Lake Vyrnwy

This mountain bike route of 18.5 miles is set in the beautiful area around [Lake Vyrnwy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Vyrnwy) in northern Powys, Mid Wales. It uses tracks through the forest to the East of the lake for a mixture of rocky doubletrack and grassy, muddy trails. The route is still rideable in the worst of weather as the grassy and muddy parts are mainly used for the descents.

1.Start from the car park by the wooden sculpture park at the bottom of the Vyrnwy dam [(GR018190)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=301830&y=319037&z=120&sv=301830,319037&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=853&ax=301830&ay=319037&lm=0). Leave the car park using the entrance lane and climb to a junction by [The Old Barn Café](http://www.oldbarncafe.com/Pages/default.aspx). Turn left to a junction by the telephone box. Go straight ahead along the dead end lane to leave the village. After a while bear left over a bridge then at the next two junctions turn right to climb steeply up the tarmac. At the top follow the lane right and descend to the next junction. Go straight on to climb the rocky double track for a short distance. After reaching the crest go straight on for a long, fast double track descent through the trees. Continue descending straight ahead until the track reaches a junction leading to a lane. Go left around the hairpin and descend to the lane [(GR013175)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=301328&y=317571&z=120&sv=301328,317571&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=301328&ay=317571&lm=0).

2. Go straight on along the lane all the way to a bridge across the River Vyrnwy. Cross the bridge then climb off to the left to a junction. Continue straight on along the lane to the next junction at the top of the climb [(GR030177)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=303043&y=317706&z=120&sv=303043,317706&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=303043&ay=317706&lm=0). Turn hard right and climb the single track lane. This lane bears left and steepens before reaching a junction at the top. Bear left on the lane to a three-way junction a short distance later [(GR030174)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=303008&y=317431&z=120&sv=303008,317431&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=303008&ay=317431&lm=0). Turn left and climb the rocky double track into the trees. At the junction at the top go straight on and descend to a lane at the bottom. Turn right on the lane and ride a short way to the next junction on a hairpin in the main road [(GR035182)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=303548&y=318231&z=120&sv=303548,318231&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=303548&ay=318231&lm=0).

3. Bear left and descend the main road into Llanwddyn. After passing some buildings on the right the road goes across a small stream and directly after comes to a junction with a track on the right, just before reaching a road sign [(GR033189)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=303318&y=318941&z=120&sv=303318,318941&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=303318&ay=318941&lm=0). Turn right down this track and go past a line of garages on the left. At the junction just after the garages take the right hand track to ride by the stream. Continue straight on to a small ford through the stream, on the right [(GR036191)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=303613&y=319116&z=120&sv=303613,319116&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=303613&ay=319116&lm=0).

4. Go across the stream then climb the singletrack into the trees. At the next junction turn right and climb fire track. The track soon goes through a left hand bend then climbs to a junction at the top [(GR141192)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=304073&y=319201&z=120&sv=304073,319201&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=304073&ay=319201&lm=0). Go straight ahead then descend bearing left to the next junction. Keep left and continue descending to a junction at the bottom, where then main track turns left [(GR043198)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=304373&y=319848&z=120&sv=304373,319848&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=626&ax=304373&ay=319848&lm=0). Go straight on to follow the track up the valley on a long, gradual climb of about two miles. Continue climbing the track straight ahead until the track turns left through a dip and comes to a T-junction [(GR063210)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=306353&y=320996&z=120&sv=306353,320996&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=306353&ay=320996&lm=0).

5. Turn right and climb the rocky double track to the next junction [(GR067211)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=306683&y=321126&z=120&sv=306683,321126&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=306683&ay=321126&lm=0). Take the track on the left for a short, steep section that soon comes to the top of the hill. At the top continue ahead along the track, which soon goes through a left then right hand bend around some trees. *Take note of the bridleway sign on the left of the right hand bend for the return leg of the route*. After the right hand bend follow the track straight on to a barn on the right. Immediately after the barn turn right through the gate to follow the signed bridleway [(GR076216)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=307668&y=321581&z=120&sv=307668,321581&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=307668&ay=321581&lm=0).

6. Go straight ahead through the enclosure by the barn and through the next gate leading into a field. Go across the grass and bear left to stay by the trees on the left. Go through two gates, directly after which drop left off the field and follow the grassy double track between the trees. Keep following the track straight ahead and go over a gentle rise before descending to the next gate. Go through the gate and descend across a field, following the line of big trees to a gate on the other side. After this gate follow the grassy track ahead along a line of trees on the right. Continue ahead through the next gates following the double track that becomes rocky before reaching a gate by a building on the left at the bottom. Go straight on and follow the track down to a junction with a lane [(GR095223)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=309478&y=322351&z=120&sv=309478,322351&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=309478&ay=322351&lm=0).

