GEOSUFFOLK TIMES

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Caroline Markham 15.10.23 https://geosuffolk.co.uk
See the Archive on our website for GeoSuffolk Times and Notes.

Serrated Megalodons

A very fine '*Megalodon*' tooth found at Walton-on-the-Naze by a 13 year old boy featured in the media on 2nd August. It is perhaps an upper right lateral 2: the root is slightly eroded but the crown shows a serrated edge to the enamel. Most *megalodon* teeth from the Red Crag are worn and have lost their enamel, but a few still have their enamel with its serrated edges. One from Bawdsey was featured in White Admiral no.101, 2018/19 (White Admiral 101 by Suffolk Naturalists' Society - Issuu), there is a fine one from Foxhall in the R W Cheadle collection in the British Geological Survey, and I have seen others. Are they derived from an older deposit (and which?), or did they swim in the Red Crag sea nearly 3 million years ago as the last of their kind before extinction?

Bob Markham (RM)

Meet GeoSuffolk

Geologists' Association Festival of Geology at University College, London on November 4th. GeoSuffolk's stand will feature the Coralline Crag Rock-Bed. Admission free.
Festival of Geology | Geologists' Association (geologistsassociation.org.uk)

Coast and Heaths AONB Work Party on November 21st – provisionally at an SSSI in Aldeburgh clearing Chillesford Clay and more (if we can beat the brambles!). It is essential to register with the AONB to take part in this. Volunteering – Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (coastandheaths.org)

Ipswich Society Winter Talk December 20th 7.30pm at Black Horse Lane Methodist Church, Ipswich. Admission free to all. Bob Markham will talk about Ipswich Museum's eleven Presidents. Several had geological interests, several led colourful lives. Forthcoming Events 2023/24 » The Ipswich Society

Harwich Formation at Nacton Cliff CGS March 2023

Designation Celebration

On September 21st Ipswich Museum celebrated the designation of its post-Cretaceous geology collection by the Arts Council. The event at Christchurch Mansion highlighted the palaeontology in the museum collection - given national/international status by the Arts Council. The collection tells Suffolk's unique geological story of the last few million years of earth history – the best British record covering this time.

Bob Markham with Simon Jackson, Ipswich Museum Collections and Learning Curator (Natural Sciences) at the Celebration. Simon is holding a woolly mammoth tooth; a Pleistocene woolly rhino skull can be seen to the left, with Pliocene molluscs and mammoth tooth to the right. The right-hand part of the display is still in place in Christchurch Mansion for a period. CM

Surveying Suffolk SSSIs and CGS

GeoSuffolk was contracted by the Geology Trust to survey three more SSSIs over the summer. Ferry Cliff SSSI is designated for its Palaeocene mammalian fauna (see page 2). Corton Cliff is the type locality for the Anglian cold stage, with a sequence of three tills. Hoxne Brick Pit, a world famous site where John Frere recognised the great antiquity of flint implements in the 18th century, is designated for its lake deposits of the Hoxnian interglacial.

At the end of July GeoSuffolk condition monitored Knettishall Heath CGS. Despite some problems with bracken (soon to be addressed by SWT) we found the periglacial vegetation patterns to be visible and in good condition at this Suffolk Wildlife Trust site. CM

Exploring the Norfolk Coast

'Exploring Norfolk's Deep History Coast' by John A Davies and David M G Waterhouse (The History Press 2023) takes us from Paramoudras to the Hanseatic League in the wonderfully named 'Deep History Coast'. I rather liked (page 41) that the work of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth was influenced by ironstone nodules from near Happisburgh. The up-to-date information on palaeontological preparation (pp 152,3) is welcome, but geology enthusiast Norman Peake would no doubt have been amused by the urban myth – he removed salt from specimens by placing them in the toilet cistern. (See GeoSuffolk Notes 29, The Norwich Chalk.) David Waterhouse is now Curator of the Polar Museum at the Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge. RM

As usual the Geological Society of Norfolk has a varied lecture programme. My eye was particularly taken by 'Seabed mapping around the coast of North Norfolk' by Dr Jonathan Lee of the BGS, on January 18th. RM

Geological Society of Norfolk (norfolkgeology.co.uk)

Have you visited Ferry Cliff?

This summer GeoSuffolk assessed this SSSI on the Deben estuary, for Natural England. The 400m stretch of cliff and foreshore is designated for its Palaeocene deposits which yield mammalian fossils, including the oldest British rodents and hoofed mammals. The Palaeocene sands are only exposed on the shore, below high water. They sit underneath the London Clay and Red Crag which form unstable cliffs bordering the river. The SSSI is in the ownership of the Natural Trust and is accessed by public footpath from Sutton Hoo. The path along the foot of the cliff is well-maintained, with wooden bridges crossing the springs and seepages issuing from the Red Crag/London Clay junction. It crosses hummocky ground denoting old landslides and passes by a very recent cliff fall (almost certainly last winter - see GeoSuffolk Times 57 for a photo) with the Red Crag exposed in the back wall. The foreshore is best seen from the old disused ferry jetty at the end of the footpath. The Palaeocene deposits area can be viewed from here (below). CM

Gainsborough's House Museum Revisited

GeoSuffolk Times reader Bill George improved on our photo of the new Caistor flint wall at this Museum in Sudbury (see GeoSuffolk Times 58) with an image of a belemnite he found in the wall.

Something to look out for next time you visit! Also find John Constable's geology cabinet which is on loan to the Museum from the Constable family. CM

India in Suffolk

'Inscriptions of Nature: Geology and the Naturalisation of Antiquity' by Professor Pratik Chakrabarti of Manchester University (John Hopkins University Press, 2020), is a study of 'deep time' in India, in culture and in paleontology (note US spelling). Two Suffolk men are included in the book:

- Proby Cautley (1802-1871) was an engineer working on the Doab canal in the 1820s. He discovered many fossils, including *Sivatherium* (a giraffid), in the foothills of the Himalayas, which he named the Sevalik (Sewalik and other spellings) Hills. On his death many of his fossils, including a *Sivatherium* tooth, went to Ipswich Museum. (See GeoSuffolk Notes 44, The Sewalik Hills.)
- Edward Moor (1771 -1848) spent his childhood at Sudbourne where his father is said to have made his fortune by discovering the suitability of Suffolk soil for growing potatoes. Edward went to work for the East India Company, becoming known for his book Hindu Pantheon (1810). On return from India, he moved to Bealings, where his 10 feet high Bealings House pyramid, of various materials, has at the apex the triple-headed figure of Shiva. His grandson was Edward Charles Moor (1848-1934) who collected fossils (some are in the Ipswich Museum collection) and is commemorated by having a seal, *Phoca moori* from the Red Crag named after him. RM