

Cuillin Hills 12:

Bruach na Frithe



Bruach na Frithe, the peak of the deer forest or steep slope, at 958m OD (Ordnance Datum) is regarded by many as one of the easiest Cuillin peaks to ascend. It is a Munro (height over 3,000 feet or 914.4m) and is the only summit with a trigonometric ('trig') point, or triangulation station. Access is possible from both [Sligachan](#) and the top of [Glen Brittle](#), both via [Fionn Choire](#). An easily traced path guides walkers onto the Cuillin ridge and thence to the summit. The views from the summit are some of the best of the Cuillin Hills, together with the Red Hills to the east and the lava field of North Skye. An excursion to be enjoyed on a fair-weather day.

Aspects covered: large-scale geological features of the Paleocene gabbro-dominated Cuillin Hills, the granite-dominated Red Hills and the lava field of North Skye; Quaternary glacial features (and deposits).

Route: EITHER [Glen Brittle](#) (Gleann Bhreatail) - [Allt a' Mhaim](#) - [Bealach a' Mhaim](#) - [Tobar nan Uaislean](#) - [Fionn Choire](#) - [Bruach na Frithe](#) (- return [Glen Brittle](#)) OR [Sligachan](#) - [Allt Dearg House](#) - [Allt Dearg Mòr](#) - [Coire na Circe](#) - [Tobar nan Uaislean](#) - [Fionn Choire](#) - [Bruach na Frithe](#) (- return [Sligachan](#)).

The path from [Glen Brittle](#) to the lower slopes of [Fionn Choire](#) is 3km. Access to [Fionn Choire](#) is also from [Sligachan](#) (5km).

Distance: 9km (from [Glen Brittle](#)) or 12km (from [Sligachan](#)) (return journey).

Time: 6/7 hours.

General comments: [Tobar nan Uaislean](#) is easily accessed by the through path between [Glen Brittle](#) and [Sligachan](#). On fair-weather days, there are superb views of the northern Cuillin Hills, from [Sgùrr Thuilm](#) (accessing from [Glen Brittle](#), to [Sgùrr nan Gillian](#) (accessing from [Sligachan](#)))

Follow the Broadford - Portree (A87) road to [Sligachan](#) (26km (16 miles) from Broadford and 14km (9 miles) from Portree).

Excursion Cuillin Hills 12: Bruach na Frithe

If starting from [Glen Brittle](#) (Gleann Bhreatail), take the Dunvegan (A863) road along [Glen Drynoch](#) to the [Carbost \(B8009\) road](#) (8km; 5 miles). From here, follow the Carbost road, along the south side of [Loch Harport](#), as far as [Merkadale](#) (2.5km (1.5 miles)) and thence take the minor road signposting [Glen Brittle](#). Descend into [Glen Brittle](#) (Gleann Bhreatail) to a point south of the hairpin bends at [\[NG 4239 2581\]](#) where (pay) parking is available. This parking is popular for visitors to the so-called [Fairy Pools](#) on the [Allt Coir' a' Mhadaidh](#) (an optional locality, see below). Alternatively, there is [limited parking in the forestry ground](#) on the NE side of the road c. 500m back towards Carbost. From the path at the parking area for the Fairy Pools, cross the [minor streams](#) that flow into the [Allt Coir' a' Mhadaidh](#) and follow the path NE, parallel to the forested area. Do not take the (all too) obvious path to the Fairy Pools. Beyond, the path you take runs parallel to the [Allt a' Mhàim](#) (on its NW side). Continue along the path, gaining height past the [cairn](#) to the [Bealach a' Mhàim](#) and onwards to [Tobar nan Uaislean](#). From here, an obvious path leads SE into [Fionn Choire](#).

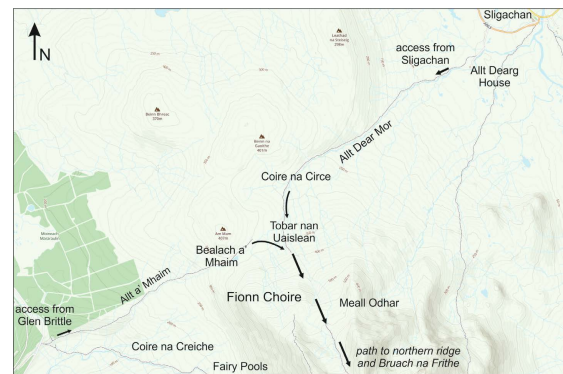


Figure Cuillin 12.1: Topographic map indicating access routes from Glen Brittle and Sligachan to Fionn Choire (and onwards to the northern Cuillin Ridge and Bruach na Frithe).



