Down to Earth *extra*

Issue 159 March 2026

NEWS FLASH...

2026 Trips..

- **Shropshire Summer School**
- **Vacancies on Cornwall, Minehead & Anglesey**

Zoom sessions
BOOK NOW!

- **The Wednesday Club**
- **Greenland Zoom**
- **Life on earth in 100+ minutes Zoom**

What are you waiting for?

This is Newton Point, just to the east of Lochranza on the Island of Arran where James Hutton first set eyes on an unconformity. The year was 1787 and at this stage he was yet to confirm deep time.

Here we see metamorphic Dalradian phyllite overlain by sediments from the Carboniferous, meaning a gap in recorded time of around 200 million years.

(Image: Chris Darmon)

From the Editorial team...

On a recent visit to my local ASDA store I took a little more interest in some bags in the entrance than I would usually do. If, like me, you're a customer of several UK supermarkets you may have become accustomed to seeing 'odd' products in various places in the store. Lidl have their famous 'Lidl in the middle' items - which are labelled 'when they're gone - they're gone' and yes indeed they are usually worth a miss!

But in this case, my bags in the entrance area would have been more at home in a garden centre than a supermarket. They were large bags of rock chippings and they were being offered at a bargain price - three 20 kg bags for £12.00. So, just to be clear, the buyer gets several thousand tiny pieces of rock for a mere £4.00 a bag.

Closer examination of the bags of stone revealed them to be around 20mm in size. They come from a company called GRS Group which is based in Nuneaton in Warwickshire. One of the two types on offer here at my local Sheffield ASDA was labelled as Cotswold Stone and the other as Blue Slate.

I assume that the Cotswold Stone is fragments of Jurassic oolitic limestone. The Blue Slate, I guess comes from some of the waste slate tips in North Wales. That said, I struggled to find pieces with good slaty cleavage. Either way, these bags tell you a lot about the way we value, or otherwise, the natural resources we have in our country.

Remember that these humble bags of stone have had to be removed from a working quarry, certainly in the case of the Cotswold stone, and then taken to a bagging site and finally transported around the country to the supermarkets. Along the way, several different people have had to make their cut of the £4.00 end user price. Think about all those 'stone miles' that have been accumulated along the way! As to whether you think this is a good use of such valuable resources, I'll leave you to decide. But are they good value, yes indeed they are.

Chris Darmon & Colin Schofield
The Down to Earth Editorial Team

Get a complete look at our trips for 2026 and the chance to book your place(s) now! See pages 9-11 for details.

news update

Wet, wet, wet - the Winter of '26...

"When will it ever stop raining?" That;s been the cry of so many people during the first two months of 2026. At least one Cornish community has endured rain every day of the year so far.

There have been so many weather related stories with a geological dimension we're devoting much of our news update to the subject...

Cornish golf course gains an extra hole...

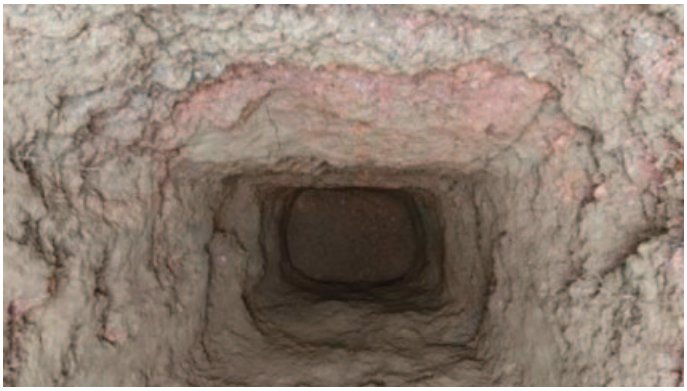
A popular 18-hole golf course at Perranporth in North Cornwall, now has an extra hole and it's not the usual 19th-hole, the club house bar!

The course is close to the coast and much of it is a dunes course. At the end of January after prolonged and often heavy rainfall, a 10 metre deep hole opened up. It's presumed to be a long abandoned, and clearly uncapped mineshaft.

The area is peppered with mineshafts mainly from the mid to late nineteenth century, when the miners were looking for tin veins.

The Clerk of Perranzabuloe Parish Council, Amanda Coleman said: "Following initial inspections, these are believed to be associated with the collapse of historic mine shafts, likely triggered by the recent period of heavy rainfall. Cornwall, including this area, has a long mining history and such features can become unstable during prolonged wet conditions."

Talking to ***CornwallLive***, the parish council clerk added: "We are



The 10 m deep hole - clearly an old mineshaft and a golfing hazard (Image: Perranporth Gold Club)

treating this as a volatile and potentially dangerous situation. The parish council is currently working closely with Cornwall Mining

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Consultants, the Duchy of Cornwall, and other relevant authorities to assess the extent of the issue, make the area safe, and undertake appropriate remedial works as a matter of urgency."

