

New Entry in Super Mountains



Resurvey of the Welsh mountain Glyder Fawr confirmed its height of 1,000.8m, slightly higher than the 999m on the Ordnance Survey maps. This also is good enough to enter the mountain in the Super Mountains. How the resurvey did take place is unveiled by G. and J. Surveys.

There is no dictionary definition of 'a Super Mountain'. Until the publication of Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 (Landranger) maps in the early 1970s we predominantly used imperial measurements for both distance and height; this despite the kilometre-based National Grid. British hills and mountains were measured against key benchmark heights, notably 1000, 2000 and 3000feet. Once the metric system was introduced on Ordnance Survey

maps, these benchmark heights became 304.8, 609.6 and 914.4metres, so using metric to "define" mountains, the obvious benchmark height is 1000 metres. There are only four mountains over this height and Wales has them all, calling them Super Mountain.

The Welsh Super Mountains are Snowdon (1,085m) followed by the adjacent Crib y Ddysgl (1,065m). Following closely behind and in the north of the Snowdonia National Park are Carnedd Llewelyn (1,064m) and finally Carnedd Dafydd (1,044m). Wales plays host to mountain events, one familiar to tourists on the Snowdon Mountain railway being the Snowdon Race. Another equally famous is the Welsh 1,000m Peaks Race, where competitors visit all the Welsh 1,000m summits within a given time limit. These international events draw competitors from far and wide.

Glyder Fawr could exceed 1,000m and being the fifth Super Mountain. Ordnance Survey measures heights using photogrammetry. These measured heights are accurate to +/-3m, meaning that Glyder Fawr lies probably between 996m and 1,002m, worth checking out.

Especially as on 24 June 2010, the G. and J. Survey team re-surveyed Tryfan in Snowdonia. This mountain's height is recorded as 915m on Ordnance Survey Maps, but with more accurate survey-grade GPS technology, a height to be 917.5m was recorded, 2.5m higher than previously thought.

On 16 August 2010, a team of the company, accompanied by Carey Davies, Stephen Edwards and Peter & Kate Williams from the Gorphwysfa Club went for resurvey. Once the summit position had been identified using optical equipment, the survey-grade GPS antenna was strapped securely to the side of the summit rock and to be level with the top. The instrument was switched on and data recorded for four hours, during which time over 500 individual height readings were collected, allowing an accurate final result for the height of Glyder Fawr to be calculated.

Glyder Fawr turned out to measure 1,000.8 metres and therefore is definitely the fifth Welsh Super Mountain. The result has been accepted by Ordnance Survey and the new height will appear on maps in the coming months.

There is an implication of the new height for the "Fell Running" community. One of the tasks of the Gorphwysfa Club, hence the involvement in the survey of Pete and Kate Williams, is the organisation of the Welsh 1,000m Peaks Race. This event takes in all the 1,000m mountains in Wales. Now the organisers will have to decide how to embrace Wales' new Super Mountain. The new height for Glyder Fawr also impacts the UK Prominent Peaks classification devised by UK Metric association members Jim Bloomer and Roddy Urquhart. One of the walking challenges based on the classification is the Prominent Thousanders which is now being revised to include Glyder Fawr as its 134th member.