Figure Cuillin 12.2: Bruach na Frithe, viewed towards the east from the top of Glen Brittle (Gleann Bhreatail).

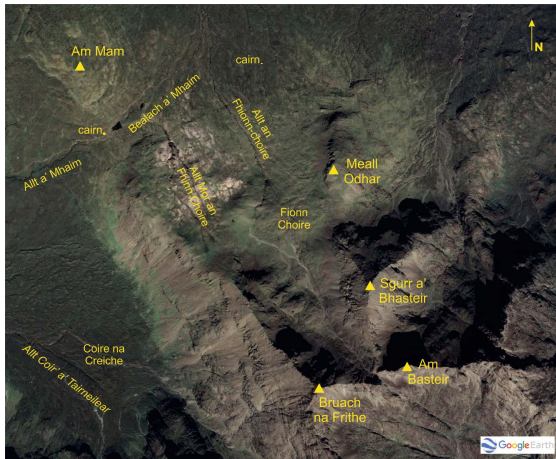


Figure Cuillin 12.3: Annotated Google Earth® image of the Fionn Choire area.

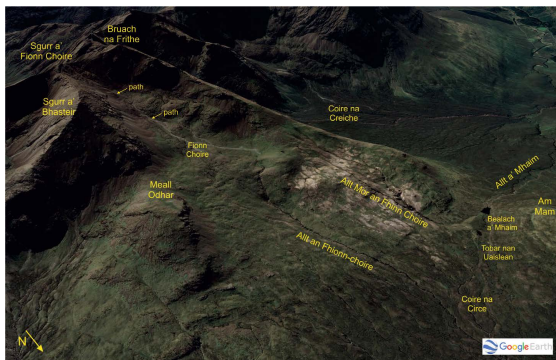


Figure Cuillin 12.4: Annotated Google Earth® image of the Fionn Choire area.

From the Glen Brittle route, the NW summits of the Cuillin Hills are particularly obvious, including [Sgùrr an Fheadain](#) with its [Waterpipe Gully](#) and, beyond, [Bidein Druim nan Ramh](#). Further to the SW is [Sgùrr Thuilm](#).

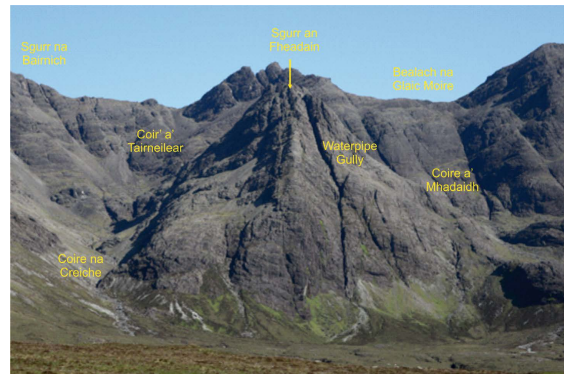


Figure Cuillin 12.5: Annotated field image of Sgùrr an Fheadain and surrounding named points.

If starting from [Sligachan](#), there is parking close to the road junction, for example, on the south side of the road c. 100m east of the new bridge over the [River Sligachan](#). The path starts on the south side of the [Sligachan](#) – Drynoch (A863) road, c. 600m west of [Sligachan](#). Here, a [track](#) leading to [Allt Dearg House](#) gives way to a [path](#) on the north side of the [Allt Dearg Mòr](#) to [Coire na Circe](#) and SW towards [Tobar nan Uaislean](#). From here, an obvious path leads SE into [Fionn Choire](#).



Figure Cuillin 12.6: Oblique aerial view indicating starting point from Sligachan (top centre).

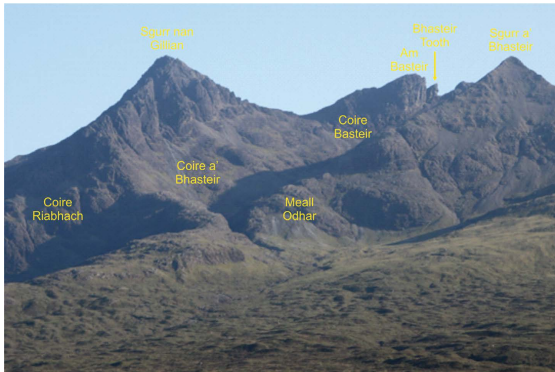


Figure Cuillin 12.7: Annotated field image of the northern Cuillin Hills and surrounding named points.

