

7.5 Middle Fell 4

Images from the walk to the waymarker tree.



Upper: looking northwards, from the beginning of the walk to Middle Fell – seeing the old and new green paths separate and then rejoin as they proceed up the slope. Several trees are ahead, including an obvious large yew, seen at centre; and *lower:* at the separating paths confirm the fine yew itself, to the right, standing amongst boulders at the edge of the Long Crag debris field.



Upper: the pathless bracken is easily traversed, despite the rocky uneven ground, bringing you closer to yew, which is resplendent in a lovely and interesting pose; and *lower:* the partly coalesced canopies of the yew and its partner rowan, defended by the sloping boulder field. Many other yew, rowan and juniper exist on the surrounding slope, singularly or in small associations. The fine yew and rowan are amongst the oldest trees in the area, suggesting their progeny (and that of other trees) are responsible for much of the growth spread across the area.



Upper: enter beneath the yew's canopy into a shaded world of moss and lichen – a sheltering haven for many birds and animals. The trunk and main branches are robust and solid and; and *lower:* from its northeast side, appreciate how the tree's crown has been shaped by the weather and contours to fit snugly into the landscape, minimising its exposure to damaging storms.



Upper: AW's fine yew (and rowan) overlook England's deepest lake, backed by the precipitous crags of The Screes fronting Illgill Head. The tree's association will change over time – with the rowan succumbing to death within a century or so, leaving the yew to continue alone until, perhaps, another partner arises nearby. All trees die, but some live longer than others, creating ever-altering vegetation patterns; and *lower:* neighbouring yew, juniper and native broadleaves clothe the surrounding slopes, spreading their seeds slowly so that new saplings gradually extend the fellside woodlands.