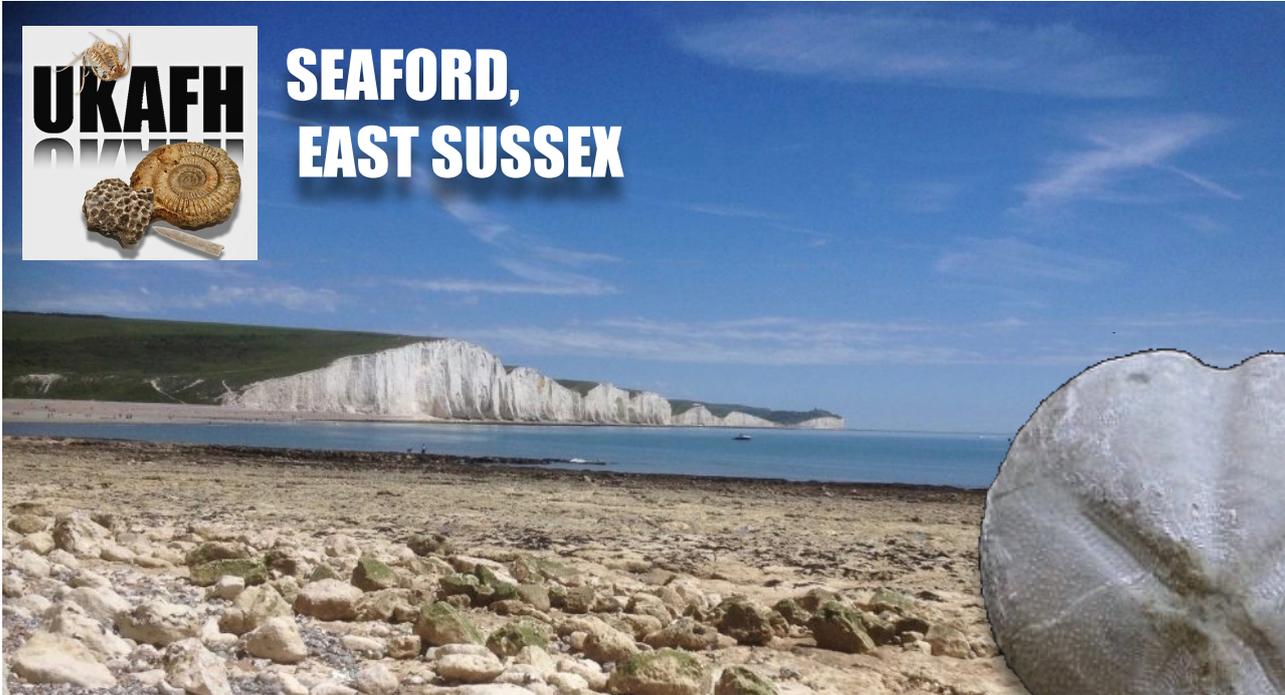


UKAFH



SEAFORD, EAST SUSSEX



INTRODUCTION TO SEAFORD

Thank you for enrolling on our fossil hunting event.

Seaford Head and cliffs form part of the wonderful Sussex coast, overlooking the Seven Sisters Country Park and cliffs and where the foreshore provides a good location for the Chalk fossil enthusiast.

Fossils are found in Chalk fallen blocks on the beach and as flint casts. Echinoids, sponges, bivalves and other fossils are common. These are of Cretaceous age, from the Coniacian stage of 89 to 86 million years ago.

Once on the beach, fossils can be found in any direction in boulders, rocks and flint nodules, which are strewn over the beach. The cliffs and platform are designated SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), so hammering is restricted to fallen blocks.

Carefully use a geological hammer and a chisel to extract fossils from the Chalk. Always use safety glasses or goggles when hammering rocks, to protect your eyes from flying fragments and others in close proximity are advised to do the same.

Most fossils from the Chalk require little in the way of preservation but de-salinating them is a good idea. Simply drop them into a pair of nylon tights and leave in a toilet cistern for a few days, which will wash them thoroughly, with a regular change of fresh water!

THE GEOLOGY

The earliest chalk at Seaford Head belongs to the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and dates from the Coniacian stage of the Cretaceous epoch of 89 Mya. The formation is well exposed on the foreshore and in the lower half of the cliff. Above this, the Seaford Chalk Formation, appears higher in the cliff.

From the steps at Hope Gap towards Seaford, an intermittent ledge protrudes from the cliff base. The upper surface indicates the top of the Hope Gap Hardground; a conspicuous layer composed of iron-stained nodular white chalk, interspersed with soft, grey chalk.

Above the Hope Gap Hardground are the Beeding Hardgrounds, also belonging to the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, containing an abundance of *in situ* shattered flints



WHAT FOSSILS MIGHT YOU FIND?

At any fossil hunting event, you cannot be guaranteed to find fossils. The frequency of fossils depends on the rates of erosion of the cliffs, the weather and of course, if others have already scoured the site beforehand!

The most common fossils at Seaford are echinoids, molluscs, sponges (*shown below*) and other fossils associated with the White Chalk Subgroup.



Echinoids (such as this *Micraster*, preserved in flint) can be picked up from the beach shingle.



Echinoids and bivalves (*shown below*) are common finds at Seaford.



We hope you enjoy your day at Seaford. Please visit our website for further events which might be of interest to you at <https://ukafh.com/> Our book, with over 50 other sites across England & Wales, can be purchased at £16.95 here: http://www.ukge.com/en-GB/A-guide-to-fossil-collecting-in-England-and-Wales_p-3439.aspx

