

Short Red Loop (approx. 45 mins)

From the **Visitor Centre (1)** turn right (west) following the main path by the stream. The weir reminds you that **water power** was harnessed here for milling (**2**). By the river, **laurel** and **holly** provide cover for small birds like **wrens**, **dunnock** and **robins**. The conifers on the hillside to the left are a good place to look for **goldcrests** and **coal tits**. In autumn you might find **conkers** – the seeds of the horse chestnut.

As you approach the exit to Braid Road look at the **Toll House (3)**. Now turn round and, immediately before crossing back over the bridge, turn left through a gate and follow the river bank on the opposite side. On your left is the **Wildflower Meadow (4)**. The path goes up and down above the river bank. In early spring watch out for carpets of **snowdrops** under the trees, followed by **wood sorrel** in late spring. This clover-like plant is a good remedy for stomach upsets.

Soon you will notice a wall on your left. Pass through an opening and climb the steps to the renovated **Dooicot (5)**. The big conifer in front is a **Lawson Cypress** – the leaves smell of parsley.

Go up the side of the doocot. The path turns right and winds between trees high above the glen. The Visitor Centre is below. Watch your step – there are lots of roots across the path. The woodland here is mainly broadleaved and includes **elm**, **ash**, **sycamore**, **oak**, **birch**, **rowan**, **beech** and **horse chestnut**. Some of the beech trees are over 150 years old. Their seeds are eaten by a large range of birds and animals. In June there will be bluebells and pink campion flowers along the path edge and you may be lucky enough to hear a woodpecker.

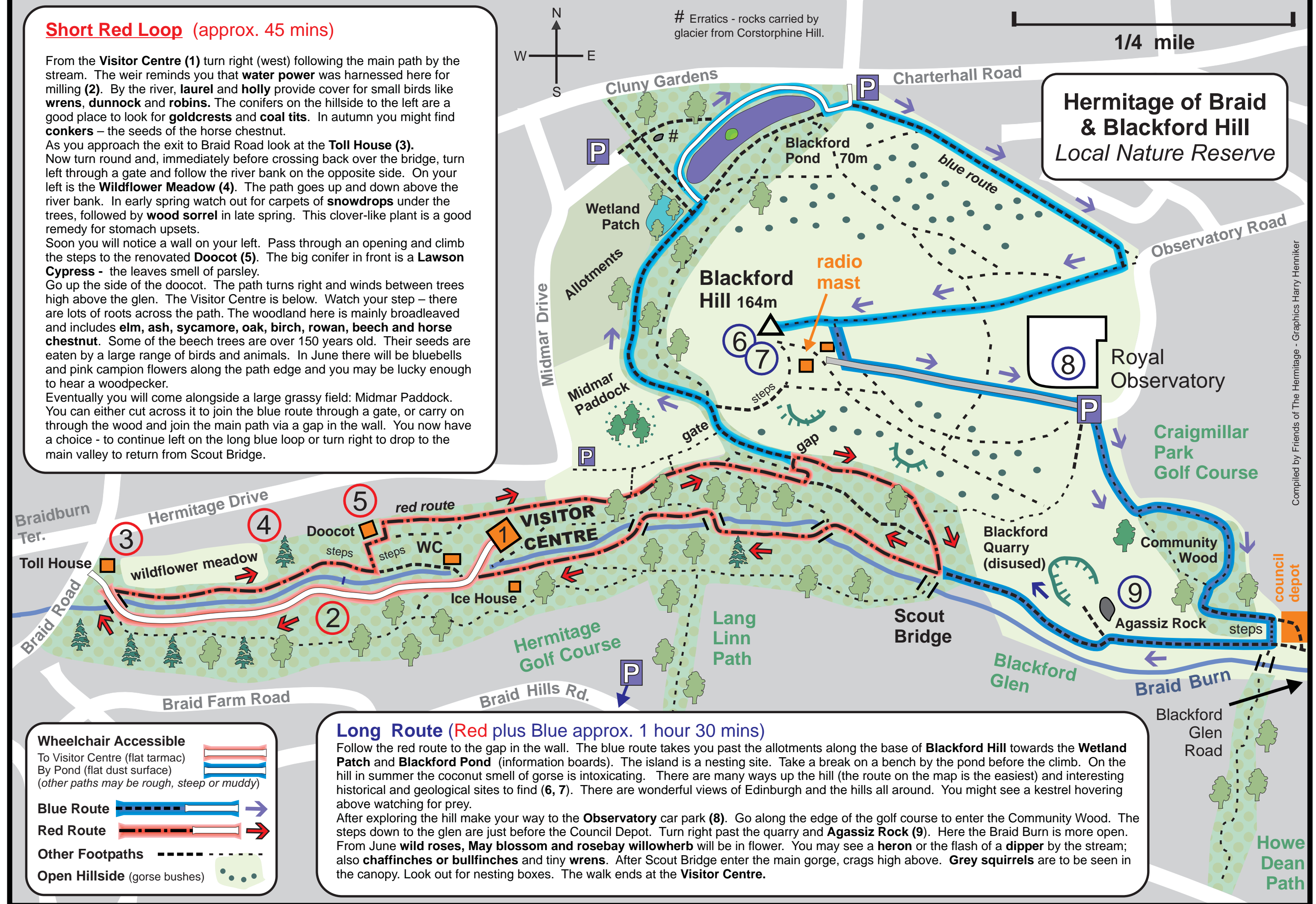
Eventually you will come alongside a large grassy field: Midmar Paddock. You can either cut across it to join the blue route through a gate, or carry on through the wood and join the main path via a gap in the wall. You now have a choice - to continue left on the long blue loop or turn right to drop to the main valley to return from Scout Bridge.





Erratics - rocks carried by glacier from Corstorphine Hill.

1/4 mile

Hermitage of Braid & Blackford Hill Local Nature Reserve




Wheelchair Accessible

To Visitor Centre (flat tarmac) 
By Pond (flat dust surface) 
(other paths may be rough, steep or muddy)

Blue Route 

Red Route 

Other Footpaths 

Open Hillside (gorse bushes) 

Long Route (Red plus Blue approx. 1 hour 30 mins)

Follow the red route to the gap in the wall. The blue route takes you past the allotments along the base of **Blackford Hill** towards the **Wetland Patch** and **Blackford Pond** (information boards). The island is a nesting site. Take a break on a bench by the pond before the climb. On the hill in summer the coconut smell of gorse is intoxicating. There are many ways up the hill (the route on the map is the easiest) and interesting historical and geological sites to find (**6, 7**). There are wonderful views of Edinburgh and the hills all around. You might see a kestrel hovering above watching for prey.

After exploring the hill make your way to the **Observatory** car park (**8**). Go along the edge of the golf course to enter the Community Wood. The steps down to the glen are just before the Council Depot. Turn right past the quarry and **Agassiz Rock (9)**. Here the Braid Burn is more open. From June **wild roses**, **May blossom** and **rosebay willowherb** will be in flower. You may see a **heron** or the flash of a **dipper** by the stream; also **chaffinches** or **bullfinches** and tiny **wrens**. After Scout Bridge enter the main gorge, crags high above. **Grey squirrels** are to be seen in the canopy. Look out for nesting boxes. The walk ends at the **Visitor Centre**.