7. Turn left and climb the steep lane. After the climb flattens off go straight on at the crossroad and descend to the next junction with a tarmac lane on the left, at a little crest in the lane [(GR099232)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=309873&y=323201&z=120&sv=309873,323201&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=309873&ay=323201&lm=0). Turn sharp left and climb the potholed lane through the trees. Continue climbing straight ahead at the two large junctions on the way up the main track, which after some time changes from tarmac to gravel, all the way to a gate at the top [(GR077217)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=307773&y=321701&z=120&sv=307773,321701&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=307773&ay=321701&lm=0). Go through this gate then, a short distance later, go past the previously visited barn on the left.  After the barn follow the track past the trees on the left to a stream crossing where the trail bears left [(GR074214)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=307403&y=321461&z=120&sv=307403,321461&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=307403&ay=321461&lm=0).

8. Leave the rocky track and go straight ahead, in the direction of the *(previously mentioned)* bridleway sign, to cross the low section of the field. Climb gently along the very vague grassy track, then when a fence and gate appears ahead aim slightly high, to the right hand side. As you pass the start of the fence, now on the left, bear right through the field where the climb steepens and the track becomes a little more defined.  Follow the line of the fence on the left to a junction with a rocky double track. Go straight across the double track and through a gate leading into the next grassy field. Climb the vague singletrack through the field, keeping to the fence on the left. Near the top of the climb bear slightly right to skirt the tall grass and bog until reaching a fence in front at the top. Turn left and go a short way across the boggy ground at a small gate on the right and large gate ahead in the corner of the field [(GR066216)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=306678&y=321651&z=120&sv=306678,321651&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=306678&ay=321651&lm=0).

9. Go right through the small gate then follow the track straight ahead into the trees. After a short gentle climb the track descends on a fast, wide and rocky forest track. At the end of the descent turn right through a ford then go up a steep climb. At the top of the climb bear left to a junction with a double track [(GR061219)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=306103&y=321926&z=120&sv=306103,321926&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=306103&ay=321926&lm=0). Turn right and descend the track to a junction with a lane. Turn left then, almost immediately, go right through a small gate. Follow the singletrack bridleway that climbs gently in a small gully to a three-way junction [(GR058227)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=305868&y=322713&z=120&sv=305868,322713&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=626&ax=305868&ay=322713&lm=0). Turn left for a steep and tricky descent in a bigger gully. The track is generally muddy at the top and bouldery at the bottom with a covering of leaves and twigs. At the forked junction 2/3rds of the way down go right and keep descending. At the house at bottom bear right on the lane, then cross a stream before reaching a junction in the village of Hirnant [(GR050229)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=305063&y=322906&z=120&sv=305063,322906&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=305063&ay=322906&lm=0).

10. Turn left on the road and ride a short way to the next junction by a house. Turn left and follow the lane across the River Hirnant then up the opposite side of the valley. Continue up this steep tarmac climb to a four-way junction at the top [(GR042217)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=304253&y=321756&z=120&sv=304253,321756&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=304253&ay=321756&lm=0). Turn right onto the double track leading into the forest. At the next junction turn left. Climb this track and bear left at the next junction, with a grassy track on the right. At the next junction a short distance later turn right and climb steeply under the cover of the trees. The trail soon comes out into daylight again and eventually finishes at another junction [(GR033210)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=303358&y=321061&z=120&sv=303358,321061&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=303358&ay=321061&lm=0). Turn right, then at the next junction a short distance later turn left. Climb gently straight ahead on the wide fire track, going past the next two junctions with trails on the right, to a gate at the top on the edge of the forest [(GR029207)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=302928&y=320701&z=120&sv=302928,320701&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=302928&ay=320701&lm=0).

11. Go through the gate and take in the great views across Lake Vyrnwy before descending the grassy double track to a forked junction. Take either track as they rejoin in about 30m, the left hand one is slightly steeper. After they rejoin bear right and descend to a gate. Go through the gate then turn left, staying high of the puddle, to go past a track climbing off on the right. After the corner follow the grassy singletrack as it straightens out and descends down the right hand side of a gully. This opens up onto a fast grassy trail that goes through a few bends but heads generally straight on. The trail eventually comes to a wide gravel track and gate at the back of the Lake Vyrnwy Hotel [(GR022199)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=302163&y=319876&z=120&sv=302163,319876&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=302163&ay=319876&lm=0).

12. Go straight on through the gate then across the back of the Hotel to the car park on the opposite side. Take the steep singletrack that drops into the trees just to the right of the car park. This short descent bears left halfway down before finishing at a road [(GR020195)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=302018&y=319501&z=120&sv=302018,319501&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=819&ax=302018&ay=319501&lm=0). Turn left onto the road then at the next junction shortly after turn right and go over the top of the Vyrnwy dam. At the junction on the opposite side of the dam turn left and descend past [Artisans café](http://www.artisans-lakevyrnwy.co.uk/), on the left, to a junction with a lane on the left directly by The Old Barn Café. Turn left and descend the lane back to the wood sculpture car park to complete the ride.