

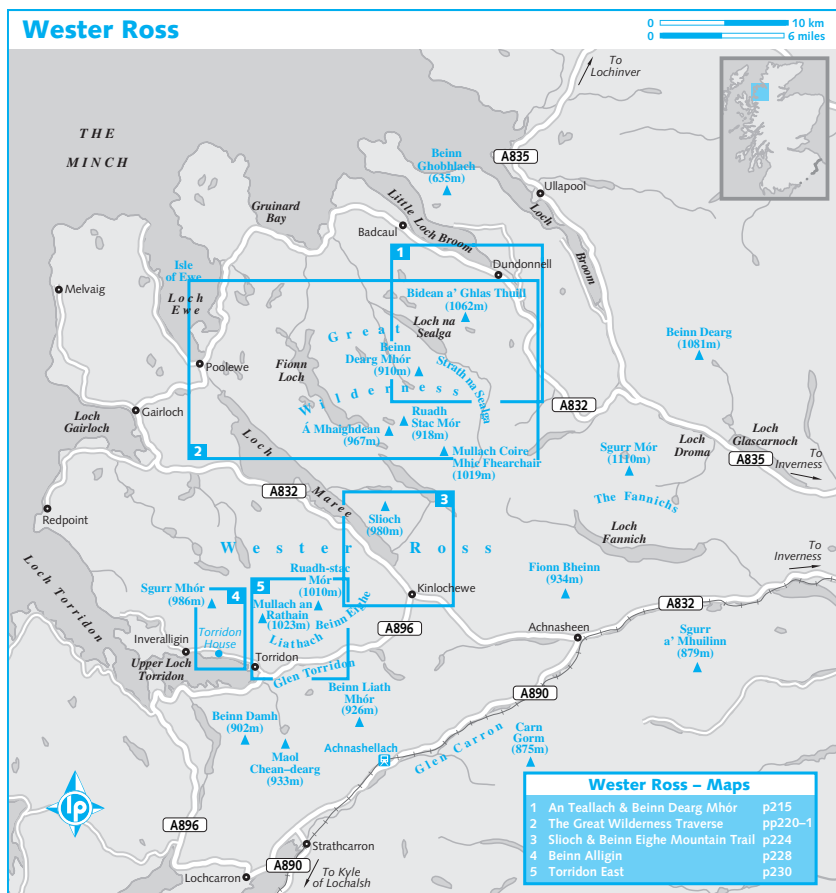
Wester Ross

Wester Ross is heaven for hillwalkers: a remote and starkly beautiful part of the Highlands with lonely glens and lochs, an intricate coastline of rocky headlands and white-sand beaches, and some of the finest mountains in Scotland. If you are lucky with the weather, the clear air will provide rich colours and great views from the ridges and summits. In poor conditions the remoteness of the area makes walking a much more serious proposition. Whatever the weather, the walking can be difficult, so this is no place to begin learning mountain techniques. But if you are fit and well equipped, Wester Ross will be immensely rewarding – and addictive.

The walks described here offer a tantalising taste of the area's delights and challenges. An Teallach's pinnacle-encrusted ridge is one of Scotland's finest ridge walks, spiced with some scrambling. Proving that there's much more to walking in Scotland than merely jumping out of the car (or bus) and charging up the nearest mountain, Beinn Dearg Mhór, in the heart of the Great Wilderness, makes an ideal weekend outing. This Great Wilderness – great by Scottish standards at least – is big enough to guarantee peace, even solitude, during a superb two-day traverse through glens cradling beautiful lochs. Slioch, a magnificent peak overlooking Loch Maree, offers a comparatively straightforward, immensely scenic ascent. In the renowned Torridon area, Beinn Alligin provides an exciting introduction to its considerable challenges, epitomised in the awesome traverse of Liathach, a match for An Teallach in every way. And to recover from this expenditure of adrenaline, we recommend the gentle walk to one of Scotland's finest corries, Coire Mhic Fhearchair.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Revelling in the scrambling along the lofty ridges of **An Teallach** (p214) and **Liathach** (p229)
- Losing track of time in the remote and spectacular **Great Wilderness** (p218)
- Looking for hobbits in the Caledonian woodland of the **Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve** (p225)
- Being knocked sideways by the views of Scotland's west coast from atop the **Horns of Alligin** (p228)



INFORMATION

Maps & Books

OS Travel – Road 1:250,000 map No 3 *Western Scotland* provides an excellent topographic overview of the region.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club's *Hillwalkers' Guide North-West Highlands* by Dave Broadhead, Alec Keith and Ted Maden is exhaustive (but not exhausting!) and the best source of comprehensive background information. For more specialised enlightenment about the landscape you can't do better than *Northwest Highlands, A Landscape Fashioned by Geology*, published by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the British Geological Survey. It's well illustrated and anything but dry and ac-

ademic. Straightforward walking guides include *Skye & the North West Highlands* by John Brooks and Neil Wilson, which describes a range of low-level and easy routes in the area.

Information Sources

VisitScotland (☎ 0845 225 5121; www.visithighlands.com) is the main resource for accommodation information and reservations in the area.

Traveline Scotland (☎ 0870 608 2608; www.travelinescotland.com) provides full timetable details. Alternatively, the **Highland Council** (☎ 01463 702660; public.transport@highland.gov.uk) *Wester Ross & Lochalsh* public transport timetable is a handy reference.