RUNNING IN SNOW

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Category: Observations

Those who know me well, know that I love the wild places of the North of England. Fell and crag, lake and tarn; Many of my happiest days have been spent on the hills of the Lake District or Northumberland. However, for most of my adult life, I've been living in exile, much of it in the South. If I had a normal job, I'd probably give it up and find employment nearer to the hills and moors. However, I don't have a normal job, I have a vocation, a calling and as God hasn't yet led me to live and work amongst the hills, I'll stay where I am and treasure the days when Sue and I can put our boots on, slip our packs on our backs and head off for the fells.

I suppose I shouldn't complain. I do get to live in the Chilterns an area of outstanding natural beauty. In less than ten minutes from our front door we can be in a nature reserve which, in summer, bursts with wildflowers and butterflies. But the problem is that the Chilterns are just too... pretty. I likeÂ *wild* places.

But even I will admit that in snow, this part of the world can be pretty special. Today, I ran for 8 miles, most of it well off the beaten track and often in virgin snow. There was snow under my feet, the wind was in my face and it felt good. The sense of excitement and exposure was almost as good as being on a Lakeland ridge and all within thirty five miles of the centre of London.

Here are a few pictures of my morning.

Not far from home, I ran along Toweridge Lane, which is partly blocked by a fallen tree.



Further along Toweridge Lane is this impressive view down to the back of West Wycombe House. The clearing in the trees, with a view up to the statue must look even more impressive from the mansion windows - but I don't get to see that.



Only a muntjak has crossed the snow in this field; until a clod-hopping runner came along and spoiled the snow that is.



I'm not at all sure why there was a Tardis parked on Bullocks Farm Lane.



Running from Copcourt Farm to the ridge took me down this lovely path.

My path took me across this field and into the woods. On a normal day, you can see the Wycliffe Centre (my office) on the opposite ridge. It seems to be camouflaged today.

It wasn't the longest run I've ever done and it certainly wasn't the fastest, but I enjoyed every second - even the last three

miles in slush along the A40 to get home. I just couldn't stop grinning when I got home!