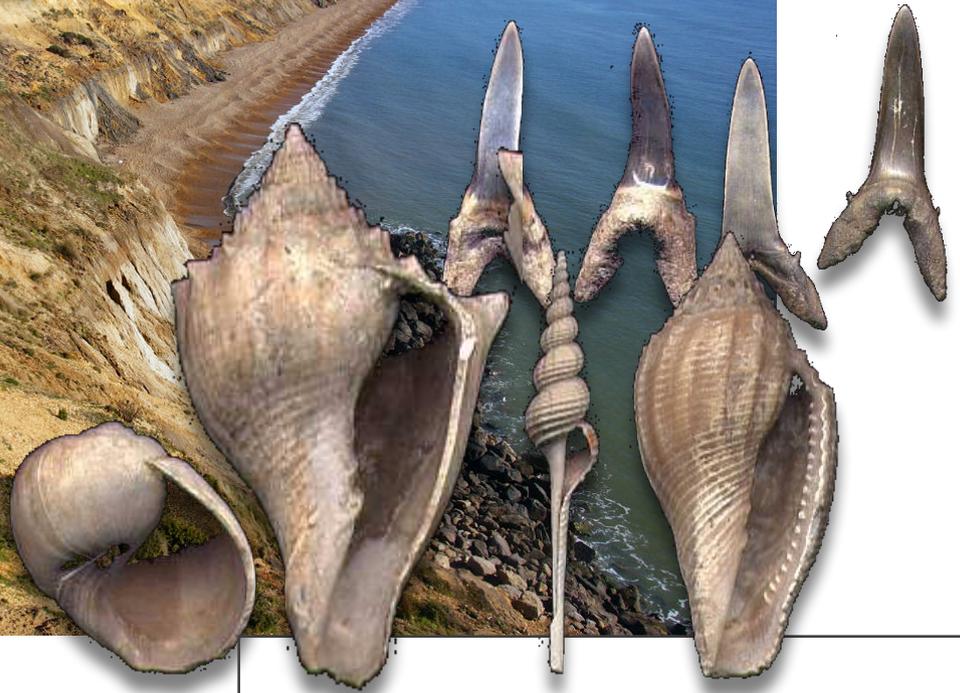




BARTON - ON - SEA HAMPSHIRE



INTRODUCTION TO BARTON ON SEA

Thank you for enrolling on our fossil hunting event.

The fast-eroding coastline at Barton on Sea provides a fantastic location for collecting fossils from the Barton Beds, which are comprised of Eocene clays and sands of approximately 40 million years in age.

The site is famed for its fossils of more than 600 different types of shells, which represent a time when Britain was bathed in a climate not dissimilar to modern Spain. Other common fossils include shark and ray teeth, turtle bones and carapace and fish remains.

The cliffs between Barton-on-Sea and Highcliffe is highly fossiliferous and the sandy beach here makes it an ideal location for children. Climbing the crumbling cliffs is not recommended but at beach level (and even among the tourist sunbathers!) the low clay cliffs and slippages provide ample opportunity for the collector.

Collection requires little effort. Walking east from the car park, toilets and restaurant, the fossils can be gently prised from the clays. The eroded cliffs often leave the fossil standing proud, ready for collection. A small amount of preparation, with an old, dry toothbrush to gently remove any clay and sand, is all that is required.

THE GEOLOGY

The Barton Beds are totally representative of a marine environment. The clays were deposited at the bottom of a warm, marginal sea shelf, close to land during the Eocene epoch.

The Barton Clay here is about 30 metres thick and overlain by the Chama Sands and Becton Sand. The changes in sea level are clearly seen and represented by various layers found within the Barton Clay. There are 10 beds in total, indicating shallow, near-shore and deeper off-shore conditions. The presence of wood and plant material indicates the nearby land during deposition.

The shells are quite exquisite and often resemble modern tropical shells. Their preparation requires no more than gentle brushing and a coating of a dilute solution of PVA: water at a rate of 1:3, which will preserve the shell for years to come.



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!

However, gastropod and bivalve shells (see *photos below*) are a very common finds. Preparation is easy and the fossil will require nothing more than a dry clean with a toothbrush (preferably an old one!)



Below: Shark and ray teeth are found in the cliffs but also on the beach, particularly in the accumulations of fine shingle.



We hope you enjoy your day at Barton on Sea. 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

