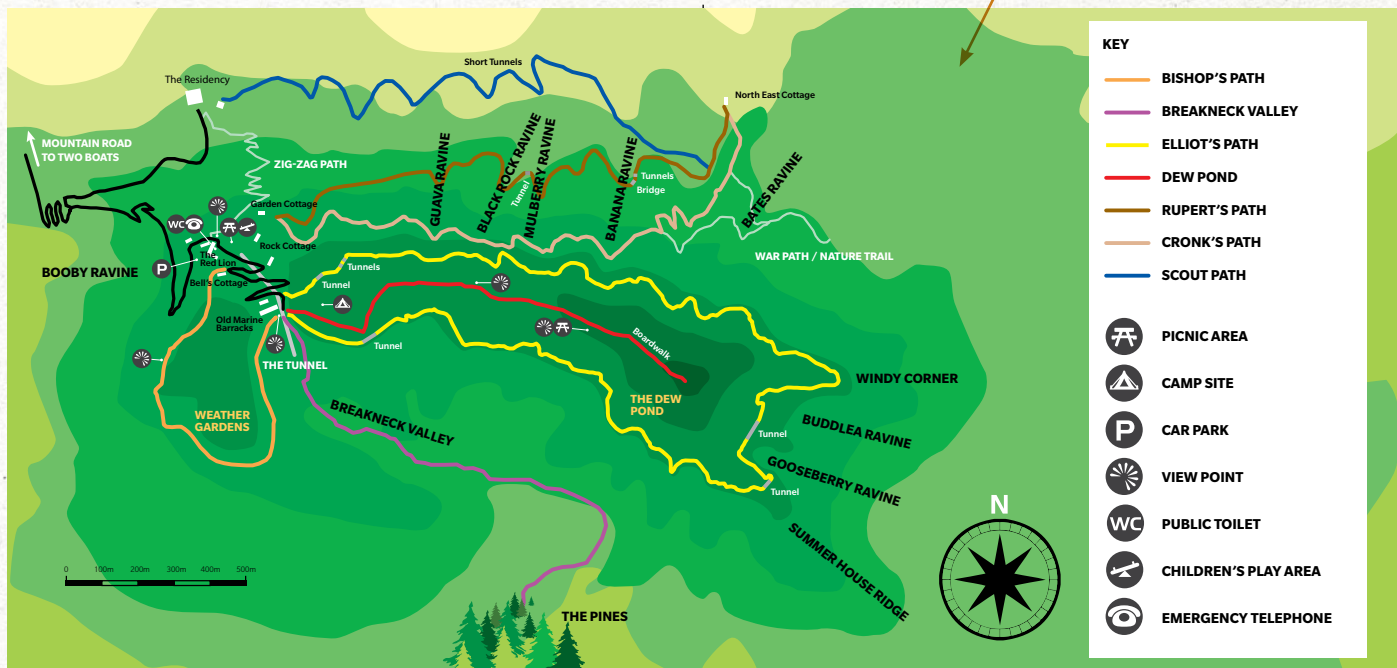
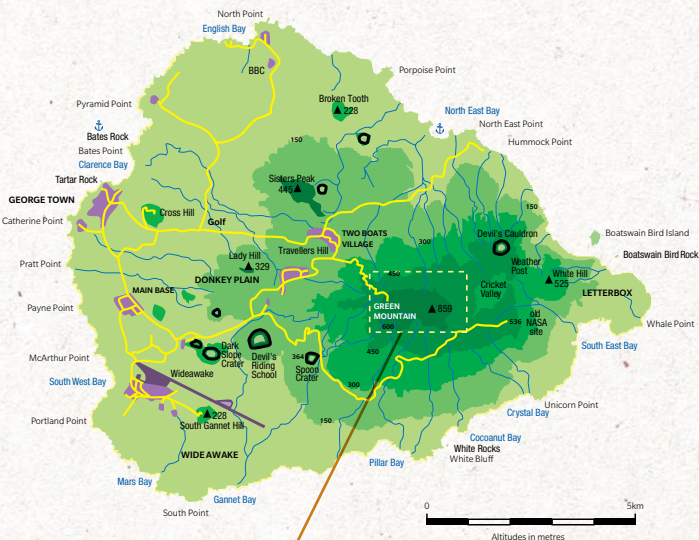
GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK WALKS

This is not an exhaustive description of walks in Green Mountain National Park. Some additional walks, for example War Path and Nature Trail, are described in the Letterbox Walks book (available to purchase from the Conservation Centre, Museum and Obsidian Shop in Georgetown).

For others, such as Middleton's and the Zig Zag path, please contact the Conservation Centre for further information or follow the signs on the mountain. While the Conservation Department and various voluntary organisations work to keep the paths clear and accessible year-round there are times when they become overgrown. If you have any difficulties on the paths then please report this to the Conservation Department or the Heritage Society and we will do our best to get this rectified as quickly as possible.