It is thought that some of the holes are the legacy of Wheal Ramoth mine, which reached about 300ft (91m) underground, but responsibility for making the shafts safe now rests with Perranzabuloe Parish Council - work that can cost between £5,000 and £250,000 depending on the complexity.

Mining engineer Chris Rogers says the recent subsidence is related to the persistent and exceptional heavy rainfall which began in the Autumn of 2025 and is ongoing. Rogers says these old mineshafts were often covered with wooden boards. Speaking to the BBC he said: "They probably thought they would last 150 years... and they were right," he says. "Now unfortunately that time has come through and you've got wooden boards that have failed and rotted away, that has left a friction surface over the top of them and then the water comes along there are collapses. I would say 95% of subsidences are caused by water."

At this point in time, some, though not all, of the holes have been fenced off. As for the golf course, it's open as normal with golfers being urged to stay clear of the fenced off areas.

Meanwhile in Devon the A379 at Torcross will be closed for some time...

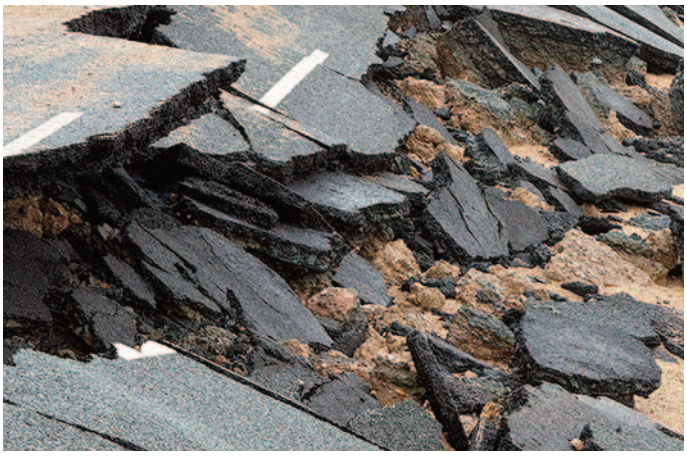
The A379 is a scenic coastal route that connects Exeter to Plymouth via an indirect route along the South Devon coast. It runs from Kennford through Dawlish, Teignmouth, Torquay, Paignton, Dartmouth (via ferry), and Kingsbridge before ending in Plymouth. Known locally as the Slapton Line it has been severed at Torcross, meaning that some villages are facing a long diversion for people going to and from Dartmouth.

The damage was initially caused by storm Ingrid in January and bad weather since has only made the situation progressively worse. The latest estimate for reinstatement of road is at least £18 million, a figure well beyond the resources of the LibDem led County Council.

The former A379 at Torcross, Devon, where boulders have now been placed on the beach.
(Image: Kim Willis, LDRS)

Large boulders have been placed along the affected stretch of coast to try and prevent further damage, but several hundred metres of road have almost disappeared into the sea.

In a statement Devon County Council said: "Early estimates to rebuild the road are currently around £18m, but this figure does not include the cost of any sea defences. We are still gathering more detailed costs for several key aspects of work. This will continue over the coming weeks so that we can build an accurate picture for the Department for Transport and our partners."



This was the A379 at Torcross, it will have to be completely rebuilt in a different place.
(Image: South Hams District Council)

South Hams District Council noted on their website that "the southern section of the road and sheet piling at Torcross has now suffered significant damage, with one lane collapsed on a section of around 200 metres. Part of our "Torcross Tank" car park has also been lost, and properties in Torcross have been damaged as well."

Councillor Julian Brazil, Devon County Council Leader and South Hams District Council's Lead Member for Community Services and

Operations said: “It’s devastating for the local community, and our priority is the families whose lives and livelihoods are directly affected by this. The route is not looking good and we’re likely to be looking at tens of millions of pounds to repair it. The County can’t afford to rebuild the road and we’re desperately looking for help from government. The Chief Executive and I are in Westminster with local MP Caroline Voaden, banging the drum and making representations on behalf of people in the local community, to do as much as we can for them.”

Councillor Dan Thomas, Leader of South Hams District Council and County Council Cabinet Member for Highways said: “We’ve been trying everything to protect this section of the road as best we can since Storm Ingrid, but sadly the ongoing challenging weather conditions have taken their toll. Our teams are on site and we’re working with partners to assess the situation and work out what our next steps will be. We’ll certainly be doing everything possible to seek help from the Government.”

Railway cutting landslip at Darton in South Yorkshire

The ‘slow slip’ at Darton began like this, but got worse over a number of hours. (Image: Network Rail)

At Darton, just north of Barnsley the Sheffield to Leeds railway line passes through a fairly deep cutting on either side a tunnel that passes under the M1 and Woolley Edge Services. In mid-February after days of heavy rain part of the cutting on the south side of the tunnel began to slowly give way.

Over a thousand tonnes of material had to be moved. (Image: Network Rail)

Network Rail had to close the line and remove more than a 1000 tonnes of loose shale before they were able to allow trains to run again. It’s this kind of scenario, often involving similar rock, that’s being problematic all over the UK right now, given the weather conditions.In the short term at least, it’s likely to get worse before it gets better.

