

Geowalks: Isle of Rum Monday 22 to Friday 26 May 2017

The wild Isle of Rum is world famous, as an eroded volcano and nature reserve. This was the site of a major volcanic activity around 60 million years ago; the rocks now visible at the surface were mostly formed underground, and are an interesting and confusing hodgepodge of different types of igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks, giving a glimpse of the power and complexity of the volcanic activity.

We will explore the wild interior of Rum, including the slopes of the Rum Cuillin. This is rough terrain, but the main features of the story can be appreciated in day walks from Kinloch, with some extensions for the keen and the fit and an optional sail. We will explore the slopes of Hallival (722m) and the low-lying centre of the island, possibly extending to the west to Guirdil or Harris (with round-trip distances of over 20 km).



Outline Programme – subject to weather and the interests of the group

Monday 22 May: Depart Mallaig 10.15am, arrive Rum at lunchtime. We will settle in at our accommodation and then take a short walk around Kinloch.

Tuesday: We will climb towards Coire Dubh, going from the ancient sandstones of the north of Rum across the ring fault and into the volcanic centre. We will visit the famous layered intrusions of the Rum Cuillin, with views of the Small Isles and beyond (weather permitting!). We can explore the complicated margin of the volcanic centre.

Wednesday: A visit to the centre of Rum, taking a good track westwards from Kinloch. We can explore features of the central intrusion. If the conditions are good, we can extend the day by walking towards Harris on the southwest coast, or drop down into the Guirdil glen to find samples of bloodstone on the beach.

Thursday: If the weather and sea conditions allow, we will circumnavigate Rum on the ocean-going yacht *Selkie*. For anyone who enjoys being on the water, this will be an unforgettable experience both in terms of the boat and the scenery, giving us a chance to see some of the less accessible parts of Rum's geological story. This is an optional trip, though, and you may prefer to spend a more relaxing day on land!

Friday 26 May: A final day to visit any remaining places of interest, for example exploring the sandstones and ring fault along the path to Dibidil on the east coast. Depart Rum around 4pm for Mallaig.

Details

Accommodation & Catering

We will be based at the Rum Bunkhouse in Kinloch, a community-run hostel in small rooms (maximum 4 people). The rooms are comfortable and bedding is supplied.

Food will be self-catering, which is a bit of a challenge! We will organise ourselves into small groups to do this; you can take some food with us and there is a small but well-stocked shop.

Cost

Cost is £280 per person; this includes your guide (Angus Miller), and four nights accommodation in the bunkhouse. Alternatively you can camp, book a camping cabin or B&B for a reduced fee of £180. The *Selkie* boat trip will cost £40 per person. Please indicate on booking if you are sure that you do not want to take this option (it should be possible to make a final decision to participate on the day).

Level of fitness required

There's no doubt that the terrain on Rum is tough, and we will often be walking on rough, wet ground. You will need to be reasonably fit and used to rough walking, but the pace will be moderate with plenty of stops. There will be some flexibility in the programme, allowing you to opt out if you wish.

Transport to Mallaig

Car sharing to Mallaig is encouraged, I can put you in touch with others who are interested in sharing. Mallaig is easily accessible by public transport, at the end of the famous west coast railway, but this involves an overnight stay in Mallaig before the trip.

Booking Conditions

To book, please send a deposit of £50 per person (cheques payable to 'Geowalks'), or ask for details to make a bank transfer. Full payment is due four weeks in advance. If you cancel your booking, refunds will be at my discretion and will usually only be available if someone else takes your place. Travel insurance is recommended – many insurers offer cheap UK-only cover.

In the unlikely event of the trip being cancelled, you will be informed immediately and receive a full refund.

Recommended Reading

Rum and the Small Isles, in the SNH Landscape Fashioned by Geology Series, 2004. ISBN 1-85397-370.

A geological excursion guide to Rum, CH Emeleus & VR Troll, 2009, ISBN 978-1-905267-22-4.

Volcanoes and the Making of Scotland, Brian Upton, 2015. Dunedin Academic Press, ISBN 1-903765-40-4.



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