



Nature on your doorstep

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Southerndown fossils

The rocks at Southerndown, Vale of Glamorgan, are some of the youngest in Wales and were laid down in warm Jurassic seas.

Many of the fossils are in solid rock and should be photographed rather than hammered.

Keep away from the cliffs as they are very unstable and rocks could fall at any time.

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Jurassic

These early Jurassic limestones were formed in clear, warm, shallow seas, high in biodiversity.

The cliffs have alternate layers of blue/grey muds and limestones. The limestones are grey inside, but turn sandy coloured once exposed to the weather.

Most of the fossils will have come from these beds. There are more varieties than those pictured here.

Please do not hammer at the cliffs, or at any fossils in layers of solid rock.

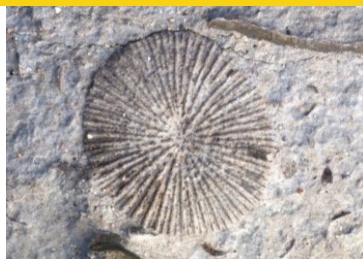
200 million years

Carboniferous

Carboniferous limestone is only seen in the lower part of the headland of Trwyn y Witch.

Thick layers of this grey rock were formed in tropical seas, but few fossils can be found here.

350 million years



Coral

Stylophyllopsis
(1 to 1.5cm across)



Crinoid stem

Isocrinus (up to 1 cm across). They look like five-rayed stars.



Bivalve

Plagiostoma
(5 to 20cm across)



Bivalve *Gryphaea*

(up to 8cm). Sometimes known as 'devil's toenails'.



Bivalve *Pinna*

(up to 15cm across) Seen here as a section through the shell.



Ammonite

Schlotheimia
A small ammonite, up to 3cm across.



Gastropod

Several types can be found. (from 1 to 5cm)



Conifer Wood

Fossilised tree trunks and branches (up to 3m long).



Ammonite

Arietites (up to 40 cm)
The centre is often missing.



Trace fossils

Fossilised burrows in the ancient seabed. (up to 1m long)



Calcite veins

These minerals infill cracks in the limestone.



Folded rocks

Evidence of ancient earth movements.