



Sugar Sands Bay



What will I see?

This bay is a fantastic place to see the different rocks that were once sand, peat, mud and coral reefs and the fossils of the animals and plants that lived here all those years ago.

How old is it?

These rocks are about 325 million years old. They are from the Carboniferous period.

Did you know?

As well as fossils of sea shells (brachiopods) you can find fossil corals, sea lilies and the burrows of ancient animals!

Why it is here?

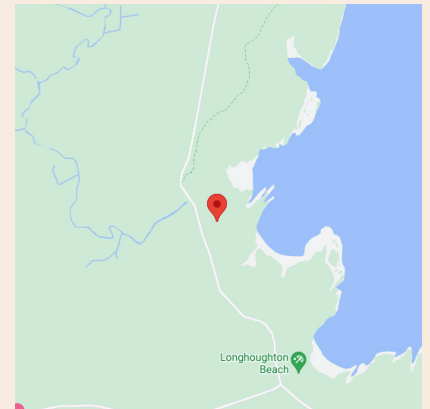
All these different layers of sandstone, shale, limestone and coal tell us that the environment repeatedly changed from fast flowing rivers, to swampy forests, coastal lagoons, to coral seas. They also show that sea level kept rising and falling many times then; probably because the Earth's polar ice caps were melting and then expanding. So we know that climate change has happened before – many times.

And wildlife?

The bay is well-known botanically as a site for seaside centaury, and several sedges including distant sedge, which is not common in Northumberland. In the autumn agrimony can be found as several salt loving plants such as orache spp.

Where is it?

On the coast east of Alnwick. Park near Low Stead Farm [NU 262 157], 2 km east-northeast of Longhoughton and walk north along the foreshore.



Want to know more?

- NNP Geodiversity Audit
- Onshore GeoIndex
- iGeology
- Geological history of Northumbria
- Carboniferous rocks
- Northumberland Coast AONB

