

Welcome to GeoSuffolk Times, keeping you up-to-date with geodiversity news, achievements and activities in Suffolk. Please pass it on to anyone who may be interested.

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Rock of Suffolk

Many places have designated a special rock, mineral or fossil to represent themselves e.g. Larvikite for Norway. Let's have some for Suffolk!

County Rock - Coralline Crag is unique to Suffolk. This honey-coloured rock may be seen in the towers of Chillesford and Wantisden churches. Or we could have coprolite from the Red Crag – there is a unique *Coprolite Street* in Ipswich. Have yourself photographed in 'fossil animal dropping street'!

County Mineral - Amber is a possibility. This beautiful material is found on our beaches and there is an amber museum in Southwold. Or perhaps francolite (carbonate fluorapatite), the cementing mineral of the unique Neogene box-stones in the Crag.

County Fossil - We could have the Red Panda (jaws and teeth have been found in the Red Crag of Suffolk, unique in the UK). Or the Coralline Crag *Blumenbachium*, a ridge-surfaced spheroidal bryozoan unique to Suffolk in the UK. It is illustrated in the summer 2009 issue of *Deposits* magazine published by UKGE Ltd of Reydon Suffolk www.ukge.co.uk. The 'left-handed' *Neptunea* whelk and the giant *megalodon* shark teeth from the Crag are popular candidates, but have already been used as logos outside Suffolk. Bob Markham (RM)

A Must for London Clay enthusiasts

'London Clay Fossils of Kent and Essex' copiously illustrated, has recently been published by the Medway Fossil and Mineral Society, from whom it is available - see www.mlms.org.uk

Thanks for the support

The East Midlands Geological Society, following a visit to Sutton, generously helped fund the explanatory panel now on site. Richard Hamblin has written an article about the site in *Mercian Geologist* August 2009.

Sutton Knoll 'Crag Island' SSSI

GeoSuffolk is grateful to the Geologists' Association for a grant of £372 from its Curry Fund for 'The Pliocene Forest' trees at Sutton. Four specimens from genera which lived in Suffolk in Coralline Crag times *Tsuga heterophylla* (Western Hemlock), *Tsuga Canadensis* (Eastern Hemlock), *Sciadopitys verticillata* (Japanese Umbrella Pine) and *Liquidamber styraciflua* (Sweetgum) have been planted by GeoSuffolk member Barry Hall with advice from Professor Richard West.

Sciadopitys verticillata is the most unusual, with a fossil record going back to the Mesozoic. Endemic to Japan, where it was worshipped since the C14th, it has no close relatives and is the sole representative of its own family.

For more information see Dr Roger Dixon's article, *The Pliocene Forest – Green shoots from GeoSuffolk and the Curry Fund*, in the GA Magazine Vol.8 No.3 September 2009. CM

Festival of Geology

Visit GeoSuffolk's *Friends of the Pliocene* themed stand at the GA Festival of Geology on Saturday 31st October 10.30-4.30 at University College London. **You could win a real *Sciadopitys verticillata* at our stall!**

Everyone welcome – for more information see: www.geologists.org.uk

Ipswich Museum

Totally Chalk-tastic event on Saturday September 26th

With Ann Ainsworth & GeoSuffolk
Drop-in 10am-12pm and 1pm-4pm



Get your chalk fossils identified, make a fossil mobile, contribute to the 'chalk wall' and learn more about the treasures hidden in the earth beneath our feet.

Make your own mobile £1.50 per child

The new Geo-East web site is up and running – lots of information on the geodiversity of the East of England region, including Suffolk
www.geo-east.org.uk

Suffolk GAP* News
For Partners in Geodiversity

Ipswich BC Holywells Park RIGS

Good news! The Parks Management Board has agreed to parts of Holywells Park being designated a RIGS (Regionally Important Geological / Geomorphological Site). The seepage areas at the Red Crag / London Clay junction show excellent examples of spring geomorphology, with good public access adding to their educational value. This brings the number of Suffolk RIGS up to eight in total.

Mid-Suffolk DC Discovery Project

Following on from their *Aggregates Trail X Traction* education initiative, the Mid-Suffolk DC Countryside team has produced an innovative new education pack based on Needham Lakes and the River Gipping. This includes river studies alongside wildlife and environmental activities.

Topics range from channel characteristics, water quality, flooding, etc. to the more practical considerations of access and safety, with an excellent project book for the children. A cd is included in the pack with a powerpoint presentation of 42 photos of the Gipping/Orwell from source to mouth.

This project has been supported by the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund.

Download the introductory leaflet from: <http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/Tourism+and+Countryside/Discovery+Project/EnvironmentalEducation.htm> CM

*Geodiversity Action Plan

Thornham Walks

Because of a growing cash deficit, Thornham Field centre (opened 1985) closed in June 2009. They had offered outdoor education, including geology sessions for primary schools, especially Key Stage 2.

Thornham Walks (managed in partnership with Mid Suffolk DC, the Thornham Estate and Suffolk County Council) remain open for visitors. The Rock Trail ('for children') was supported by English Nature through the ALSF grant scheme. Specimen no.1 is a glacial erratic found at Thornham; labelled as quartzite its spheroidal weathering suggests that it could be dolerite. A number of erratic fossils found on the estate are illustrated in chapter 1 of *Thornham and the Waveney Valley- An historic landscape explored* by John Fairclough and Mike Hardy, published 2004 by Heritage Marketing and Publications Ltd (ISBN 0 9544456 7 8). RM

Have you visited

Newbourne Springs in the Autumn?

Permeable Red Crag lies on top of impermeable London Clay here and a multitude of springs issuing from the junction of the two give this Suffolk Wildlife Trust reserve its distinctive character and its name. The whole valley is wooded and so a particular delight in its autumn colours.

There is a small car park at TM275433 and from here it is a short walk to the stream. Two bridges allow excellent views of the crystal clear water with crag shells from the springs. Follow the path uphill on to the sandy land for the best views of springs in the valley to the left.

If you wish for a closer look at the Red Crag return to the car park and cross the road, entering a further SWT reserve directly opposite and walking a short distance on the footpath, you will discover the Great Pit and an excellent exposure of shelly Red Crag.

For information on the biodiversity of Newbourne Springs visit the SWT web site

www.suffolkwildlife.co.uk/nr/sites/newb.htm CM

Lowestoft Museum

The Lowestoft Museum in Nicholas Everitt Park by Oulton Broad provides much of interest to geologically minded (and other) visitors. Here local collectors display their finds for us – mammalian bones from the Cromer Forest Bed of Pakefield, information on flaked flints from those beds, and large ammonites from the glacial deposits at Pakefield. The outline of one ammonite is picked out with red wool – simple but effective. Other material includes information on coastal changes at Covehithe, a fine display of Lowestoft porcelain ('local economic geology!'), plus much splendid flint in the exterior walls.

See www.lowestoftmuseum.org

RM

Jonathan Lambert, Sudbury

This independent jeweller has been elected (East Anglian Daily Times 15 August 2009) to membership of the Responsible Jewellery Council; the Council advances responsible business practises throughout the diamond and gold jewellery supply chain.

Jonathan Lambert has held two exhibitions of Australian opals – wonderful for geologists as well as gem enthusiasts. The most recent, of black opals and black opal jewellery, was in October 2006 and included the magnificent 529-carat 'Southern Cross' opal (photograph in EADT 3 October 2006). John Wheeler of the Blue Star Opal mining Company was on hand to answer questions. RM