



Northumberland
Wildlife Trust

Green Carts old quarry



What will I see?

Hundreds of fossils of large sea shells, a brachiopod called **Gigantoproductus**; they reach 15 cm across! Also there are the fossils of corals and other sea creatures, all weathering out of limestone rock in an old quarry in the middle of Wark forest.

How old is it?

These rocks are about 335 million years old. The rock is called the Fourlaws Limestone and it's from the Carboniferous period.

Did you know?

Brachiopods have been around more than 550 million years and there are a few species still living today. Our fossil brachiopods lived permanently attached to a rocky sea bed in a warm sea. They had no defence except their hard shells enclosing their soft organs.

Why it is here?

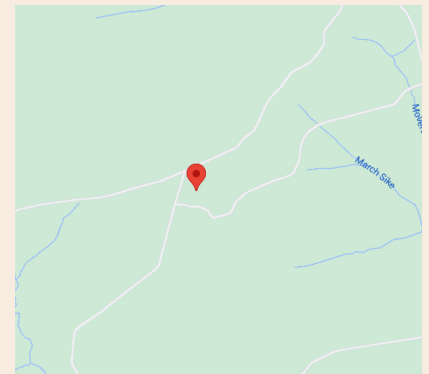
Limestones like this are made of calcium carbonate from the shells and skeletons of billions of sea creatures, including brachiopods, together with carbonate mud. The environment at the time was a warm shallow sub-tropical sea.

And wildlife?

The old quarry is tucked away in a clearing in the middle of a sitka spruce forest. The floor of the quarry has a carpet of glaucous sedge and mouse ear hawkweed with fairy flax and bird's foot trefoil. There are lots of tiny spruce seedlings as well. In late summer see if you can find the spikes of autumn gentian in the south east corner of the quarry. Roe deer are common and you will hear great tits and coal tits. If you are very, very lucky you may see a goshawk.

Where is it?

In the southern part of Wark Forest [NY773715] and it's a challenge! It is a long walk from the south – take the Pennine Way from just west of Housesteads. Or you could mountain bike in from the end of the tarmac road to Scotchcoulard.



Want to know more?

- NNP Geodiversity Audit
- Onshore GeoIndex
- iGeology
- Geological history of Northumbria

