**The Benmore Estate**, to the north of the Holy Loch near Dunoon, was once Campbell hunting grounds. Forest tree plantations began in the 1820s.

In 1849 John Lamont, who had made his fortune as a sugar planter in Trinidad, bought the estate and built *Benmore House*, but died in 1850.

A succession of owners made improvements, notably the American James Piers Patrick who planted the giant sequoia avenue in 1863, and later Greenock sugar refiner James Duncan expanded the estates and added the Puck's Glen path between 1870 and 1889.

In 1889 the Younger family of Edinburgh brewers took over, then in 1924 they gave the estates to the Forestry Commission and the central gardens to the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, which opened the *Younger Botanic Garden* in 1929. It was later renamed the *Benmore Botanic Garden*.
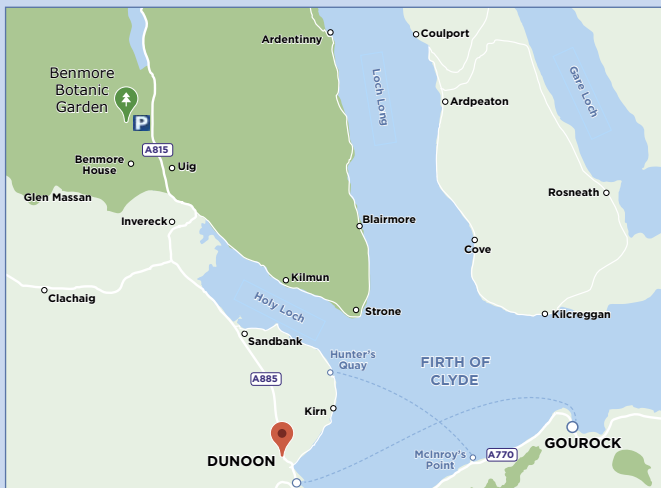
The **Benmore Botanic Garden** car park serves walkers as well as visitors, bus services are more frequent March to October. Access to toilets through Benmore Café & Shop, check **www.benmorecafe.co.uk** for opening dates and times.

Puck's Glen walk

Benmore House, nestled under the wooded slopes of Beinn Mhòr

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Puck's Glen and Massan Loop walks

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We walk every Saturday and Wednesday

www.inverclyderamblers.org.uk

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Puck's Glen and Massan Loop walks

Benmore Botanic Garden

Benmore Café & Shop

Benmore House Outdoor Education Centre

River Massan

Fern House

1. Leave the car park by Pedestrian Exit ('Access to Forest Walks'), carefully cross A815 main road to bus lay-by on the other side. Take the path up to the left, then turn right along the quiet lane and continue south past Uig.

8. Go left at junction and follow path downwards past fallen Silver Fir tree, continue down hill back to bus stop and cross road to car park.

9. From car park, cross the River Eachaig over road bridge and turn left. Continue along the track with the river to your left, passing the end of the Uig footbridge and ford.

Fast but intermittent traffic on the A815

Footbridge to Uig

Uig

Uig Village Hall

11. After following a row of electricity pylons, turn left onto vehicle track.

7. Where forestry track bends uphill, take the narrow path to left (blue inset marker posts for 'Big Tree Walk'). Keep to the right at the next two junctions, pass to the right of stone hut.

The Big Tree Walk, part of the Big Tree Trail, goes through an area of Uig Wood planted between 1820 and 1883

6. Turn right on to forestry track and continue downhill.

Puck's Glen – the Eas Mòr stream (Gaelic for *big waterfall*). In the 1870s the Greenock sugar refiner James Duncan added a path up the ravine beside the stream so that his guests could enjoy the magical atmosphere of the mossy wooded glen.

He named it after the mythological Puck, a character in William Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Upper Puck's Glen – the ethereal atmosphere intensifies in the less frequented upper path up the ravine, continuing beside the stream past more waterfalls.

See towering conifers including Douglas firs, cypresses and silver firs. There are benches, sit quietly and you might see a roe deer or a red squirrel!

Gravelly path, quite steep

Puck's Glen Walk

12. At forest road, turn left for a few metres, then take the first track to the right. Keep to the right of an open area of ground, and follow the track through coniferous woodland.

10. At minor road, continue ahead over road bridge across River Massan, then turn right down short slope onto narrow but distinct path, near the left bank of river. Watch for occasional waymarks, and alternative paths where the river has eroded the edge of the path.

Massan Loop Walk

14. Turn right to follow wide track through tall conifers forming a woodland avenue.

A815

2. At sign walk down steps to join 'Puck's Glen Gorge Walk'.

3. Keep left at junction to continue beside stream.

5. At sign near top go left down 'Black Gates Trail'.

Puck's Glen

4. Cross forestry track and follow signs for 'Upper Puck's Glen Loop'. (Alternative shorter walk: go left along forestry track to 6).

Rough stony path with uneven stone steps

13. In an open area, follow the main track left to a gate. Past this, turn right along the Glen Massan–Invereck road with the River Eachaig again on your left. When the road reaches woodland, take a rough path down to the left, and continue along the bank of the river.

River Eachaig

15. Turn right along road to get back to Benmore Gardens, 2km to car park. (Alternative option: turn left along road, 1.5km to Invereck and bus stops on each side of A815 main road – cross to other side for bus to Dunoon).

Puck's Glen walk: 3.5 miles (5.6km)
Massan Loop walk: 4.5 miles (7km)

inverclyde ramblers

For more information visit
www.inverclyderamblers.org.uk/pucks-glen