

Fellwalking Report February 2023 by Annie Clouston

It was cold, it was wet, but the walk was so good it transcended the malevolence of weather. Ten of us, just call us the Teesdale Ten, migrated for the day to Weardale, starting at Bollihope Burn we headed off across the heathery moor to a pimply pike, aka Pawlaw Pike, where the rain first introduced itself to us. We skirted Five Pikes – with little temptation to go over the top - trying to figure out what substance you'd have to be on to see the elephant in the Elephant Tree, but seeing instead a much more convincing Emu on the horizon. We then picked up the Weardale Way.

At soggy lunchtime we stopped by the Gaunless which had largely disappeared at this point and the photo shows Jenny having a closer look at the Frosterley Marble in the riverbed that can be seen in all its glory from the footbridge above what would be a rather splendid waterfall. Curious about where the water had gone, we followed the river upstream and discovered, at a confluence with a substantial beck, the spot where most of the water sinks underground.

We returned via White Kirkley along the way seeing some rather splendid stretches of lime kilns, where sadly the arches appear to have become dumping grounds for industrial and agricultural detritus. On returning to our starting point the excellence of Bollihope Burn as a picnic spot and play park (in wellies, building dams) was obvious, though not particularly appealing on the sort of day we were blessed with. Thanks to Lynda Bares for offering the walk and Gordon Selley for leading it.

Photo by Judith Coleman

