

Colin Glen Forest Park



Route description

Follow the Collin River up a beautiful wooded glen, on surfaced paths with some steep hills.

Distance

4 miles 6.5 km.

Average Time

1 hr 30 mins – 1 hr 40 mins.

Access

By bus - Metro Services: 10 C, D, E, F.

By car - Car park and entrance on the Stewartstown Road, signposted from Dunmurry and Lisburn.

Trail Route

From the car park go through the pedestrian gate into the park and follow the main path past the red suspension bridge, keeping the Collin River **(1)** on your right.

Following the Hannahstown trail, (red waymarking arrows), keep left at the next two junctions, climbing uphill through the woodland **(2)**.

Views will open up across the glen, the hills above and the city below. On your left is a former landfill site **(3)**.

At the next junction turn right down the 39 steps to a wildlife pond. **(4)**

Take the path to the left, following it until you reach the Tri-bridge. Cross to the northern bank of the river and turn right.

This leads you to the Cantilever Bridge under the Glen Road into Upper Collin Glen **(5)**, a National Trust property. Follow the gravel path right then left through the woodland to the wooden bridge. At this point retrace your steps back to the Tri-bridge.

Follow the path to the left of the bridge back down the glen. Pass the Weir Bridge and Gamekeeper's Bridge and return down the glen back to the car park.

Trail 09

History

The idea for the restoration of Colin Glen, formerly known as McCance's Glen, was initiated in the early 1980s by St Oliver Plunkett Environmental Committee. The Department of the Environment (DOE) then announced that sections of the glen were to be acquired to develop a linear park. The Colin Glen Trust was formed in 1990 to manage and maintain the park.

Things of Interest

Collin River (1)

This river runs from Black Mountain to the Lagan. It was once heavily polluted from the linen bleaching, quarrying and bacon curing factories. Today it is in much better condition, sporting salmon fry, brown trout, dippers and otters.

Woodland (2)

The glen contains over 50 acres of broadleaf woodland and 47 acres of recently planted reclaimed industrial land. Tree species include oak, ash, aspen and alder. There are wild flowers such as wood anemone, bluebell, wild garlic and wood speedwell and many birds and mammals, including red squirrels.

Weir Bridge and Aqueduct (3)

This weir and aqueduct (or mill race) were once

used to harness the river's power to drive machinery in the nearby Suffolk Road Linen Mill.

Wildlife Pond (4)

This was originally associated with McGladdery's brickworks which operated in the glen until the 1960s. Today it is a haven for wildlife and is used for educational visits.

Landfill Site (5)

Like most of the glen this site has been cleaned up, creating a more attractive and healthy place for people and wildlife.

Upper Collin Glen (6)

This area has not suffered the same level of environmental degradation as the Lower Glen and therefore retains its mature woodland and rich ground flora.

Look out for

- red squirrels, particularly in the upper parts of the glen.
- dippers flying along the river.
- wild flowers in spring, woodland fungi in autumn.

For more information visit the Colin Glen Visitor Centre.