

4.1 Cold Pike 2

Images from the walk to the waymarker tree.



Looking north, across the infant River Duddon, from the iron gate at Wrynose Bottom. With Ulpha Fell to the left, two becks fall from the far upper reaches of Cold Pike/Crinkle Crag – Gaitscale Gill is seen at centre-left, with an unnamed beck adjacent at centre-right. The solitary larch is visible, for those with keen eyes, within a fold of the right-hand beck, at around the lower-mid level.



The broad stoney debris fan of Gaitscale Gill is joined by the equally rock-choked anonymous beck feeding in from the slopes of Cold Pike. The solitary larch stands upslope through the bracken, crouching low at the first major bend of the right-hand beck.



The larch is characterful in many ways, hanging over the beck, having tilted sideways following a partial washout of the beck's bank. The canopy drapes across the tumbling water. Directly at the point of balance and pressure, a large lower limb supports the tree from completely falling, rigidly braced like an elbow, on a massive block mid-stream.



The propping branch, braced against the weight-loading, holds the tree in place. The trunk is covered in lichen and moss, with a clump of dark heather (at upper-right) set in its rough bark. A marvel of natural rebalancing and restructuring.



Upper: from upstream, notice the larch's canopy lying across the beck, almost reaching the far bank, though clear of any physical contact with the ground; and *lower:* from downstream, see how the extended branches have been distributed to bear any weight and wind-loading, effectively draping themselves over the beck and its surrounds. The larch is hunkered down into the landform.