



Saltpan Rocks



What will I see?

Limestone rock bent into one incredible fold and several arches (anticlines). And in the limestone, which has been polished by the sea, there are many fossils of ancient sea creatures – sea shells: a brachiopod called *Gigantoproductus* and corals.

How old is it?

The limestones, which alternate with sandstones, shales and thin coals, were deposited in a sub-tropical clear, coral sea in Carboniferous times 330 million years ago.

Did you know?

The changing rocks – limestones, followed by shales (mudstones), then sandstones, seatearths (fossil soils), and thin coals – repeated many times. Geologists think this tells a story of rising and falling sea level as the Earth's ice caps grew and then melted millions of years ago. In many ways that's like the period of Earth's history we live in today.

Why it is here?

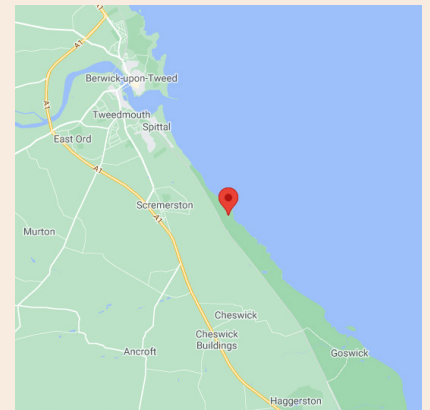
The rocks were bent and folded when Britain and northern Europe were part of the building of an enormous mountain chain about 290 to 300 million years ago.

And wildlife?

The dunes are calcareous owing to shell fragments, and you could find purple milk-vetch, burnet rose, viper's bugloss and bloody crane's-bill (including a pale pink variety). On the backshore is Scots lovage, which reaches its southern-most east coast limit in north Northumberland. Shorebirds include purple sandpiper, turnstone and oystercatcher.

Where is it?

Just to the east of Scremerston. You can park beside the coast road at Cocklawburn Beach and walk north. [NU 036 478].



Want to know more?

- Geodiversity Audit
- Onshore GeoIndex
- iGeology
- Geological history of Northumbria
- Carboniferous rocks

