

Gently descend and bear right through light woodland before descending steeply on more open heath to reach the valley bottom, a bridge and the site of the **North Pole** ⑤.

It was Christopher Robin who had the idea of an expedition to discover the **North Pole**. Nobody was quite sure what it was, including Christopher Robin who told Pooh that it was just a thing you discover. In Pooh's hands (or paws) it became an 'expotition' and he spread the word. Led by Christopher Robin a long line, including all Rabbit's friends and relations, started out. At the bottom of the valley they came to a stream where Roo fell in. Fortunately Pooh discovered the **North Pole** and used it to rescue Roo. And, as the world knows, they stuck the pole in the ground and Christopher Robin tied a notice to it:

**North Pole  
Discovered By  
Pooh  
Pooh Found It**

Cross the bridge and ascend the wide ride. Towards the top pass by pine woodland on the left. Turn right at the t-junction of rides ⑥. Follow the ride as it skirts around the rim of the valley.



**Wrens Warren Valley  
(Eeyore's Sad and Gloomy Place)**

**Eeyore's Gloomy Place** ("rather boggy and sad") is somewhere in the valley below on the right - even the grown-up Christopher Robin was not sure where it was. The Gloomy Place was where Eeyore lost his house. That is another story with a happy ending.

Continue to the road and junction opposite **Gills Lap** car park. Cross with care.

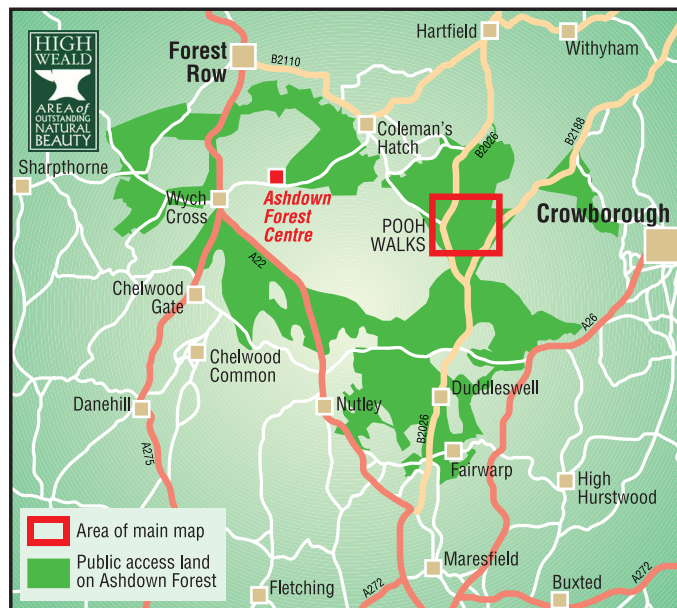
If you enjoyed this 'expotition', there are many other places to explore on the Forest!



## Information

A Board of Conservators manages Ashdown Forest as a quiet, natural place for you to enjoy and as a refuge for wildlife. At 2500 hectares (10 square miles), Ashdown Forest is the largest open access space in the South East. Nearly two thirds of it is heathland, one of the rarest habitats in Britain. On account of this, the Forest is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and an EU Special Area for Conservation and Special Protection Area.

Ashdown Forest is a former medieval hunting forest: the largest of four spread between Horsham and Tunbridge Wells in an area known as the Weald Forest Ridge. This is the highest ridge of the High Weald, itself recognised as one of England's Finest Landscapes and designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).



Text by Per-Rambulations  
[www.per-rambulations.co.uk](http://www.per-rambulations.co.uk)

If you would like further information about the work of the Conservators and the Friends of Ashdown Forest, visit the Forest Centre at Wych Cross. Telephone 01342 823583 or visit [www.ashdownforest.org](http://www.ashdownforest.org)



Cartography, photography and graphics by Mapping Ideas Ltd. [www.mappingideas.co.uk](http://www.mappingideas.co.uk)

