

# Odon & the Giant's Staircase

## Story Trail at Dry Rigg Quarry

Follow in the footsteps of Odon and Lutra on their exciting adventure around Dry Rigg Quarry and Swarth Moor. Meet some of the rare creatures that live there and the magical characters from days gone by that once worked in this usual place.

**Start Point:** Helwith Bridge Car Park

**Trail Length:** 4 miles

**Time Required:** 1.5 hours

**Trail Location:**

Grid reference: SD810694. Nearest postcode: BD24 0EH

Closest towns: Settle 3.7 miles, Ingleton: 9.9 miles



## The Dry Rigg Quarry Story Trail

Millions of years had passed. Wide rivers that once flowed had now gone, leaving behind Dry Rigg. Here, hard gritstone was capped by softer limestone made of shells and corals from ancient seas. Below the gritstone, wet, waterlogged and half-decomposed plants had been squeezed and squashed together to create the high peat land of Swarth Moor.

Quarries that had once supplied limestone for field walls and milk slabs now gave up gritstone for modern roads. Rare plants and magical creatures now made their homes amongst the hills of unwanted stone, and in rocky crevices and high peat bogs.

Odon had lived in the pond from the moment he had hatched as a nymph in its waters. Emerging a few months later, he took to the air as a gold-ringed dragonfly. His shimmering, rainbow-coloured wings hinted of an unknown, magical world.

One day, Odon was gazing into the water when he saw the reflection of a watery dragon staring back at him. 'It is time to leave the pond to visit the past and then give birth to a new future,' a voice called to him. Odon had never seen a dragon before, but he knew deep down that this one was right. He had stayed near the pond for far too long and it was time to spread his rainbow wings.





## 1 Dragonfly Pond



'Hi,' said the otter coolly as she drifted by. 'What a lovely place for a swim. Do you want to play?' She said sliding elegantly out of the water. Odon couldn't believe his eyes when he saw her and he just couldn't resist. Leading the otter back into the water, he hovered above the surface and teased the playful creature. She rolled and snatched at the dragonfly, pretending to catch him. When they were both tired, the little dragonfly settled on the otter's nose whilst she floated on her back in the clear water. 'Have you ever wanted to go adventuring?' enquired Lutra, for that was the otter's name. Odon felt a wobble of nerves and excitement in his tummy. He had always wanted to go beyond the pond but he'd been too comfortable and too scared to leave.

That evening Lutra and Odon agreed to leave the pond. Oxeye daisies waved goodbye to them, sand martins saluted them, and wild strawberries offered their fruit as they left the next morning.

Reaching a small watery outlet, the dragonfly and the otter watched a whirligig beetle spin around on the surface before diving into a pool of crystal-clear water. Tadpoles lay still on the muddy bottom, and a caddis-fly larva stuck out its head to see who was there. Odon remembered how they had provided him with food when he was a young dragonfly nymph. Lutra called out to Odon to join her as she raced ahead, leaping and laughing through the long grass.

What pond creatures can you see in the small pool?



Dragonfly Pond

## 2 A Rare Find

Ophrys had been waiting a very long time to show herself. She had just displayed her unusual petals, ready for a bee to come, when she saw a lolling creature bounce towards her. Whizzing ahead of it was a dragonfly.

Odon spotted a bee flying around underneath him. 'Yum, lunch,' he said to himself as he hovered over it.

'That's odd. Something's not quite right,' he shouted to otter who was afraid of bees and was hiding in the grass. The flower spoke a little rhyme.

Nothing is quite as it seems.  
My flowers looks like honey bees.  
Ophrys Apifera, here I wait  
For a bee to come and pollinate.  
Not so many visit me -  
Extinction threatens now, you see.  
Please Bee careful, please go slow.  
There lots of danger where you go.

Lutra the otter felt sad for the bee orchid. She promised to tell all her friends to spread flower seeds for the bees in future.



Bee Orchid

## 3 The Giant's Staircase

Reached a viewing area, Odon and Lutra gazed at the high, rocky staircase that plunged down into an enormous hole below. Such a big set of stairs, they agreed. A giant MUST live down at the bottom of them.

The little otter shuddered at the thought but Odon, feeling brave, flew out over the jagged stairway to find out more. 'No giant down there!' he reported, laughing loudly. Suddenly, a gust of warm air forced the little dragonfly back onto the land. A dark shadow cast over the friends and spoke.

Within the staircase I make my nest  
Where at night I go to rest.  
From here I fly across the sky  
Patrolling the ground from up high.  
Every danger from there I see.  
It's no place for a dragonfly to be.



The peregrine falcon delivered his warning and was gone. As Odon looked at the rocky stairwell, a deep, echoing explosion rose up from below. 'The giant,' he stuttered. He rushed back to tell Lutra, who was already making her way back to the pond.

What birds can you see nesting in the Giant's Staircase?

## 4 Granny's Toenails

'What was that?' thought Lutra the otter when she heard a noise. Looking down between her big furry paws, she saw some small yellow flowers glaring up at her angrily.

Granny's toenails scowled as a rare, blue, silver-studded butterfly landed gently on her flower and fed on her sugary nectar.

Just then, Odon sped by. Lutra was scampering after him to find out what had scared him so much.

After exchanging their stories about the peregrine falcon, the giant and Granny's toenails, the two friends agreed that they would set off to find out more – after they'd had a small snack back at the pond.

