Before you go

No public body gives a distance or a time for this walk. By our map it is about 8 km (5 miles) there and back with about 700 metres of climb, and it takes about 3 to 4 hours, more with stops, in poor weather or under snow. Under snow it is a winter mountain: frozen snow and icy steps can last into May, one guide calls crampons and an ice axe essential, and the walk can take twice as long. Most incidents in Killin Mountain Rescue Team's area involve people slipping on hard snow without crampons or losing their way in mist, the team says. No avalanche forecast covers the Ben Lawers range, which is no sign there is no risk here.

Check the mountain forecast, and under snow the snow and avalanche conditions too. Conditions on the hills are often much colder and windier than down by the loch, and the wind can be far stronger on the top than at the car park. Wear good walking boots and carry warm, waterproof clothing, plenty of food and drink, and a torch in case the day runs long. Carry a map and compass and know how to use them, and do not rely only on a phone or GPS. If you have not been trained to use them in poor visibility, be ready to turn back early by a safe route.

The car park is on the minor road that leaves the A827 about five miles east of Killin and climbs over to Glen Lyon. By our map the road is one lane wide, with few places to pass, and one guide warns it is steep in places and can be impassable in winter. The car park is pay and display, and free for the Trust's members: ask the Trust about the charge on 01567 820988. On fine weekends it is often full by 9am. There are no toilets at the start, so plan for Killin or Kenmore. Keep dogs under control: local farmers graze the Trust's hill ground.

After the walk

From the summit most walkers go on to Ben Lawers, down to the bealach and up a steep, loose last climb: a longer day, and not this walk. The name is Gaelic for the grey-green mountain, after the mica-schist rock the hill is made of, and the path passes outcrops of it with garnets in them.

The walk online, with its film and map:
hiddenscotland.com/walks/beinn-ghlas-from-the-ben-lawers-car-park

It starts at the National Trust for Scotland's car park on the Ben Lawers nature reserve, across the road from the path, NN 608 376.

In an emergency, dial 999 and ask for the police, and give a grid reference if you can: the Ordnance Survey's OS Locate app gives one from your phone.

A MUNRO WALK UP

Beinn Ghlas



A HIDDEN SCOTLAND WALK

From the Ben Lawers car park

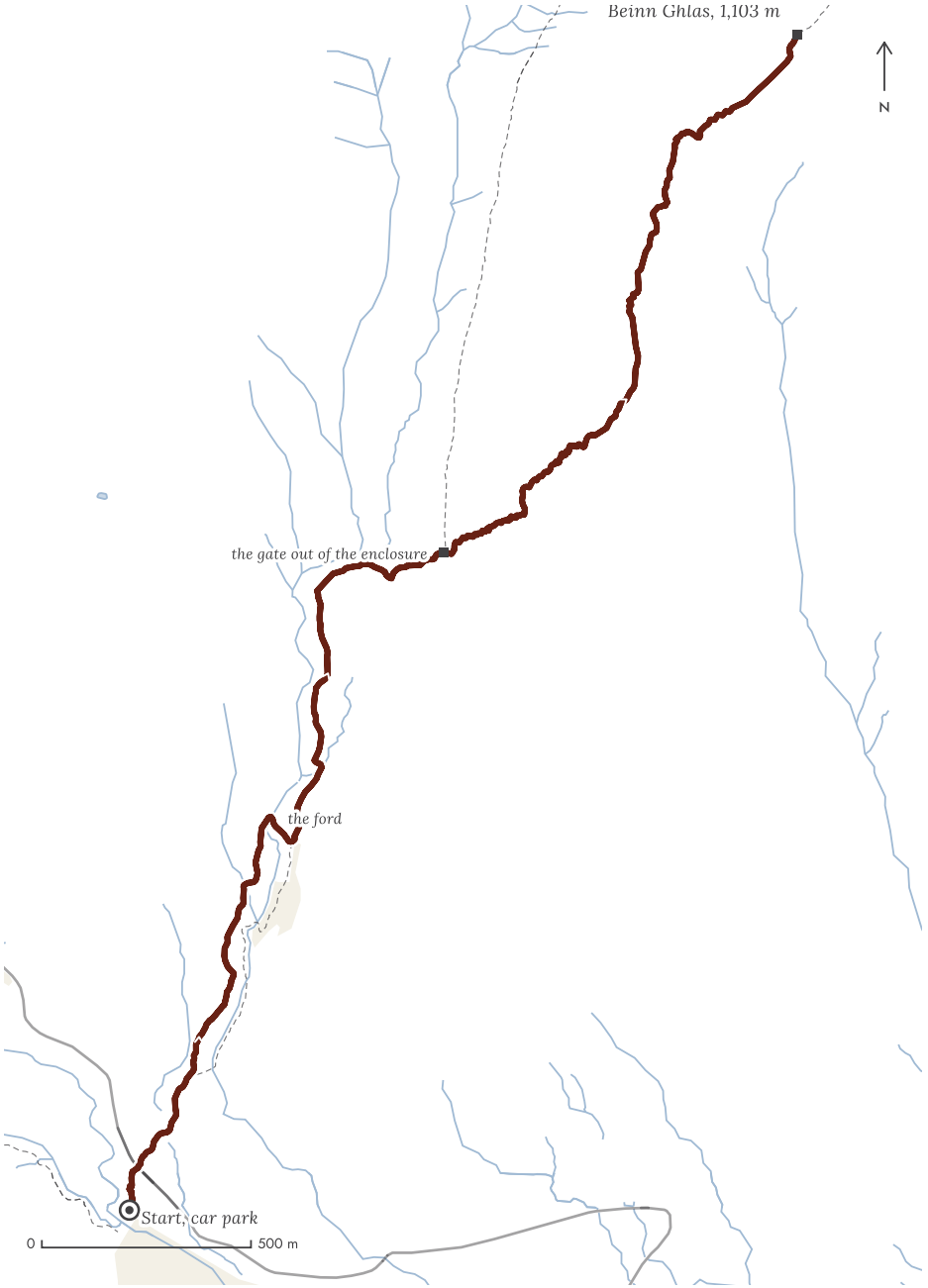
Beinn Ghlas stands above the north shore of Loch Tay, and its summit is 1,103 metres. This is the usual way up, from the National Trust for Scotland's car park on the Ben Lawers nature reserve: through a fenced enclosure and up the Trust's zigzag path on the south-west ridge to the top, and back the same way. The path is steep and eroded, and rocky below the top, and there are no waymarks on the hill: a day for hillwalkers who can find their way with a map and compass.

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The path starts across the road from the car park and runs north over a boardwalk. It climbs beside the Edramucky Burn through a gate into a fenced enclosure. Near the bottom the nature trail goes off over the burn on a bridge: keep on up the main path. By our map it fords the burn about a kilometre up. Burns can rise fast in a day, so after heavy rain the crossing can run high: turn back if it looks unsafe. The mountain plants are fragile, the Trust says, so keep to the path.

Leave the enclosure by the gate at its top and keep right at the junction just beyond it: the path north-west towards Coire Odhar is not this walk. Here the climb begins in earnest, on the zigzag path the Trust built up the south-west ridge to control erosion. The path is broad and worn, its built steps are big, and it grows steeper and rockier as you climb. There are false tops before the summit, and the last stretch below it is rocky.

From the summit you first see Ben Lawers along the ridge. Crags fall away on the north side of the top: in cloud keep to the path, away from the edge. If the cloud is coming down, the wind is rising or anyone is tiring, turn back. Go home the way you came, with more care on the rocky stretch and the big steps below the top.



Up Beinn Ghlas by the zigzag path and back the same way: about 3 to 4 hours.

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