



# Limestone Corner



## What will I see?

A large ditch partially excavated through hard igneous rock, with broken boulders scattered around. In one large block you can see the chisel marks the Romans made to try and split it.

## How old is it?

This is the ditch that the Roman's dug immediately in front of Hadrian's Wall. It was excavated around 122-130 AD. The rock is 295 million years old.

## Did you know?

Limestone Corner is **NOT** limestone. The rock here is Whin Sill; geologists call it dolerite, an igneous rock, and it was once molten. It was so hard here that the Romans gave up trying to get through it here. But their colleagues digging the Vallum (the behind-the-Wall ditch) in the same rock about 100 metres further south managed to finish their job!

## Why it is here?

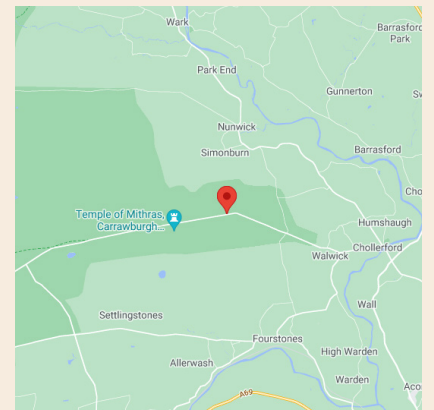
The ditch is part of the defences of the Roman Empire. The rock is here because billions of tons of molten magma was injected from deep in the Earth in between the layers of Carboniferous limestones and sandstones. Then it cooled and solidified.

## And wildlife?

As you walk along the base of the quarried channel look out for wild thyme and wood sage growing in cracks and on the shelves amongst the rocks. The dandelion-like flowers of mouse-ear hawkweed are also common here. At the eastern end of the channel see if you can find the tufts of parsley fern, uncommon in Northumberland, growing in shady crevices.

## Where is it?

Immediately north of the B3618 Military Road [NY876716]. 100 metres from a small parking pull-in.



## Want to know more?

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