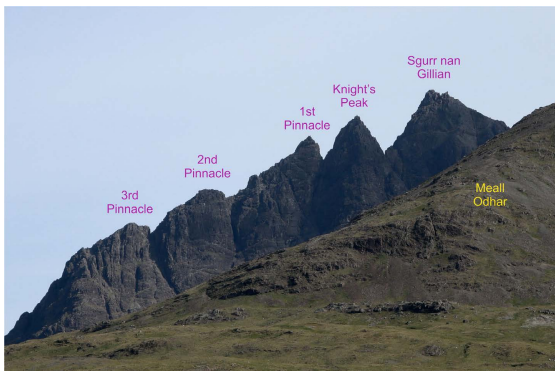


Figure Cuillin 12.8: Annotated field image of the Pinnacle Ridge of the northern Cuillin Hills and surrounding points.



Figure Cuillin 12.9: One of the many plunge pools on the Allt Dearg Mòr.

To reach the summit of [Bruach na Frithe](#), follow any one of the paths that trend south, upwards, into the [upper part of Fionn Choire Choire](#) for c. 1.5km. These paths converge and the main path follows one of the nameless streams in the corrie.

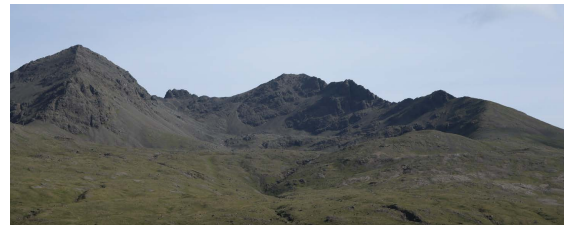


Figure Cuillin 12.10: Annotated field image of [Fionn Choire](#) and surrounding named summits.



Figure Cuillin 12.11: [Sgurr a' Bhàsteir](#) from [Fionn Choire](#). The dominant lithology is gabbro, intruded by inclined (N-S, top-left to bottom-right) cone-sheets, mainly dolerite. View towards the SE.



Figure Cuillin 12.16: Annotated field image of the northern Cuillin Hills and surrounding named points from [Bruach na Frithe](#). Dominant lithology unit is Outer Unlayered Gabbro. It is likely that the summit area of some of these peaks were nunataks during the later stages of the Pleistocene glaciation(s).

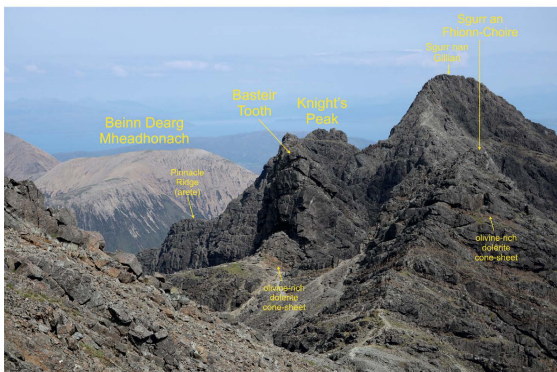
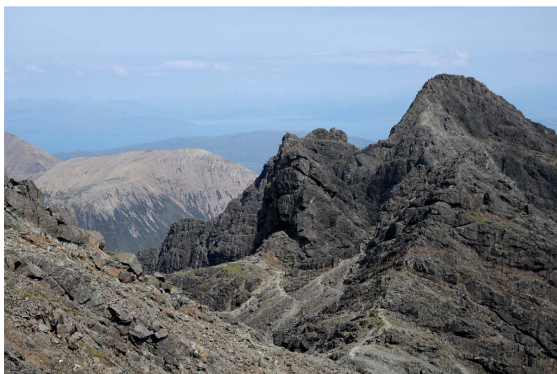


Figure Cuillin 12.17: Annotated field image of the northern Cuillin Hills and surrounding named points from [Bruach na Frithe](#). Dominant lithology unit is Outer Excursion Cuillin Hills 12: Bruach na Frithe

Unlayered Gabbro. It is likely that the summit area of some of these peaks were nunataks during the later stages of the Pleistocene glaciation(s).



Figure Cuillin 12.18: Annotated field image of the northern Cuillin Hills and surrounding named points from [Bruach na Frithe](#). Dominant lithology unit is Outer Unlayered Gabbro. It is likely that the summit area of some of these peaks were nunataks during the later stages of the Pleistocene glaciation(s).



Figure Cuillin 12.19: Annotated field image of [Sgurr an Fhionn-Choire](#) in the northern Cuillin Hills. Dominant lithology unit is Outer Unlayered Gabbro, intruded by dolerite and olivine-rich dolerite cone-sheets.

