



## Loch an Eilein Trail

See this historic island castle from all angles as you stroll through the ancient woodland that surrounds the loch.

### From Loch an Eilein Car Park

5km | 3 miles | Allow 1 - 1.5 hours

### From Farm Shop / The Barn cafe

11km | 6.8 miles | Allow 2 - 3 hours

### A home and a workplace<sup>1</sup>

For hundreds of years, people lived in the forest around Loch an Eilein. Until 1876, the ruin near the white croft building was a lime kiln, and a grain mill once occupied the grassy car park area. When logs were floated down the River Spey to use in shipbuilding, the loch was dammed to create artificial floods.



Loch an Eilein castle

### Now a wildlife wonderland

The landscape around Loch an Eilein supports life of all kinds, and the loch itself grows the occasional monster pike in its depths – some weighing up to 30 lbs (13.5kg)! Ospreys nested here until the early 1900s, enjoying the security of the island. They continue to nest nearby, so you might be lucky enough to spot one soaring overhead.

### Castle history

First built in the 13th century, the castle on the island has been modified many times since. In 1690, Jacobite troops attacked, but the castle remained the safe refuge for local people it had been for hundreds of years. Rising water levels have submerged a causeway that once linked the island to the loch shore.

### Thieves' Road

Thieves' Road, to the north of Loch Gamhna, was used centuries ago by cattle raiders as an access route into Strathspey. In the hope that thieves would spare the main herds, local folk tied a few cows to a tree beside Loch Gamhna, unwittingly naming it in the process.

Photos (left)  
Loch an Eilein © David Lintern  
Crested Tit © Neil McIntyre