**Walk 8 The Skirrid**

Last walked in March 2017

**Description.**  A 5 km (3.1 miles) moderate walk. Ysgyryd Fawr is the most easterly of the Black Mountains in Wales, part of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The name is often anglicised to The Skirrid or Skirrid Fawr, and the mountain is also known as Holy Mountain or Sacred Hill.

**Start.** Explorer Map OL13 Grid 328165.

**Direction from Tesco’s roundabout** (Turn milometer to zero). Take the A465 towards Abergavenny. After 20 miles and on a short duel carriageway you TL onto the B4521 towards Skenfrith. A little further on, at a T-junction, (20.2 miles) you TL towards Skenfrith. At 21.4 miles you reach the parking area on your L.

**1.** **Car Park.** Face the road. TR and walk to the end of the car park. TR and walk up the enclosed National Trust Ysgyryd Fawr footpath. Go thru the double wooden gates/stile and follow the well defined, waymarked National Trust track uphill and thru the woods, initially and after a few paces going up some wooden steps and ignoring the track that bends off L. As you venture up the track you pass a wooden seat on your R, and further on the track goes thru a small/large wooden gate where you TR and continue on uphill. As you come out of the wooded area the track bends slightly to the R and continues uphill. You should now have some beautiful scenery around as you continue walking uphill and along the ridge to finally reach the summit.

***There is a rich mythology attached to the mountain, including a distinctive stone known as the Devil's Table. According to legend, part of the mountain is said to have been broken off at the moment of the crucifixion of Jesus. There was a local tradition that earth from the Skirrid was holy and especially fertile, and it was taken away to be scattered on fields elsewhere, on coffins, and in the foundations of churches. Pilgrimages were made, especially on Michaelmas Eve (September 28th), to the summit. The ruins of an iron–age hill fort and a medieval Roman Catholic church, dedicated to St. Michael, lie at the summit.*** ***Rudolf Hess used to walk here when he was held prisoner at nearby Maindiff Court during the early 1940s. Pete “Snapper” Winner, Soldier ‘I’, mentions this mountain site in his book, which is the Story of an SAS Hero and the part this hill played during Sickener, (Sickener being part of SAS selection).***

**2. Summit.** Return back down to the car the same way as you came up to the summit.