I'm called Granny's toenails or sometimes bird's-claw.  
Don't trample on me or tread with your paw  
Or I'll catch you and scratch you.  
So keep this in mind:  
When you pass by, do please be kind.



**Take pictures of the butterflies fluttering around swarth moor.**

## 5 Dragonfly for Tea

As they walked on, they passed a marshy pond teeming with wildlife. At the edges of it were short, silver-birch trees with crows cackling in them.

A great-crested newt wandered across their path. He flicked out his tongue at Odon and tried to catch him.

'Get back or I'll get you!' snarled Lutra.

The cheeky newt flounced by in its frilly dress, finally plopping into a small pond nearby.

'I'll give you conserved,' muttered Odon.

You can't get me for I'm conserved.  
Endangered species, well deserved.  
If you want a bite, a morsel to eat  
A fish like a trout should be your treat.



## 6 A Ghostly Tombstone

Turning the corner, they saw an old stone sticking out of the moorland in the distance. 'That looks like a tomb stone,' said Lutra and they made their way across the moorland towards it. A rare stonechat was perching on the pointed stone when they arrived – and chat it did!

You better be careful, watch your back.  
Flail and shout and he will attack.  
The ghost comes for his precious peat  
To burn on his fire for winter heat  
Chak, chak, chak, chak,  
Clickety-clack.



'Oy, get away from my peaty patch. I'll burn your bones when you I catch you,' came a voice from the path. The ghost of a man was waving a shovel as he climbed down the bank and headed towards them, but Lutra couldn't move because her paws were stuck deep in the peaty bog.

'That must be the giant,' said Lutra, whose paws were gradually sinking into the peaty mud. Odon was not so sure.

Closer and closer came the ghostly figure. Just as he reached out to swipe her with his shovel, she managed to pull her feet out with a loud slurp! Running for her life, she crossed the bog and leapt onto the path.

Odon counted two, three, four gravestones; they must all belong to different ghost people with different fires.

'Fires! I'll give them fires!' replied otter angrily. 'Look at my fur. It's ruined!'

**Gryke stones not tombstones mark peat areas that once belonged to local people as peat was used to keep their fire burning over winter.**

## 7 The Spirit of Foredale Quarry

Reaching the end of the path, Lutra pushed open a large gate in front of him and entered a grassy field. A loud clanging sound rang out as it slammed shut behind her. 'Careful,' said Odon who was scared the sound might bounce up the hill and then makes its way down the stone staircase and wake up the giant.

Little did they know, they had woken the last spirit of Foredale Quarry on the other side of the hill. The wild beast was now on its way from high up at Foredale's forgotten quarry. Thundering past the quarry cottages, she headed towards them.



## 8 A Frightful Supper

Odon and Lutra were busy hunting for their lunch in the grassy field. Cradling his legs to make a basket trap, Odon zoomed around the pasture catching midges and flies whilst the otter searched under stones looking for a tasty frog. 'Did you hear that? It sounded like thunder?' Odon asked Lutra. The otter hadn't noticed anything unusual. She was too busy wondering whether they were lost. A deep rumbling sound shuddered through the grass. The giant had finally caught up with them!

An enormous snorting creature galloped towards them. Sparks of light shot out from its feet, but something about it didn't seem quite real.

The horse walked gently across the field and led them to a road. Ahead stood a farm. As they made their way towards it, the helpful horse kicked up its hooves and galloped off towards some cottages high up on the hill – and then it disappeared.

'A quarry pony. I once lived here  
At Foredale Quarry then disappeared.  
Powerful steam trains took my place.  
Moving limestone from the rock face.  
The clanging gate called for me with its tone  
I'm here to help you find your way home.'



## 9 Going Home

Climbing into a field full of tall grass and flowers, Lutra bounded around and disappeared into a sea of green. She soon lost her dragonfly friend. Noticing a fenced-off pond, she spotted Odon sitting amongst the reeds. 'Oh! I do miss my own pond,' cried the dragonfly, who was feeling homesick.

Play hide and seek amongst the tall grass.

## 10 Curlew Point

Soon they reached a long, straight, grassy track. A curlew circled overhead and landed close by. The bird pushed its long beak into the ground, looking for insects. When Odon asked how to get back to great pond, the curlew raised its head and pointed its long curved beak as if to show them the way.



## 11 Refreshment Time

Passing by a large building, Odon and Lutra took a drink from a bowl of water and set off along the road. Feeling refreshed, the two friends passed a row of houses and then they saw it – the giant's staircase rising up in the distance with the pond nearby.

'We're home,' they both thought.

## 12 A Magical Reflection

The moon shone brightly as Odon sat by the starlit pond, staring into the water. The little dragonfly noticed his reflection had changed – and this time it was for real. A golden dragon was staring back at him.

Odon had come home, but leaving the familiar pond behind him had changed him forever. The gold, shimmering dragon took to the wind and flew towards the entrance of the quarry. Hovering above the enormous hole below him, he saw tiny men scuttling around like ants moving gritstone from one place to another. He gave a wide smile and laughed to himself. There was no real giant after all!

And Lutra? Well, she left the comfort of the pond and headed east for the river in search of new friends and more adventures.

This project is part of Stories in Stone, a scheme of conservation and community projects concentrated on the Ingleborough area. The scheme was developed by the Ingleborough Dales Landscape Partnership, led by Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.  
For more information visit: [www.storiesinstone.org.uk](http://www.storiesinstone.org.uk)

