

Nature Trail



Essential information

We want you to enjoy your visit to Padarn Country Park but please be aware that some areas of the Park can be dangerous and children should be supervised at all times.

- Only follow way-marked trails
- Do not enter building ruins
- Keep away from old quarry structures
- Some paths have uneven surfaces and steep drops
- Some of the features of the Park include old quarry workings, steep woodland paths and deep waters

- Follow the green way marks from the Padarn Country Park Information Kiosk at *Gilfach Ddu* and walk towards the Llanberis Lake Railway station building. Walk part way up the Dinorwig A1 incline. From the Quarry Hospital road you can see across to the Vivian Quarry. It was worked from the early 1800s until 1964. The quarry pit is known as a 'sinc'. When the quarry was open, pumps were used to empty water from the sinc. Nature is slowly reclaiming this industrial landscape.
- The Oak woodland is cool and moist and is an ideal habitat for ferns. Some of the ferns that grow here are the Lady Fern, Maidenhair Spleenwort, Bracken and Polypody tree-growing fern. The Mountain Buckler is the most common. It has brown scaly stems and long feathery fronds.
- At the side of the path is a bank of small rocks known as Glacial Till. It was left behind during the last Ice Age between 115,000 and 11,700 years ago. The rocks are sharp and do not appear to have been smoothed by the movement of ice over time.
- When the ice melted 12,000 years ago different types of plants grew here. The plant life was similar to that found in cold northern climates such as the Tundra in Greenland. As the climate warmed trees with broad leaves like the Sessile Oak began to grow in large numbers. The *Coed Dinorwig* is an example of one of these ancient woodlands.
- In May, the Sessile Oak trees are infested with Mottled Umber Moth caterpillars. They feed on the leaves. Evidence of their feeding can be seen until July. After the caterpillars turn into moths, the trees grow a second crop of leaves to compensate.
- Lichens are a complex mix of fungi and algae. They are easily damaged by polluted air. Many can be seen on the trees and rocks in Padarn Country Park, which shows how clean the air is here.
- Many different birds live in the Oak woodland. You may spot Tree Creepers, Wrens, Long Tailed Tits and Pied Flycatchers. Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers can be heard but are rarely seen. The Pied Flycatcher acts as a natural pest controller by eating the Umber Moths.
- Scots Pine trees grow to the left of this path. Although they grow wild in Wales, these were planted by the quarry owners. The long trunks were used as timber for support beams in the quarry buildings. However, it is widely believed they may actually have been planted to commemorate an event.
- The valleys have deeper soil and are more sheltered than the ridges in the Park. From this point it is easy to see how the Oaks grow taller and stronger in the valley areas.
- Here is a panoramic view of *Llyn Padarn* which is the sixth deepest lake in Wales. The summits of *Yr Wyddfa* and *Crib Goch* can be seen in the distance to the south east. Caernarfon Bay and Anglesey are visible to the south west.
- From the Quarry Hospital Museum go down the steps and cross the Vivian Arch bridge to reach the final view point. This area was created by removing the top section of a huge pile of slate waste. The base of this tip sits 30 metres / 100 feet below the surface of the lake.

