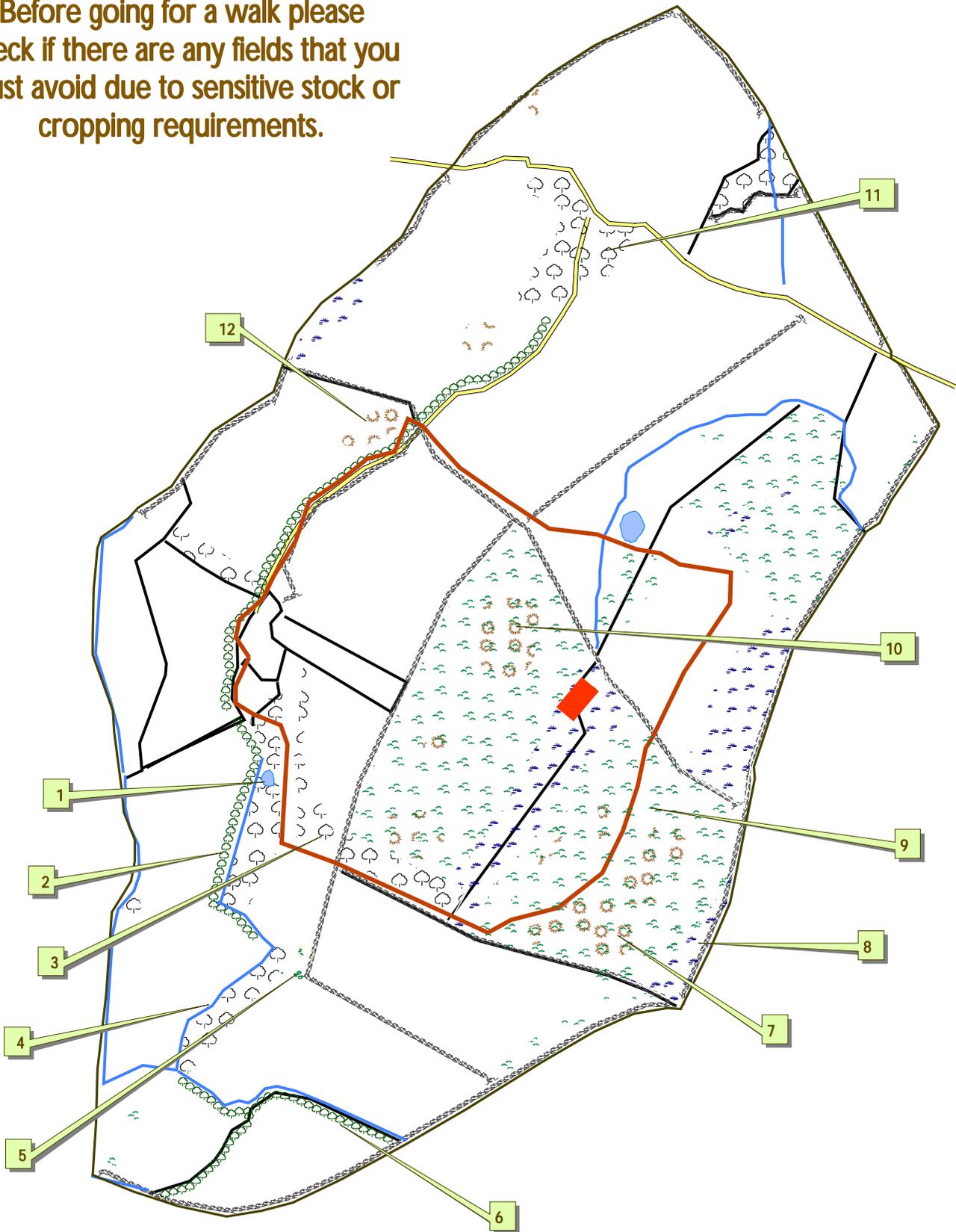


Before going for a walk please check if there are any fields that you must avoid due to sensitive stock or cropping requirements.



