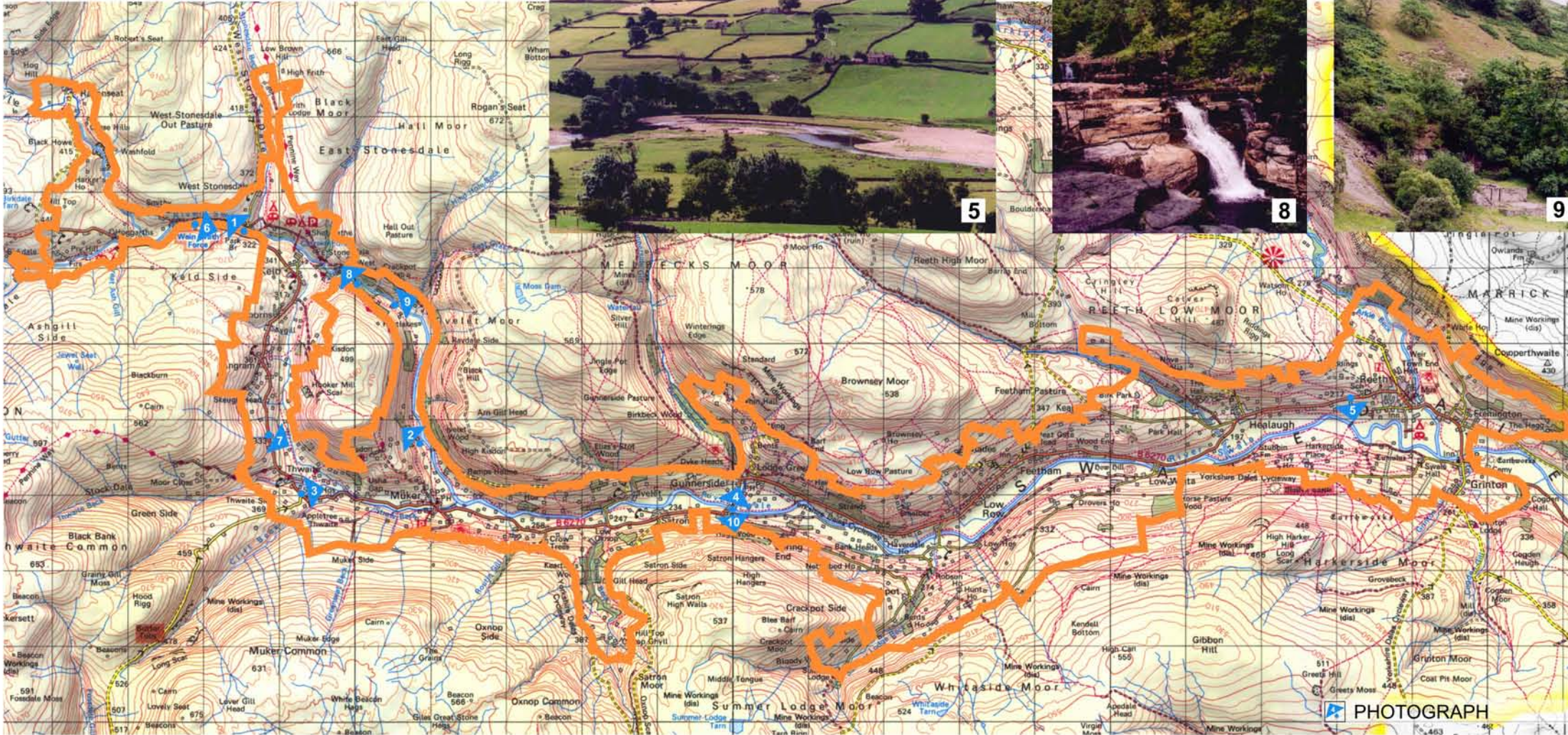


YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Winding, steeply sloped narrow u-shaped valley within Yoredale series giving a sense of intimacy and enclosure in contrast with extensive open uplands to north and south.
- The dark purples, tans, greys and blacks of the gritstone uplands contrast with the lush greens and bright colours of valley vegetation and hay meadows, the influence of underlying rock often apparent in valley side vegetation cover.
- The underlying geology has created a stepped or terraced appearance to the valley sides, areas of farmland on the gentler slopes interspersed with woodland on steeper slopes with rocks occasionally outcropping to form prominent scars.
- The upland island of Kisdon, with its dark gritstone cap, divides and dominates the upper dale while Calver Hill, with its curved summit and stepped profile, is a distinctive feature within the middle dale.
- The River Swale is fast flowing with a platformed rocky bed and stony bank, descending the upper valley via a limestone gorge and a series of dramatic waterfalls. Steep sided gills, often wooded and with waterfalls, cleave the valley sides.
- Bands of woodland follow the steeper slopes of the valley sides, and often occur in association with scars. Trees follow the course of the river and tributaries and mark settlements, tree cover reducing with dale elevation. Yew in association with scars and several extensive areas of juniper scrub are distinctive localised features.
- The pattern of hay meadows in combination with a particularly high density of drystone walls and barns are an outstanding feature of the dale.
- Dramatic reminders of former lead mining, including structures, hushes and spoil heaps, dominate a number of valley side gills, and are particularly marked at Gunnerside Gill. Further scars of lead mining are visible on the upper valley sides and on moortops but are very gradually greening over and blending with the background.
- Settlement pattern is a combination of traditional nucleated Anglian pattern in the lower dale and dispersed Norse pattern in the upper dale, with a few exceptions. Scattered traditional farmsteads, often occurring as long houses or in rows with other cottages, occur throughout the dale.
- The upper dale is increasingly remote and open and is surrounded by an amphitheatre of moorland. In these areas the pattern of barns and walls is dominant.
- The sinuous nature of the valley and overlapping fell sides creates a series of constantly changing vistas as one moves along the dale.



1 UPPER SWALEDALE