



Rotary Club of
Inverness Culloden

Walk No 1 - Merkinch Local Nature Reserve - Approx 1.25/2.0 miles

An easy walk along the sea wall to the canal and return via woods and open land.

Views north across the Beaully Firth to the Black Isle and east to the A9 Kessock bridge and Moray Firth.

**Directions – park at turning circle at end of Kessock Road, South Kessock.
(OS sheet 26 - ref NH 655472). Also served by bus (no 14) from the city centre.**

1. From the turning circle (A on the map) go through the gate opposite the old ferry terminal office and ramp and head south-west along the path on the sea wall.

Points of interest: (a) wintering birds such as knot, dunlin, curlew and redshank when tide is out; bottlenose dolphins at high tide.

(b) the sea wall constructed at the same time as the Caledonian Canal – c. 1822.

2. In approximately 1/3 of a mile (500 metres) you come to point B which is the start of the timber walkway crossing the tidal inland pool to your left. To your right you will see the outfall pipe draining the pool. Do not go on the walkway yet but continue along the sea wall path taking care when you cross the railway line. To the left is Inverness and to the right Beaully.

Points of interest: (a) after crossing the railway (built in 1862) look to your right and you will see the remains of a crane foundation in the water; this was used to off-load coal from boats (which entered the tidal pool under the railway bridge to your right) on to a local train which ran on the 'puggy' railway line connecting to a nearby distillery, now no longer there.

3. Continue to point C, the towpath of the Caledonian Canal. At this point you have walked approx. ½ mile (800m). From here you may turn left (SE) and visit the Muirtown Basin or turn right (NW) and walk to the end of the canal to the first of two sea locks at Clachnaharry.

These two additions will add approximately ¾ mile (1200m) to your walk.

Points of interest: (a) the canal was built by Thomas Telford and opened in 1822.

(b) grey heron can often be seen feeding in the tidal pools.

4. Return to point C and retrace your route back across the railway line to point B where you now turn right down the timber walkway. Follow the walkway across the tidal pool then the footpath till you reach the far end of the trees and open playing fields – point D on the map.

Points of interest: (a) animals (roe deer), plants (orchids in June), butterflies and birds.

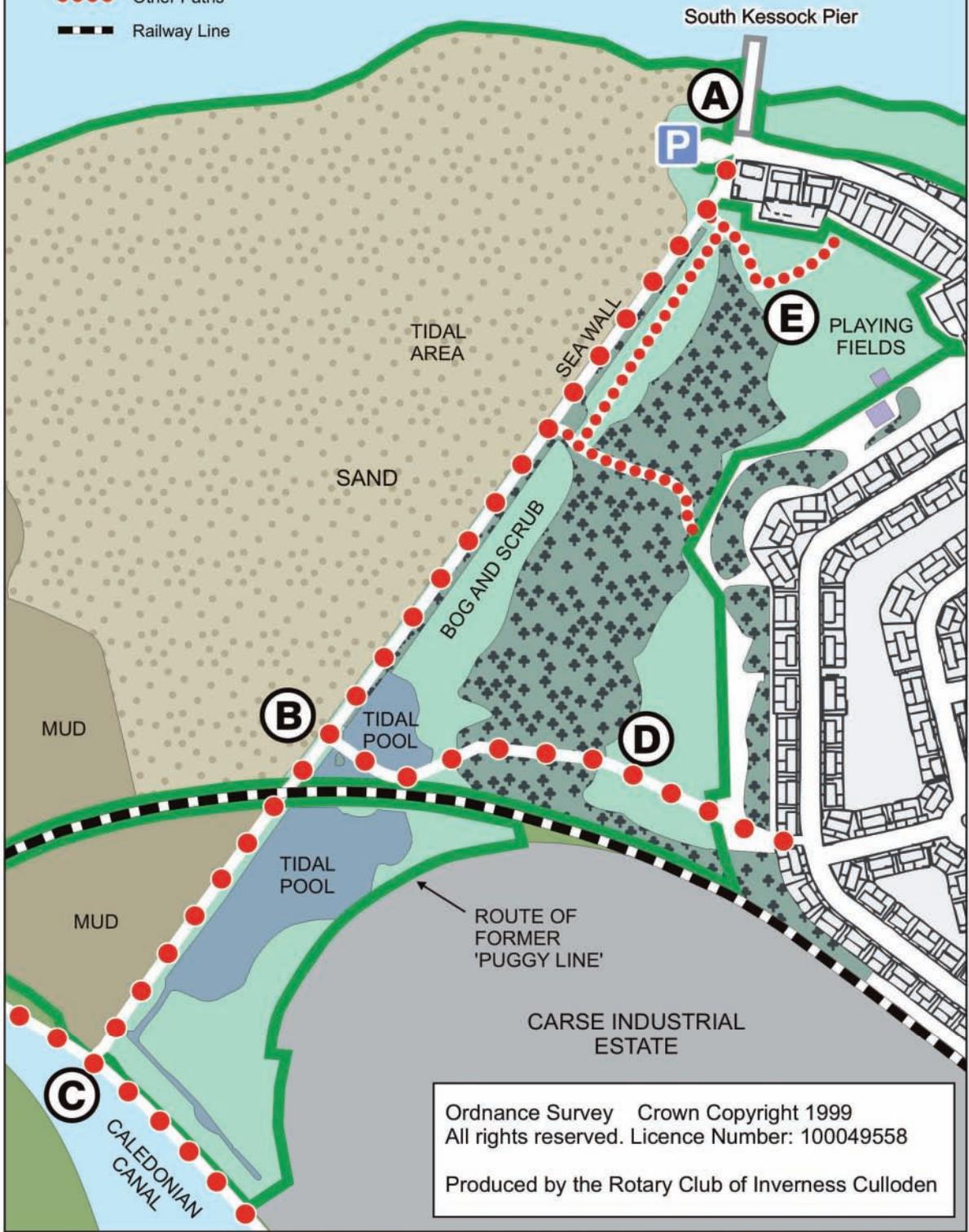
5. At point D turn left along the edge of the trees till you reach point E then follow the track towards the left hand end of the houses till you reach the car park once more. (Mid-way between D and E alternative paths can be followed through the trees back to the car park).

**For more information on the LNR go to www.merkinchlnr.org.uk
Find out more about Inverness Culloden Rotary Club at www.cullodenrotary.co.uk**

PLEASE RETURN CARD AFTER USE

Merkinch Local Nature Reserve

-  Nature Reserve Boundary
-  Built Paths
-  Other Paths
-  Railway Line



Ordnance Survey Crown Copyright 1999
All rights reserved. Licence Number: 100049558
Produced by the Rotary Club of Inverness Culloden