

## North Walk

# May Beck to Little Beck Wood (autumn)

This makes a gorgeous autumnal walk, full of fallen leaves and mossy trees. It's quite hilly in places but has well-worn paths and spectacular views – you can even see the sea on a clear day!

**1** Starting in the car park, exit over the cattle grid and turn left to follow the 'Coast to Coast' footpath along the stream, which winds its way downwards with occasional paddling-sized pools through the bronzed woodland.

**2** Once you reach Foss Lane, cross the bridge (ideal for playing 'pooch sticks') and take the right fork (marked 'Coast to Coast'). This crosses the river again, bringing you to Falling Foss waterfall. Carved into a hollow in amongst the trees and cascading an impressive 30 feet into a plunge pool, the waterfall is well-worth a pause to enjoy - particularly sat with a hot drink at the nearby tea rooms.

**3** Taking the left fork and being mindful of the steep drop to one side, continue along the path beside the beck. Here, wide carpets of rusty orange leaves are

offset by silvery tree trunks and a green-gold canopy. Explore 'The Hermitage' en-route – a hollowed-out boulder said to have been inhabited by an 18th-century hermit.

**4** A dry-stone wall and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust sign marks Little Beck Wood reserve. A mixture of oak, ash, alder, and cherry arch over the boardwalk and gives the path a more secluded feel. Treasures abound around every corner, including a 17th century alum mine, a lazily winding stream perfect for dippers, clusters of fungi and a cacophony of birdsong from tits and nuthatches overhead.

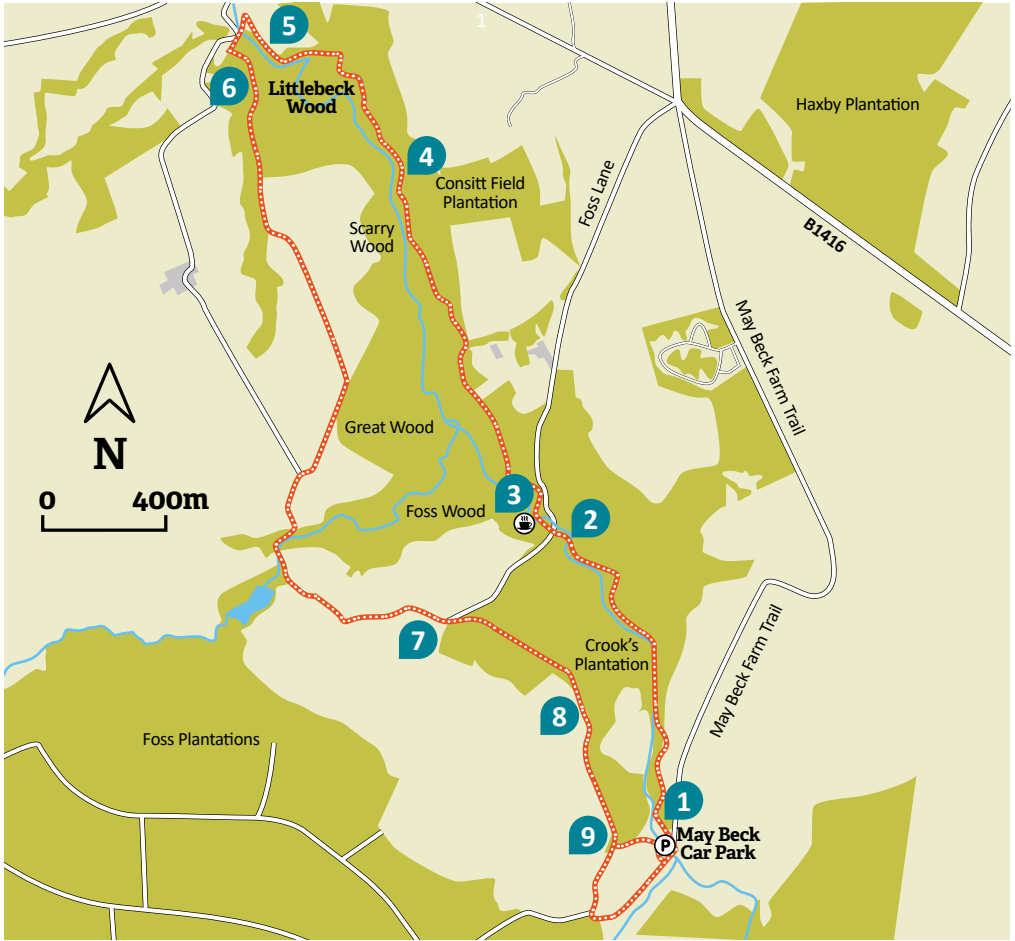
**5** Exit through the gate, turn left and follow the road down and around the bend. Cross the small stream on your left just before the bench to re-enter the reserve.

**6** The path slopes back upwards, through a gate at the top and along a bridleway through the farmland. Take in the wide open space, occasional drystone wall, and the autumnal crowns of the reserve woodland on your left.

**7** Just after you pass the farm at the end of Foss Lane, take the middle path without a gate offroad and uphill. Enjoy the panoramic views towards Whitby as you go, and the woodland laid out below.

Nuthatch





**8** Follow the path across a few stiles and through some fields, gradually dipping back down into the woodland and onto a well-worn path.

**9** Finally, there is a junction with a gate on the left and stile on the right. The path through the gate leads back to the carpark. Going over the stile creates a slightly longer route, coming out on the road further along from the car park.

**Suggested start point** – May Beck Car Park

**Parking** – May Beck Car Park

**Length** – 4.3 miles/7km



**Other useful info:** The Falling Foss Tea Garden is only open in summer, but you can find several pubs and cafés in Goathland and Sleights. The closest public toilets are in Ruswarp and Goathland.