ASCENSION ISLAND



ELLIOT'S PASS

Duration: 1 hr 30 min – 2 hrs
Start Point: Old Marine Barracks
End Point: Old Marine Barracks
Difficulty: Medium



Description of walk

This walk is easy-going and mainly flat, only rising at old earth slides. Just before the barracks there is a large sign marking the path. Almost immediately you will pass the Elliot Obelisk, just before your first tunnel. This path can often get very muddy in places (in particular the tunnels), so do wear appropriate footwear (trainers or hiking boots). A torch is useful (although not essential) for navigating the various tunnels).

The path can be walked in either direction and is a circular route. There are a number of educational boards positioned around the walk that provide information on the native and endemic flora and fauna that you will be able to observe. You will also find a picnic area towards the mid-point of the walk with stunning views across the southern part of the island on a clear day.

History of path

Elliot's Pass was built in 1840, under the direction of Lieutenant Wade, as a lookout for the Marines of the Mountain Detachment. Admiral Elliot, Commander in Chief of the West Africa Squadron, opened the pass. The obelisk at the start of the path was erected in his name. The Squadron was responsible for patrolling the waters of the South Atlantic for slave trading ships and pirates. The path circles Green Mountain at 2400 feet and gave, at that time, a cloud-free 360-degree view of the island. (Remember, in 1840 there was virtually no vegetation to obscure the view). Several small look-out caves can be seen around the path. The Old Marine Barracks at the start of the walk were built in 1833. They were only inhabited for 30 years due to them being damp and cold. In 1863 the Marines moved into the Red Lion and the original barracks eventually became cowsheds.

DEW POND

Duration: 1 hr 30 min – 2 hrs
Start Point: Old Marine Barracks
End Point: Old Marine Barracks
Difficulty: Medium



Description of walk

This path takes you to the highest point of the island at 2817ft above sea level. The actual peak lies just past the Dew Pond and is marked by an old chain. At the Old Marine Barracks you will find a signpost marking the start of the path.

Walk gradually uphill, over an open ridge and up again through the trees and bush. Continue on the final ascent up through the bamboo to the Dew Pond. This section can be muddy during periods of wet weather; there is a boardwalk to assist you virtually all the way to the top, but it is often slippery so do take care. The pond is several feet deep and is surrounded by an impressive bamboo plantation. You have to descend along the same path to return to the Old Marine Barracks.

History of path

The pond was constructed in 1875 some 60 years after the occupation of the island. A single boat shelter was erected on the site in 1876 and in 1877 the bamboo, which now covers the peak, was planted. A pipe from the pond was laid to North East Cottage in 1898 to replenish a sheep trough. This pipe, its route and the sheep trough can still be found today.

Goldfish were introduced to keep the water clear, but this was not highly successful. Additionally, it is thought that the Americans introduced toads to the pond in World War II, to use for medicinal purposes at their field hospital which stood at the site of Two Boats Village, but these are no longer present.



BREAKNECK VALLEY

Duration: 2 hrs
Start Point: Old Marine Barracks
End Point: Old Marine Barracks
Difficulty: Medium - High



Description of walk

This path sets off downhill from the Old Marine Barracks, along the wall enclosing the upper water catchment. The walk is all downhill in this direction and not too steep for steady walking. Follow the path down to the derelict water pump and then continue down the valley until you eventually come to the stand of Norfolk Island Pines (note that Palmer's Farm path, another walk, leads off from here). Return to the Old Marine Barracks by the same route back up Breakneck Valley, or alternatively plan to leave a car at the bottom of the walk on the NASA Road.

History of path

Breakneck Valley path gives access to what was a water collection and distribution area, which was in use from the 1830s until the late 1960s. It was Lieutenant Brandreth who, in 1831, discovered water in the valley at a depth of 30 metres. The water fed through the mountain tunnel (now closed) to the mountain main tank (next to the Red Lion). Water from there then fed via Dampier's to Georgetown.

Above the pumping area there is a disused sheep trough, which was fed by a drip out of the hillside. This has long since dried up. Directly beneath the pump can be found the intact and full octagonal tank. To the left of the pump there are a number of cuts in the clinker valley wall. These were either storage areas or, more likely, a sheep pen and coves for them to take shade under. There are more to be found in the level area of the valley.

The Norfolk Pines were planted to become ships' masts. Within the stand there is a large water tank, which is fed from run-off from the hillside to the above right. This tank would have been a supply for the valley and the planting that went on there and may have also fed the Palmer's plantation on the southern flank of the mountain, only half a mile away.

BISHOP'S PATH

Duration: 45 mins
Start Point: Bell's Cottage, above the Red Lion
End Point: Old Marine Barracks
Difficulty: Medium



Description of walk

The paths starts at Bell's Cottage as a level and easy walk and continues up a mildly steep and grassy hillside up to a level path again. Go past the front of the cottage and on to the path cut into the hillside. The path has a jungle feel to it as you follow it through the trees. It opens up through the ginger onto a grassy hillside and continues around to the upper water catchments and the Old Marine Barracks. From the barracks take the road back down to Bell's Cottage.

