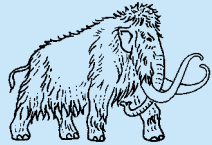


Suffolk's Ice Age elephants

Did you know fossil elephants are a Suffolk speciality? We have the most complete range of prehistoric elephants and mammoths in Britain, spanning over two million years!

30,000 years ago

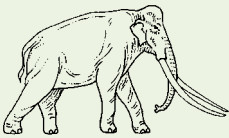
Woolly mammoth



Adapted to living in the colder phases of the later Ice Age. It had a fatty hump, a thick coat of hair and small ears as proof against the cold. Curved tusks were used to sweep away snow from herbage. Its remains are commonly found in gravels of the Gipping, Stour, Lark and Waveney valleys.

200,000 years ago

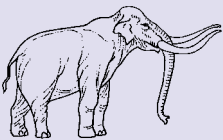
Straight-tusked elephant



The typical forest-dwelling elephant of warm periods in the later Ice Age. Its remains have been found at Brundon, Hoxne and Stutton. DNA evidence suggests its closest living relative is the Indian elephant

1 million years ago

Southern elephant



A forest-dwelling ancestor of the mammoths, standing about 3 1/2m high at the shoulder, with curving tusks. Its teeth have been found in sands of the Red Crag at Trimley, and Norwich Crag at Holton and Southwold.

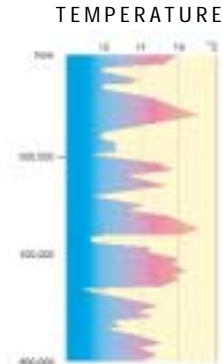
2 million years ago

Mastodon



Mastodons were forest-dwelling cousins of the elephant, having straight tusks and short legs. Their teeth are found in the Crag rocks of Suffolk, dated between 2 and 3 million years old, as at Sutton.

The Ice Age



The last two million years is a story of climate change. During this period, known as the Ice Age, the climate has fluctuated between warm and cold phases; this is driven by changes in the Earth's orbit. The chart (left) shows how global temperatures have varied over time.

20,000 years ago Suffolk was in the grip of an arctic freeze. 120,000 years ago the climate was like southern France. Different types of wildlife – from polar bears to hippopotami – were able to thrive in these different environments.

Human activity is now adding excess 'greenhouse' gases to the atmosphere. This will lead to a predicted rise in global temperature of at least 1.5°C* by 2050, and altered weather patterns. Our crops, water supplies and wildlife will be affected.

* Statistics from the UN IPCC, 2001

Did you know?

Mammoths had a battery of teeth with up to 26 enamel ridges, to help grind rough herbage. Teeth were replaced in succession from the back of the jaw. Even mammoths had toothache!



About GeoSuffolk Group



This leaflet is published by the Suffolk RIGS Group (GeoSuffolk) 2005, with support from English Nature and DEFRA Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund. RIGS are Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites. We aim to promote understanding, appreciation and conservation of the geo-resources of Suffolk.



To join us or find out more, contact Ipswich Museum 01473-433 550, or English Nature Suffolk Team on 01284-762 218.



GEO Suffolk

Mammoth Trail



Discovering Ice Age wildlife in Suffolk



Designed by Ark Design Co. Printed by Riverside Print. Photographs © TD Holt-Wilson; Ipswich Museum Service. Wildlife scenes, elephant drawings and climate chart by Beverly Curt.

The Suffolk Mammoth Trail

Discovering Ice Age wildlife

Suffolk is one of the best places in Britain for discovering Ice Age wildlife. The sands, gravels and clays of our quarries, cliffs and river valleys contain fossils from the last two million years. We have a wide range of plants and animals from both warm and cold periods.

Find out more about Ice Age wildlife



Discover the secrets of seven prehistoric sites in Suffolk! Track down Suffolk Mammoth Trail interpretive panels around the county (see map for more details).



Come face to face with a woolly mammoth! See the life-size replica in Ipswich Museum, and see bones and teeth of the real thing - and other Ice Age animals - in the Geology Gallery.