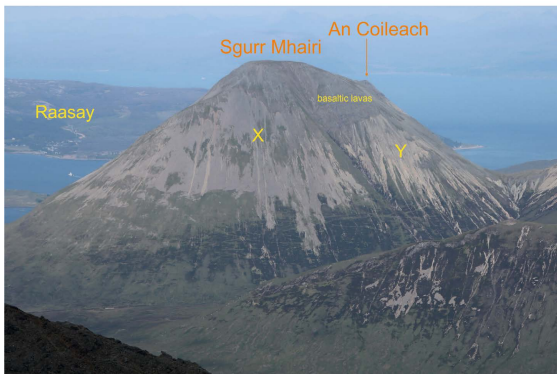


Figure Cuillin 12.20: Annotated field image of the twin summits of [Glamaig](#) in the Western Red Hills from [Bruach na Frithe](#). Dominant lithologies of the scree-dominated lower slopes are glamaigite, a coarse-grained hybrid

belonging to the Marsco Hybrids (X), and the Glamaig Granite (Y).



Figure Cuillin 12.21: Annotated field image of the Outer Bytownite Gabbros forming the Garbh-bheinn – Clach Glas ridge, from [Bruach na Frithe](#). View is towards the east. Ruadh Stac is composed of granites of the Srath na Crèitheach Intrusive Centre. Granite-gabbro contacts arrowed.



Figure Cuillin 12.22: Annotated field image of the northern Cuillin Hills and the Garbh-bheinn – Clach Glas - Bla-bheinn - ridge, from [Bruach na Frithe](#). R, Ruadh Stac, M, lower slopes of Meall Dearg. Cone-sheet intensity is high in Lota Corrie and on Sgurr na h-Uamha. View is towards the east.



Figure Cuillin 12.23: Annotated field image towards the SE from [Bruach na Frithe](#).

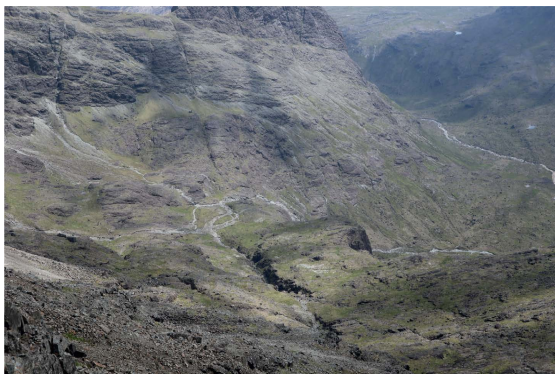


Figure Cuillin 12.24: Annotated field image towards the SE, into Lota and Harta corries from [Bruach na Frithe](#).



Figure Cuillin 12.25: Annotated field image towards the SW, along the Cuillin Ridge, from [Bruach na Frithe](#). The prominent dip slopes in the foreground are due to a significant number of (inclined, top-right to bottom-left) cone-sheets within host ('country-rock') gabbro(s).



Figure Cuillin 12.26: Summit of Sgurr an Fheadain from [Bruach na Frithe](#), composed of Outer Unlayered Gabbro intruded by a high density of inclined dolerite cone-sheets. Helicopter for scale.

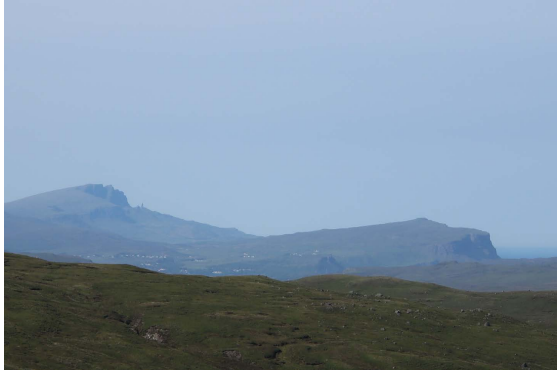


Figure Cuillin 12.27: The Storr escarpment (left) and the Old Man of Storr (below the cliff line), in profile, composed of *in situ* and landslipped basaltic lavas, respectively, viewed towards the north from [Bruach na Frithe](#).

Return to the road at Glen Brittle or Sligachan.

End of excursion.

Bad weather day:

The [Fairy Pools](#) of the [Allt Coir' a' Mhadaidh](#) are worth visiting, either as part of the main excursion, or as a short 'bad weather day' option. Access is from Glen Brittle. Be aware that the Fairy Pools are a popular visitor attraction and at times the area can be overrun by visitors: if possible, go either early or late in the day to enjoy a degree of solitude. From the (pay) parking area, walk east to the north side of the [Allt Coir' a' Mhadaidh](#) along the (too) well-constructed path. The pools are strung out over a length of c. 1km where the river flows over plateau basalt lavas. Return using the same route.

However, similar, if not better, plunge pools occur on the [Allt Dearg Mòr](#), where you can enjoy your own company. These are outlined at the beginning of this excursion.