KEY

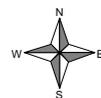
-  Farm Boundary
-  path, 2.2km
-  Watercourse
-  Hedgerow
-  Unimproved Grassland
-  Wetland
-  Native or Semi-natural Woodland
-  Scrub

**Castle Creavie:
Farm Trail Map**

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Castle Creavie Farm Trail



1. Farm Ponds

The two ponds on Castle Creavie provide a valuable area of open water to attract wildfowl and amphibians. Cover is provided by rushes growing around the ungrazed pond margins. A nice quiet place for a picnic on a sunny day!

2. Hedgerows

The young hedgerows by the farm track contain a mixture of native plants to encourage a diverse hedge offering food and habitat to a range of wildlife. They create a wildlife network across the farmland, linking different habitats. The hedges are cut in winter in rotation every 3 years to ensure berries are always available somewhere. Hawthorn is traditionally used as it makes a stockproof boundary.

3. Woodland

There are many areas of woodland around Castle Creavie, some mature, others recently planted with native species. The young plantations are already starting to provide good wildlife habitat for many of the birds and small mammals present at Castle Creavie.

4. Burns

Rough grass and hedging along the banks of the burns provides cover which encourages birds to nest and feed. In summer dragonflies may be seen darting about. Care is taken to ensure farming operations do not pollute the burns.

5. Scrub

Another important habitat found on many farms, scrub on Castle Creavie contains mostly gorse, favoured by birds such as linnet, and rough grassland where barnowls can hunt for voles.

6. Farmland Trees

An important part of the farming landscape, mature trees can also offer cover to stock during hot or wet weather. Trees can support many types of insects (oak over 400). Decaying wood is an important habitat which supports many insects, lichen and fungi. Castle Creavie has many mature hawthorns on field boundaries.

7. Rigg and Furrow

Still evident today, particularly when the sun is low in the sky, are the characteristic lines of the ancient form of cultivation in the Castle and Back Castle fields. More details in the information chest.



Hedgerow laden with berries



Farm pond



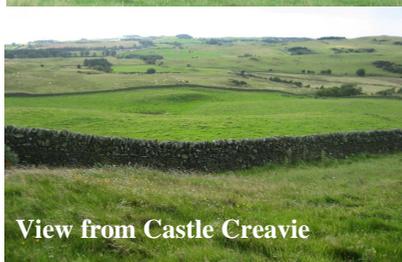
Sneezewort near pond



Stand of gorse in flower



Sheep sheltering under hawthorns



View from Castle Creavie



Yarrow flowering on track side

8. Wetland

Castle Creavie has some rich wetlands, containing a wide range of wetland plants such as sneezewort, bogbean, devil's bit scabious and marsh bedstraw. A walk through a wetland in summer should reveal many flowers. Careful grazing in these areas ensures coarse grasses and rushes do not shade out the slower growing species. Birds such as snipe may nest in these wetlands so disturbance should be avoided in spring. Snipe and curlew frequent these areas—look out for snipe flying off if you walk into a rushy area.

Avoid the fenced off area (marked in red on the map) - it is blanket bog, a floating mass of vegetation which you could fall through and get trapped in.

9. Unimproved Grassland

Unimproved grassland supports a diverse range of plants. As farming at Castle Creavie has been largely organic, many of the fields are unimproved. Light grazing allows plants such as yarrow, knapweed and harebell to flower and set seed and birds and mammals to breed undisturbed. There will be an abundance of insects here, providing food for many mammals and birds. Skylark are common in these fields - listen out for their lovely song whilst they fly high overhead.

10. Castle Creavie Fort

A fort was in use here some 2000 years ago. There are remains of a stone rampart and terrace. More details available in the information chest. There is a wonderful view across the Kirkcudbrightshire countryside from here.

11. Mature Woodland

This mature woodland has plentiful food and nest sites are for many birds, insects and mammals. Look for Red squirrels, Bluetits, Chaffinches. Listen for Woodpecker, Great tits or Song thrush. List how many of the birds present at Castle Creavie you can see or hear!

12. Castle Creavie Dun

A defensive settlement in use at the same time as the fort, using the rocky outcrop as a natural defence. More details available in the information chest. There are also cup and ring markings on a rocky outcrop.