History of path

Bell's Cottage was erected in 1848 for Farm Superintendent Bell. It was partly demolished in the 1970s and converted into pigsties, but is no longer in use. Prior to this, it had been used as weekend or holiday accommodation and back in the 1920s it had been run by the Eastern Telegraph Company for their employees to enjoy. It was one of only a few buildings on the island to have a bath so it was a real treat to stay there.



SCOUT'S PATH

Duration: 1 hr 30 min
Start Point: Car park near the Residency
End Point: North East Cottage
Difficulty: Medium



Description of walk

From the parking area, walk down the road towards the Residency and you will find the sign for the start of the path on the right of the road. The path winds its way around the mountainside past several small ravines before opening up towards the end onto the hillside below North East Cottage. From the path you get great views back to Monkey Rock and beyond. Walkers have a choice when they reach North East Cottage whether to return the same way or take Rupert's or Cronk's paths back to Garden Cottage and the Red Lion. From there you can walk down the mountain and back to the Residency. This makes for a varied and very interesting walk.

History of path

Scout's Path was built during the 1970s and follows the line of the old NASA cable which came up the mountain from the Cable & Wireless Earth Station and tracked round the north east side of the mountain all the way to the Devil's Ashpit area.



MONKEY ROCK CEMETERY

Duration: 30 mins
Start Point: Car park near the Residency
End Point: Car park near the Residency
Difficulty: Easy



Description of walk

The walk starts from the Residency car park. Heading down towards the Residency take a right up onto the bank where the Monkey Rock Cemetery, Scouts and Zig Zag path signs are located. The path goes around the upper boundary of the Residency and then along its right side. At this point you will come to a fork, one path leading directly below the Residency and the other away in the opposite direction. The path to Monkey Rock Cemetery is the one directly below the Residency. The path almost encircles the grounds as you meet the original cemetery path that comes from the Residency lawn. From here it goes straight down to the cemetery.

History of path

The cemetery was built when the Residency was used for its original purpose, as the Mountain Hospital or 'San'. The original path between the hospital and the cemetery ran directly from the lower right edge of the Residency lawn. When the Residency became a private home the path was re-routed several times to afford the occupants greater privacy. The remains of one such move runs below the Residency lawn on the opposite side, where only a derelict boardwalk can be seen today.



CRONK'S PATH

Duration: 1 hr 30 min
Start Point: Red Lion
End Point: North East Cottage
Difficulty: Medium



Description of walk

The path starts at Garden Cottage. At the first fork, take the lower path. It runs below Rupert's and is very similar in terms of the scenery; however this route has deeper cuts and some short tunnels to wander through. One of the notable features is the bridge at Banana Ravine. The walk is easy as it winds around the flanks of the mountain, slowly descending all the way to North East Cottage, where it intersects with the end of Rupert's Path. Walk back along either Cronk's or Rupert's to return to Garden Cottage.

History of path

Farm Superintendent Hedley Cronk built Cronk's in 1920 as an alternate route to North East Cottage. Banana Bridge was built in 1921 to cross Banana Ravine. In 1982 an RAF chinook helicopter lowered the current bridge into position, soon after the end of the Falklands conflict. Before this was installed, steps cut into the clinker and an iron ladder were used to get in and out of the ravine. These are still evident.



RUPERT'S PATH

Duration: 1 hr 30 min
Start Point: Red Lion
End Point: North East Cottage
Difficulty: Medium



Description of walk

Walk through the arch gate by the Red Lion and through the garden of Garden Cottage. The path starts at the north east corner of Garden Cottage (you will find the start of Cronk's path at the same place). Pass through the gate and follow the path until you reach a fork. Stay on the upper path for Rupert's. Follow the well-defined path past the old tennis courts, a flat area on the right that is now very overgrown, and travel on to Black Rock. Here you will find a cave adorned with Maidenhair Fern. The shelter has a plastered ceiling with much graffiti on it, dating as far back as 1874.

The path is fairly level but with some steep drops as you navigate the ravines. After the zigzags the path descends gradually to North East Cottage. Walk back along either Cronk's or Rupert's to return to Garden Cottage.

History of path

Rupert's Path is probably the oldest path on the mountain. It was built to link Garden Cottage, which was built in 1817, with North East Cottage, built in 1834. Much of it used to be bordered by a metal railing fence, which was a safety measure to allow the Garrison Commandant to ride out along it on his horse (this is no longer in place).

A little past the cave there can be found a white cross in the black clinker face. This marks the spot where J Galloway, R.M.L.I. fell to his death in 1872. Then, the path was much narrower and very treacherous with its many drop offs. In those days, there was no vegetation to halt a potentially fatal fall.



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