

Keep in touch with GeoSuffolk Times. Welcome to issue number 12 of our newsletter - for those who value Suffolk's geodiversity. Caroline Markham 22.04.12 www.geosuffolk.co.uk



Sea Defences at Felixstowe

The section of Felixstowe beach between the War Memorial and the Fludyers Arms has been reopened, allowing inspection of the new 'sea defence' works. The rock groynes are blocks of larvikite from Norway, tipped onto the beach from the barge 'Charlie Rock' (larvikite is not a 'granite' in a geological sense, but so called commercially as the word indicates strength). Look out for pegmatite veins (coarsely-crystalline with pale feldspar crystals and 'books' of dark mica crystals). The beach has been recharged with shingle and sand pumped ashore from the dredger 'Crestway'; there were numerous modern oysters, cockles and *Nucella* whelks, but of particular interest were shells of *Corbicula fluminalis* from an interglacial deposit. There were also occasional, mainly fragmentary, bones and the April 19th Ipswich Star featured a mammoth tooth found here by a Felixstowe resident. R Markham

Recent Publications

Roger Dixon *The Suffolk Geocoast – Bawdsey East Lane to The Manor*, Suffolk Naturalists' Society Transactions 2012 vol.47.

Roger Dixon *The Geology of Christchurch Park*, Ipswich Society Newsletter October 2011 <http://www.ipswichsociety.org.uk/newsletter/display.php?issue=185&art=14>

Cornhill Correction (GeoSuffolk Times 11). My thanks to Keith Ambrose of the British Geological Survey for updating me - Mansfield Stone is Permian age and Bath Stone is 165 million years old. RM

Have you visited Spa Gardens Felixstowe?

This County Geodiversity Site is a marine cliff of Red Crag resting on London Clay. It has many natural springs which were landscaped in the early 20th century to create an Edwardian water garden. Suffolk Coastal DC has produced an excellent map of the gardens which is used for the following directions (see below).

- The best exposures of Red Crag are behind the Cliff House Tea Rooms and high in the cliff above Pavilion Terrace. Spa Pavilion Approach and the area around the Round Shelter are good places to see Crag shells in the flower beds.
- There are six ponds, all fed by water from the Red Crag – the spring at the back of the Lily Pond is particularly easy to see. Look also for seepages on the Ranelagh Steps and below the Wishing Well and a visit to the Pump House is well worth the climb.
- Many of the steps and walls show mass movement damage – especially obvious above the Spa Pavilion Approach.

The SCDC map shows the plans for refurbishment with Heritage Lottery Fund money. Commendably "All the ponds and cascades will be restored to their original design" and also "Information and interpretation will be available" which should include reference to the rich geological heritage to which these gardens owe their name. CM

www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/8EF5BD19-8AAE-4722-9338-A6453876B8E3/0/SeaFrontGardensMasterplanFeb2011.pdf

Miomys glendae, New Species

Congratulations to Glenda Cruikshanks for having this new species of fossil vole named after her in recognition of her meticulous work in finding small Norwich Crag mammals (this one was from Covehithe). It was named by David Mayhew in *Quaternary International* in 2011, and estimated at between 2.25 and 2.35 million years old. RM

A Celebration of Suffolk Geology will be launched at GeoSuffolk's 10th AGM on May 12th 2012. Edited by Dr Roger Dixon, with 40+ authors and 400+ pages, it promises a good read.

News: Geodiversity Providers and Owners

Earth Heritage Suffolk

GeoSuffolk's Handbook, published in 2010 has been put onto our web site. At its inception four years ago *Earth Heritage Suffolk* was designed for ultimate use on the web and the gazetteer and geosite pages have been inserted individually. The *Conserving*, *Promoting* and *Inspiration* sections have been included as separate booklets. Why not take a look? CM

Meteorites at the Museum

The Ipswich Museum Science Day event on March 10th was well-attended with about 200 (mostly children) visiting the GeoSuffolk 'space rocks' activities. Specimens on display included suevite (an impact breccia) and a variety of meteorites including a (very popular) handling specimen. Also popular; the extinction survival trail and the asteroid catalogue – is there an asteroid with your name? CM

Pliocene Forest Open Day

GeoSuffolk's innovative project is taking part in the Sutton Open Gardens event on May 27th from 12 noon to 6pm. The entry fee covers a number of gardens in the parish as well as the 'forest' and is paid at the Sutton Memorial Hall. Part of the money goes towards the upkeep of Sutton Church with its numerous Crag boxstones (and some Crag barnacles) in the walls. The church is well worth a visit and we understand cream teas will be served from 3pm at the Old Vicarage. RM

Aspects of Ipswich Geology

Buried Channels, glacial tectonics, brickearths and lots more - GeoSuffolk's display on urban geology will be at the Reg Driver Centre in Christchurch Park from 14th – 26th May. The Centre is normally open to the public – ring 01473 252435 to check before you go. CM

Ipswich Park Ranger Events

June 16th - visit GeoSuffolk's stand at the Chantry Park 'Bioblitz'.

June 21st - Bob Markham will be demonstrating geology from the boat on the 'Solstice Cruise'.

http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=1026 gives details. CM

A River For All

This welcome new interpretive panel near the sarsen stones of the Stoke Bridge Pocket Park in Ipswich has been provided by the River Action Group. It features the geology of the sarsen stones and also the Stoke Tunnel SSSI. (The piece about the Stoke Bone Bed has the correct date but refers it to an incorrect (Hoxnian) interglacial.) RM

Hosepipe Ban

With water shortages in the news, the April 17th East Anglian Daily Times reported an increase in business for boreholes for water, especially for irrigation systems and large gardens. Drilling firms at Glemsford and Haverhill are quoted and there are comments from Suffolk County Council, the Green Party and the Environment Agency. Suffolk's most important aquifer is the Chalk, as has been tapped at Mildenhall, Sudbury, Bury St Edmunds, Stowmarket, Ipswich, etc. Sand, gravel and Crag yields a water supply, especially at the coastal strip, as at Southwold, Leiston and Aldeburgh. Valley terrace gravels may yield water as at Outney Common near Bungay. RM

Boyton Church

St Andrew Church, Boyton has a display of photographs and specimens illustrating the recently repaired tower staircase. The treads include blocks of septaria (being inside they haven't weathered the same as 'outside' blocks) which have been repaired by grouting cracks and consolidated with epoxy resin. New septaria have been used for new newels. Specimens on display suggest the original septaria (small broken pieces) were from London Clay and new material (with well-defined calcite crystals) is from Jurassic material occurring as glacial erratics. The church is usually open and the staircase may be viewed by appointment (it will soon be preserved inside a 'window'). My thanks to Mr and Mrs Fleetwood for access. RM

You might like to....

- Download a leaflet - Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB has produced some excellent fact sheets for 7-11 year olds – Erosion, Estuaries, Tides & Waves and Sea Defences all have geological content. (However - the 'coprolites' in the Suffolk Craggs are not fossilised dinosaur dung.)

http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/download_s.asp?PageId=229

- Attend a week-end course – Cambridge University Institute of Continuing Education is currently offering weekend geology courses – Further Geology; The Geological History of Britain; Rocks, Minerals and Fossils - taught by Dr Peter Sheldon. www.ice.cam.ac.uk
- Take a holiday – Suffolk Coastal Scene newspaper April 6th carried a geological Reader Travel offer 'Walking for Softies on the Jurassic Coast' (www.diamondhols.co.uk departs September 7th, 3 days from £185).