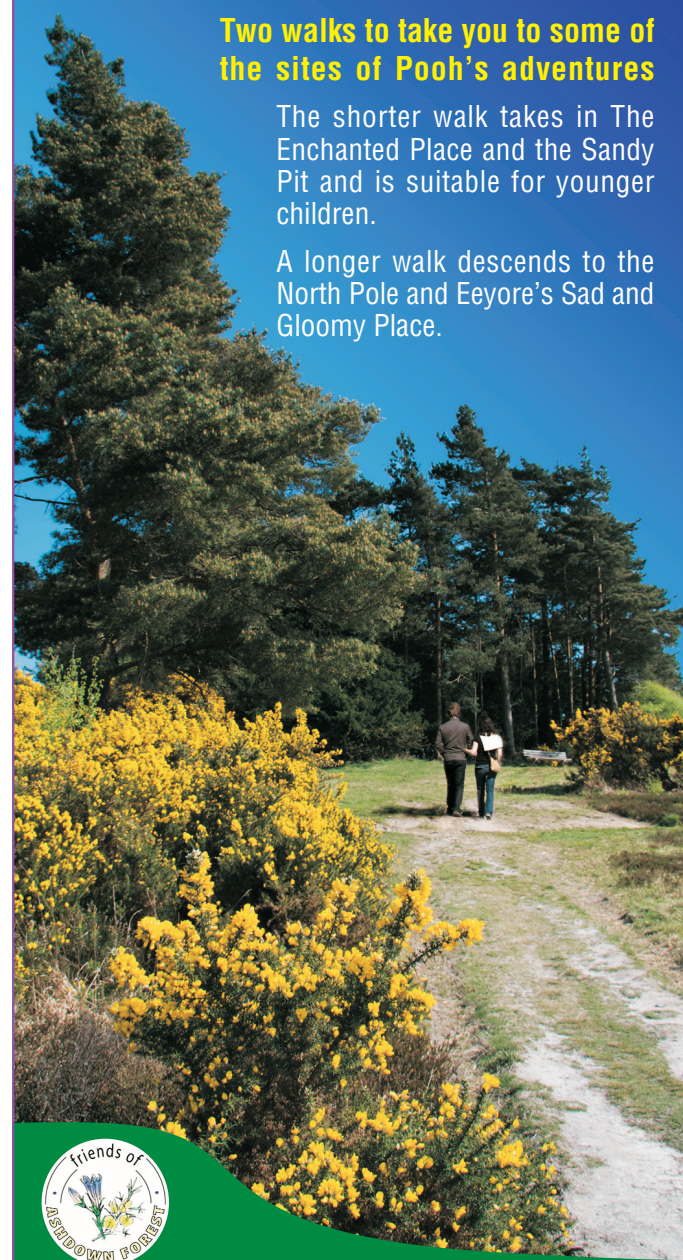


## Pooh Walks from Gills Lap

**Two walks to take you to some of the sites of Pooh's adventures**

The shorter walk takes in The Enchanted Place and the Sandy Pit and is suitable for younger children.

A longer walk descends to the North Pole and Eeyore's Sad and Gloomy Place.



Exploring Ashdown Forest on foot

# Pooh Walks from Gills Lap

**Short Pooh Walk – 0.6 mile/1 km**  
**Long Pooh Walk – 2 miles/3.25 km**

Ashtdown Forest is the real place where Christopher Robin, a boy, Winnie-the-Pooh, arguably the most famous bear in the world, and their friends grew up together. Their adventures have been translated into many languages. The Pooh walks explore some of the places of their best-known exploits.

From Gills Lap car park ① walk north, away from the road junction, on the wide ride. Pass a bench and after about 250m you reach a clump of tall pine trees (Gills Lap) on your right - **The Enchanted Place**. The concrete, surveyor's triangulation point is 669 feet/204m above sea level.

Gills Lap, Galleons Lap in the Pooh stories, is the Enchanted Place on the very top of the Forest. Christopher Robin knew it was enchanted because nobody had been able to count if there were sixty-three or sixty-four trees. It was also the only place on the Forest where they could sit down without worrying about prickly vegetation. From here

their 'expedition' to discover the North Pole set off, but we make a diversion before following the footsteps of the explorers.

**Heffalump Trap and the Lone Pine**



To continue, turn left ② and descend on a narrower path to reach the **Heffalump Trap**, a small hollow in which a Lone Pine grows.

Some say that the hollow was Pooh's Cunning Trap to capture that rare beast, the Heffalump. Some will say that it was somewhere else. Readers of the Pooh stories may remember that the **Heffalump Trap** was close to the Six Pine Trees, not a solitary pine. Could it be that this Lone Pine is all that remains of the Six? In the stories Piglet digs the pit whilst Pooh went to get honey to bait the trap. Could Piglet, a Very Small Animal, dig a pit big enough to fit a Heffalump? A carefully disguised Heffalump trap in the garden of his real home brought disgrace upon Christopher Robin when Mrs Tasker, the gardener's wife, caught her foot in it.

**Backtrack about 10 metres, turn left and follow the ride for 250m to the Milne and Shepard Memorial ③ in front of you.**

The Memorial commemorates AA Milne, the father of Christopher Robin and the author of the Pooh stories, and EH Shepard, the illustrator. As Christopher Robin was to write in later life, this was where his father sat and where Pooh sat too; now we can see what they saw.



**Milne & Shepard Memorial**

**On leaving the Memorial turn right and in 25m is Roo's Sandy Pit, a disused quarry, on the left (not so sandy now).**

Although Baby Roo played happily in his Sandy Pit, it was the supposed site of Pooh's dark moment, the kidnapping of Roo to force Kanga and Roo, the newcomers to the Forest, to leave it forever. As in all the best stories it ended happily except for Piglet who had to take a bath, and he had never "really been fond of taking those".

**To complete the shorter walk return to Gills Lap car park by continuing ahead, passing the Enchanted Place again on your left.**

**For the longer walk, turn left onto a path, pass through Quarry car park to the road. Cross with care onto a path opposite and in 30m turn left onto the ride ④.**

The woodland on the far side of the valley appears as Five Hundred Acre Wood on the Ordnance Survey map but Pooh knew better: to him it was the **Hundred Acre Wood**. It is mentioned in the story in which Eeyore loses a tail and Pooh finds one, when Pooh went to visit Owl, whose house was in the wood (**100 Aker Wood** on the plan drawn by Christopher Robin and Mr Shepard), for advice on the sore subject of Eeyore's lost tail. Pooh used the same route down into the valley that was, and is, used while searching for the North Pole. In later life Christopher Robin was to write: "It is a real forest with giant beech trees, all dark and mysterious. You would need to be a brave explorer to venture into the Five Hundred Acre at night, and I never did."

