

## SCOLT HEAD

Norfolk

**Distance:** 15.2 km (9.4 miles)

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Terrain:** Coast path; beach walking; tidal crossings

**Height gain:** 173 metres

**Map:** OS Explorer 250 & 251

**Starting point:** Car park Burnham Overy Staithe (GR TF 845 443)

### Highlights

- Walking the extensive sands of the north shore
- Secret swimming in the warm pools of Norton Creeks and North Sea
- Incredible bird life

### Pubs and cafes near the route

- Burnham Deepdale has an excellent café, campsite and shop.
- The Hero pub at Burnham Overy Staithe serves good food and has rooms.

### Dogs

- Dogs are not allowed on Scolt Head Island between mid-April and mid-August

### Scolt Head Island Circular walk

Scolt Head Island is owned by the National Trust and is a small paradise of sand dunes, salt marsh, mud flats, and shingle. It is internationally important for its birdlife (terns in particular which breed here). There are just two buildings on the island: one at the western end and the other more centrally situated towards the southwest end of the dunes. This is an adventurous walk that requires tidal crossings and good navigation skills. You need to cross two tidal creeks to get to the island, then cross two more to get back to the mainland. Many families simply cross Overy Cockle Strand at low tide, then spend a few hours on the island beach and walk back; or use the seasonal ferry from Burnham Overy Staithe to keep their feet dry (departs from the quay runs 1.5 hours before and after high water (daylight hours, Apr-Sept). Check times at boathouse (07836 523396).



### Directions

1. Start from the car park at Burnham Overy Staithe and cross Overy Creek at low tide (or swim across at high tide); keep to the left of an obvious drainage creek on the opposite bank.
2. Walk north along the wide mud path towards the eastern edge of the marshes. After 940m cross the first of two wooden footbridges over the smaller creeks, and after a further 260m reach Cockle Strand. Walk across the sands towards the white sign on the island.
3. Once on the island turn right and follow the shore line around the island's east tip to reach its north shore.
4. Walk for 4.4 km along the north shore until you reach a well-walked route through the dunes to The Hut. Continue on the path, marked near Butcher's Beach on OS Maps, that skirts the western edge of Hut Marsh to reach the shore of Norton Creek.
5. Cross Norton Creek +/- hours around low tide, then pick up the path through the muds and salt marsh for 1.2 km, to cross Mow Creek at lower tide. Continue on the obvious path that then intersects with the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path at the coast. Turn left (east) along the coast path (or continue along the lane straight ahead of you to enjoy the café and shop).
6. Follow the coast path along the embankments of Trowland Creek and River Burn following the signs for the Norfolk Coast Path until, after 5.3 km, you reach the A149.
7. Take the track to your left just before reaching the road and continue along it for a short distance until it rejoins the road. Continue along the pavement to the reach the first turn on the left, follow signs for the Norfolk Coast Path along West Harbour Way to return to the car park.

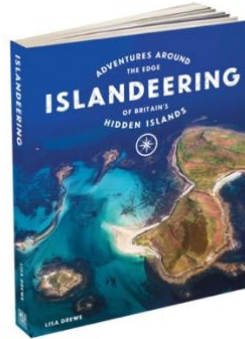
*Special notes:* Only attempt Norton Creek route at low tide (passable 2 hours before/after). Beware of fast tides which flood E and ebb W in the creeks. Car park may flood at high tides. GPS device recommended.

There are circular routes around 50 islands of Britain featured in our book "Islandeering: adventures around the edge of Britain's hidden islands".



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