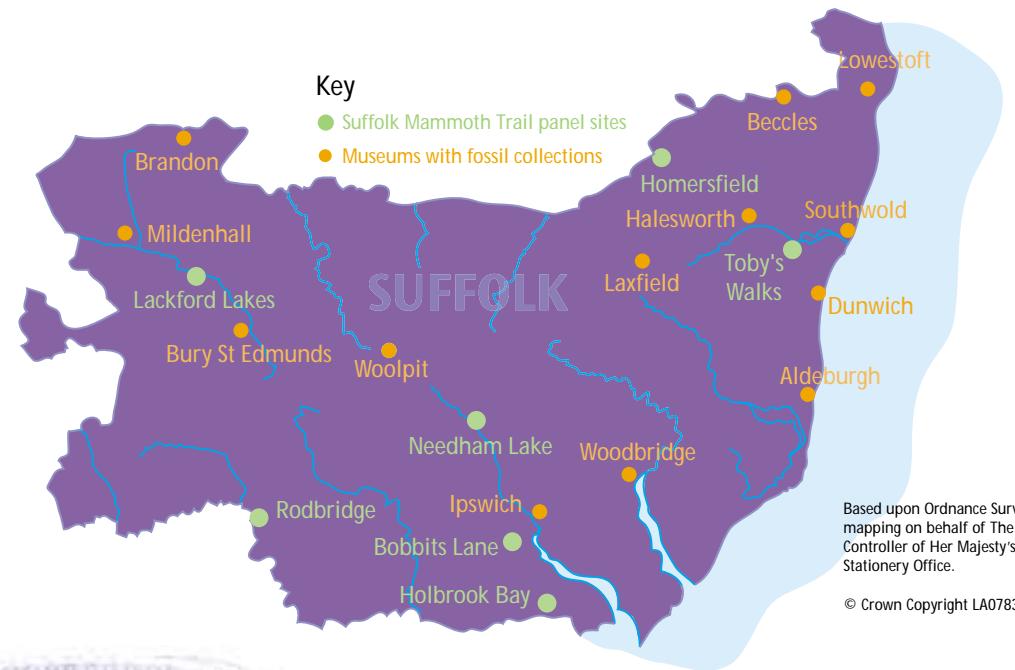
Discover thirteen Suffolk museums with collections of local fossils (see map). Many of them have Ice Age specimens.



Lion tooth



Mammoth tooth

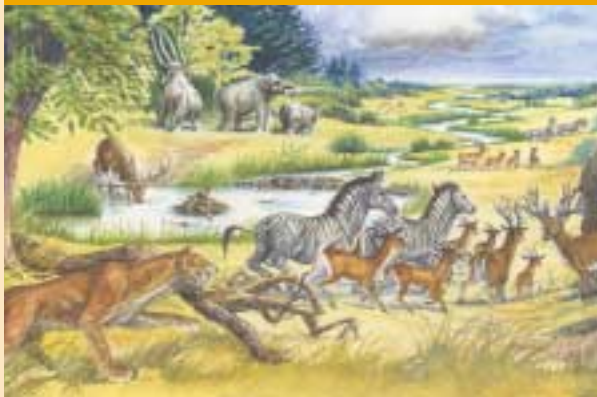


Panel sites

- 1) Lackford Lakes wildfowl reserve
- 2) Rodbridge picnic site, Long Melford
- 3) Needham Lake recreation area
- 4) Bobbits Lane car park, Wherstead
- 5) Holbrook Bay car park, Lower Holbrook
- 6) The village green, Homersfield
- 7) Toby's Walks picnic site, Blythburgh

2 million years ago

The climate in Suffolk was similar to today. Large herbivores included mastodon, southern elephant, giant deer and gazelle. The scimitar cat was a powerful carnivore. Humans were evolving in Africa at this time.



200,000 years ago

This was a warm period. Herds of mammoth, bison, horse and straight-tusked elephant roamed Suffolk. Carnivores included lions and hyaenas. Flint tools show that humans, probably Neanderthals, were living here at this time.



30,000 years ago

The climate was cold, with a landscape similar to the arctic. Wildlife included woolly mammoth, woolly rhinoceros, bison and reindeer. Wolves and hyaenas preyed on them — as did our own ancestors, recently arrived in Britain.

