



Access Point: Ballyronan Marina



The newly upgraded Ballyronan Marina is a picturesque facility boasting over 70 berths, slipways, play and picnic areas, a restaurant and full camping amenities. Ballyronan is known for its pubs and live music. The friendly village of Ballyronan Wood has a pleasant walkway along the shore of Lough Neagh. The Marina is home to the Maid of Antrim - one of the oldest wooden-hulled passenger vessels in Northern Ireland. She was built on the Clyde in 1963 and has since been restored to her original condition and now leaves from Ballyronan on regular tours.

Look out for:

- Butterflies, along the shore, including ringlet, meadow brown and orange-tip.
- Scamps, diving ducks with a resemblance to tufted ducks. Males have black heads, females have black and a black flank. Females are brown, with tall. Characters include white patches around the base of the bill.



Male Scamp



Orange-tip butterfly

Access Point: Battery Harbour



Male Tufted Duck

At Washing Bay look out for:

- Rare plants, including Irish lady's tresses
- Historically recorded in the Washing Bay area.
- Tufted ducks, medium-sized diving ducks, smaller than mallard. They are black on the head, neck, breast and black and white on the sides. They have a small crest and a yellow eye.

Access Point: Washing Bay



Male Goldeneye

Look out for:

- Irish Hares, which frequent the shoreline, especially where there is unimproved grassland, hedgerows and patches of wet woodland.
- Goldeneyes, medium sized diving ducks. Males look black and white with a greenish black head and a circular white patch in front of the yellow eye. Females are smaller, and are mottled grey with a chocolate brown head.

Access Point: Kinnego Marina



Male Pochard

At Kinnego Marina look out for:

- White-clawed crayfish, which occasionally can be spotted in the areas near to Ballinerry River on the west shore of the Lough. Ducks, smaller than a pochard, stocky diving mallard. The male is pale grey with a rusky red head and neck, and a black breast and tail. The female is brown with a dark head and blotchy cheeks.

Access Point: Rams Island



Ram's Island jetty

At Antrim Lough Shore Park look out for:

- Bats. Several species are found hunting over Lough Neagh in late evening. One of these is the Daubentons Bat (also known as the Water Bat) which likes to hunt very close to the surface of the water.
- Great crested grebes, living here are delightfully elegant water birds with ornate head plumes. They have an elaborate courtship display in which they rise out of the water and shake their heads. Very young grebes often ride on their parents' back.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

In the unlikely event of an Emergency use the following numbers: Police and Ambulance 999 or 112 (all phones) and ask for the Coast Guard.

* Note that mobile phone reception is unreliable in many areas.

SAFETY

Canoeing is an adventure sport and as such should be treated with respect. If you are new to the sport, it is advisable to join an organised club where expert coaching can be provided. (Details of clubs and courses can be found at www.canl.org.uk)

When taking part in canoeing consider the following safety advice:

1. Be aware of the limitations and needs of larger craft that are restricted to deep water channels.
2. Be aware that large sand barges operate in Lough Neagh, especially near sand quays.
3. Be aware that seaplanes may operate on the Lough.
4. Wear adequate buoyancy in the form of a personal life jacket or buoyancy aid. Canoe buoyancy should be sufficient to keep the canoe afloat if you capsize.
5. It is not recommended to canoe alone - three boats is the minimum required for most rescues.
6. Remember! A canoe may be difficult to see from a larger craft so carry a whistle.
7. You do not need to be a strong swimmer but you will need the water confidence to deal with a capsized boat and get ashore safely.
8. Wear adequate clothing. Prolonged immersion in cold water leads to hypothermia - hypothermia can kill.
9. Consider attending a recognised training course, which explores skills, safety and environmental issues.
10. Carry and know how to use a map and compass.
11. Lough Neagh can become rough in strong winds - carrying rafting poles is a sensible precaution (rafted canoes are more stable in rough conditions).
12. Leave details of your Journey with a responsible adult.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Tourist Information Centres/Accommodation:

