

# GEOSUFFOLK TIMES



Newsletter 64  
January 2025

Caroline Markham 14.01.25. The GeoSuffolk Archive, and more can be found at <https://geosuffolk.co.uk>

12th C Tournai Limestone font in St Peters, Ipswich

## Global Warming in Mildenhall Chalk

We were introduced to the Chalk Sea Ecosystem (ChaSE) project at the recent (November) Geologists' Association Festival of Geology in London. The London Natural History Museum is investigating the response of marine ecosystem biodiversity to the major climate warming event in the late Cretaceous about 94 million years ago (Cenomanian-Turonian Boundary Event) - see [www.chalksea.co.uk](http://www.chalksea.co.uk) , also try the BlueSky link. This Event is recorded in the Chalk – in Suffolk, the specific horizons underlie the Mildenhall area. Echinoids, brachiopods, and ammonites are some of the Chalk fossils recorded from West Row, at which pit when the Geological Survey officer visited in 1886, one of the workmen said he was the first stranger he had seen there in the 13 years he had worked in the quarry. Bob Markham (RM)

## Westleton Common CGS



The Westleton Common Advisory Group has recently cleared a face of the County Geodiversity Site of undergrowth, giving a much improved exposure of its Westleton Sand and Gravel (of Norwich Crag age). I thank John Bebbington for sending me news and photographs of this valued geological, community (and sand martin) asset. RM

## Love Mammals Discovery Day

February 19th 10am – 3pm

GeoSuffolk will have a stand at this free event in Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich. Join us to see, handle and discuss fossils of swimming, burrowing, flying and walking mammals.

<https://ipswich.cimuseums.org.uk/events/museum-discovery-day/>

## Essex Gem and Mineral Show

February 22nd 10am – 4pm

This event at the North Romford Community Centre is well worth a visit – admission £2, refreshments available. [www.erms.org/essex-gem-mineral-show/](http://www.erms.org/essex-gem-mineral-show/)

## Surveying Suffolk's SSSIs

GeoSuffolk has monitored five SSSIs for the Geology Trusts in 2024. Ramsholt Cliff SSSI (Coralline Crag) was the only one showing geological exposures (see GeoSuffolk Times 63). Two sites could not be accessed – Crag Pit, Aldeburgh SSSI (Coralline Crag) and part of Creting St Mary Pits SSSI (designated for its stratigraphy - Crag sand, Kesgrave Gravel and Lowestoft Till). Development has been the main pressure on the three sites close to Ipswich - part of Creting St Mary Pits is traversed by an A14 road cutting, Waldringfield Pit SSSI (Red Crag and Kesgrave Gravel) is being developed for residential use, with a small area reserved for the SSSI. The Ipswichian interglacial deposits at Bobbitshole, Belstead SSSI were discovered in excavations for a sewage works in the 1950s and underlie that site now. Reports have been sent to Natural England. Whilst undertaking these surveys GeoSuffolk has visited all but two of Suffolk's 44 Geological SSSIs in the last six years. CM

## White Admiral is Online

A big thank you to the Suffolk Naturalists' Society for publishing its Newsletter up to date. Back issues include RM's 'A Red Crag Find' in 103, and CM's 'Fissures at Newbourne Great Pit' in 104. <https://www.suffolkbis.org.uk/publications/wa>

### A Geological Blue Plaque

At the request of GeoSuffolk, the Ipswich Society has erected a Blue Plaque on the Stable Block at Holywells Park in Ipswich. It was 'opened' by Professor Elizabeth Harper of Cambridge University and GeoSuffolk on November 30th.



Elizabeth Cobbold collected and identified fossil molluscs from Suffolk Crag deposits (Red Crag), mostly from the land belonging to the Cobbold family in what are now Holywells and Landseer Parks. Her specimens were first published by James Sowerby of London in his *Mineral Conchology* from 1813. In 1819 Elizabeth Cobbold sent a box of crag fossils to Gideon Mantell and in return he sent her some fossils later that year. In 1829 Gideon Mantell sent his 'Crag shells collected by Elizabeth Cobbold' to Baron 'Georges' Cuvier, French anatomist who has been called 'the father of palaeontology', for the Natural History Museum in Paris. This was after her death.

Such early scientific endeavour deserves to be recorded and celebrated. Indeed, Sowerby named a fossil bivalve *Nucula cobboldiae* (see GeoSuffolk Times 42) after her, "Being desirous of commemorating Mrs Cobbold, whose copious collection obtained with great industry... I have named this rare, and withal elegant shell after her". Thank you to the Ipswich Society for this 21st century commemoration on the 200th anniversary of her death. She laid the intellectual foundations for palaeontology in Ipswich, with the collection at Ipswich Museum designated of national/international importance by the Arts Council in 2023.

If you walk up the valley at Holywells Park, towards Nacton Road, you will come to a viewing point where springs of clear water can be seen bubbling up in the stream bed. The water is issuing from the Red Crag and often contains finely comminuted pieces of fossil shell from the Crag. GeoSuffolk has designated this area a CGS. CM

For more information on Elizabeth Cobbold see the SNS Transactions vol. 56, 2020.

<https://www.suffolkbis.org.uk/publications/tsns>

### Aldeburgh Brick Pit SSSI

On October 15th, GeoSuffolk and the Coast & Heaths National Landscape Work Party convened at Aldeburgh Brick Pit SSSI. This is designated for its unique stratigraphy, with Kesgrave Sand and Gravel, Chillesford Clay, Chillesford Crag and Scrobicularia Crag overlying Coralline Crag. Brambles were cleared to give access to the SSSI (overgrown) faces and a face outside the SSSI was cleared down to the Chillesford Clay. Thank you to the NL Work Party for their hard work on our Suffolk geosites. CM

### Chester Goodwin Doughty -

was the collector of some of the fossil molluscs in Ipswich Museum. He was born at Martlesham Rectory on 26 January 1870, his father was Rector of Martlesham. He worked as a solicitor in London until 1915 when he went to live in Gorleston (then in Suffolk). He also had relatives at Framingham Pigot, not far from the Norwich Crag at Bramerton near Norwich. He died 24 January 1939 and is buried in Martlesham churchyard (marked by a stone cross and kerb in 1945). There is a photograph of him in SNS Transactions vol. 4 Part 2, 1939. Walton-on-the-Naze was a favourite locality – he collected Red Crag fossils including, *Trivia coccinelloides* (cowry) from there in May 1919, and *Cerastoderma parkinsoni* (cockle) in April 1930. More modern specimens include a *C. edule* (cockle) in dredged material from the New Cut, Haddiscoe on 31 May 1930. RM

### More Ipswich Museum

In connection with the redevelopment of Ipswich Museum, the large stones in the south courtyard have been moved a short distance (they are very heavy) to just in front of the former Fine Art Club's picture gallery south of the Museum, so GeoSuffolk Notes no.13 plan of their location is obsolete. The 'puddingstone' (see GeoSuffolk Times 42 and our 'Discover Geolpswich' leaflet) is still easy to see. RM  
Meanwhile a herd of mammoths and rhinos (along with other children's drawings) is enhancing the front of the Museum building! CM