Antrim	T: +44 (0) 28 9442 8331
Lisburn	T: +44 (0) 28 9266 0038
Craigavon	T: +44 (0) 28 3832 2205
Dungannon	T: +44 (0) 28 8776 7259
Cookstown	T: +44 (0) 28 8676 9949
Magherafelt	T: +44 (0) 28 7963 1510
Police - non-emergency:	T: 0845 6008000

Information Updates:

Any changes to the trail that may occur will be updated on our web site as we are made aware of them. Please log on and tell us what's old, what's new and what you thought of the trail!

www.canoeni.com

CAAN:
NITB:
www.discovernorthernireland.com

Acknowledgements: Photography: Alan Pentland, Boyd McClurg, John Doherty, Think Studio
Design: g2 design

Disclaimer:
The information on this guide may not be 100% accurate - It is designed to be used in conjunction with an OSNI 1:50,000 map. The publishers, authors and contributors can accept no responsibility for any loss, injury or inconvenience sustained by any person as a result of information or advice given in this guide.

canoe TRAILS

Finding freedom in Northern Ireland on the

Lough Neagh Canoe Trail

LOUGH NEAGH IS THE UNITED KINGDOM'S LARGEST INLAND LAKE WITH A SHORELINE OF OVER 90 MILES/150KM. PADDLERS CAN EXPLORE THE NUMEROUS BAYS AND INLETS AROUND THE LOUGH OR THE VAST EXPANSE OF OPEN WATER WHILST OBSERVING A DIVERSITY OF WILDLIFE AND HISTORICAL SITES



Lough Neagh is the United Kingdom's largest inland lake with a shoreline of over 90miles/150km. The Lough Neagh Trail links the Blackwater Trail, which enters at the southern end, and the Lower Bann Trail, which exits at the northern end. Combining these trails it is possible to paddle from the southern part of Northern Ireland to the Atlantic Ocean on the north coast.

In the days when waterways provided a means of transporting goods Lough Neagh was an important hub which linked the Lagan, the Blackwater and Ulster and Newry canals. Today the main water based transport is by sand barges which remove sand from the lough bed and transfer it to quays on the northern and eastern shores.

A unique and diverse shoreline together with the vastness of open water provides for the novice and experienced paddlers, while the rich wild life - the lough being an important conservation area- and numerous historical sites ensures that the paddlers have a fulfilling experience.

The trail can be started at any access point and can be completed in full or in part. It can be a serious undertaking as large waves build up on the vast expanse of open water during windy periods, challenging the most competent paddler.

This guide has been designed for canoeists by canoeists. It provides practical advice on everything required for an enjoyable experience including details of camp sites, access points, phone numbers etc.

Happy paddling!

Access Point: Cranfield



Cranfield Church

On the shores of Lough Neagh at Churchtown Point lie the ruins of an ancient Irish Church and St Olcan's Holy Well. Tradition states that the well was blessed with healing properties by St Olcan who, it is reputed, lies buried at Cranfield's 13th Century church in earth brought from Rome. The well's fine spring water and amber coloured crystals were believed to protect women during childbirth, men from drowning and homes from fire and burglary. Emigrants to America carried the crystals to protect them from shipwreck.

Look out for:

- Otters, which live around most of the Lough may be sighted in early morning or late evening.
- Coots, which are all-black and larger than their cousin, the moorhen. Their distinctive white beak with 'shield' above earns them the title 'bald'.

Access Point: Antrim Lough Shore Park



Boat at Lough Shore Park

Situated on the shores of Lough Neagh, Antrim Lough Shore Park is an area steeped in history and natural beauty. The Lough Shore Coffee House is open all year round and during the summer months there are a range of events from Summer Bands and Childrens Activities to Boat Trips and the Viking Boat Race on Lough Neagh. A slipway offers free access to the Lough for boats and canoes and camping is available onsite. The Park is within walking distance of Antrim Town and local attractions including Antrim Forum Leisure Centre, Antrim Castle Gardens, Clotworthy Arts Centre and Rea's Wood.

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