Meanwhile in Wales, try this for an extreme pothole...

A giant sinkhole at Rhondda Cynon Taf, which buried this road , and sweeper. (Image: Local handout)

Across the country everyone is talking about potholes. Indeed it seems that you can’t venture out anywhere without encountering what the Mayor of South Yorkshire describes as being “like the Winter Olympics out there with the number of slaloms in place across some of the roads in Sheffield”. Indeed, it’s little better anywhere in South Yorkshire.

One of those ‘slalom courses’ exists just metres from where the Editor is composing this issue of ***DtoE extra***. To be fair the roads near you are probably the same, or even worse.

But it has to be said that they aren’t as bad as what happened between Porth and Ynyshir, Rhondda Cynon Taf, at about 14:20 on the afternoon of February 3rd.

It seems that after heavy rain, a former mine shaft opened up and the road sweeper vehicle just happened to be passing. Luckily the driver was shaken but otherwise was uninjured.

The Mining Remediation Authority said it was "working closely" with the police and council “to secure the area and carry out thorough investigations to understand the cause of the incident and any potential risks. If this incident was due to historic coal mining, we will design and deliver a permanent solution as quickly and safely as possible,” it added.

And finally, we return to South Devon and a famous stretch of railway...

Just over 10 years ago the main railway line from London to Plymouth and Penzance was severed close to Dawlish where the Great West line runs along the seawall. Since then 10s of millions of pounds have been spent in an attempt to secure the line for the long term. Beginning at the end of January the coast has been battered by further storms and there has been considerable damage. However the newly complete seawall, built after the 2014 major washout appears to have held firm.

This hole next to the railway was discovered on January 28th. (Image: Great Western Railway)

The railway had to be briefly closed whilst debris from the collapse of the promenade boundary wall was removed and a large hole close t the line was filled in. That said, it has renewed local pressure on the possible reopening of a long closed inland route across Dartmoor.

A tribute to Leo Ross, a keen fossil collector, who was sadly murdered on his way home...

Leo Ross was a 12-year old schoolboy who was walking to meet a friend in a park in Birmingham on January 21st. But on the way he was stabbed to death by a then 14-year old who is now serving a 13 year sentence for for his knifing.

Leo was a smallboy for his age, who has been described as being a loving child wirth a bright future ahead of him. It also emerged that he was a keen fossil collector.

Get Down to Earth - by e-mail...

If you’ve enjoyed reading this Down to Earth extra, you’ll love our quarterly Down to Earth! It’s a 32-page quality magazine in full colour that’s packed with up to the minute geological news and articles. You can get your hands on this either in print or electronic formats. Why not request a FREE sample electronic copy of the current issue?

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Murder victim Leo Ross, loved fossils, rocks and crystals (Image: Family handout)

Chris Ross, Leo's father said: "He was the opposite of me. I tried to get him boxing lessons, but he wasn't like that, he didn't have that in him. All he wanted to do was look through his microscope at fossils, crystals and gems. He loved his rocks and gems. He loved nature, anything wild like that, he loved it. He also loved playing on his PS5. He was such a good kid - he was always happy and he just loved everyone."

A crocodile called Jones...

The Natural History Museum reports...
A new species of crocodylomorph dating to around 215 million years ago has been described from the UK. It;s been called *Galahadosuchus jonesi* in recognition of David Rhys Jones, a secondary school physics teacher from Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi who gave inspiration and encouragement to one of the authors to pursue a career in science.

A strange-looking ancient relative of crocodiles used to roam what is now the southern UK. The Late Triassic fossil of a type of crocodylomorph was unearthed in southwestern England in 1969, but has been sitting in our collections just waiting for its significance to be realised. Now, a team of researchers have named this animal as a new species called *Galahadosuchus jonesi.*

A reconstruction of the ancient crocodile - a sleek animal. (Image: Matt Dempsey)

Looking a little like a reptilian greyhound, this animal lived on land and was fast-moving, with slender, elongated limbs. It would have stalked the undergrowth for small reptiles, amphibians and early mammals when this part of the world was an upland surrounded by hot, arid plains.

The first part of the species name comes from Galahad, a knight renowned in Arthurian legend for his moral uprightness, as a reflection of the crocodylomorph's upright stance. But the second part of the name honours David Rhys Jones, a schoolteacher at Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi in Cardigan, who taught the paper's lead author.

"We named it after my secondary school physics teacher," says Ewan Bodenham, a PhD student and lead author of the new paper. "Mr Jones was just such a good teacher, not only in being able to explain things well, but you could tell that he was genuinely interested in the sciences. I think that really inspired me."

"He also didn't let me settle. He was very good at challenging people and helping students be the best they can be. Above all, he's a very funny, genuine, nice guy."

The new species has been described and named in the journal ***The Anatomical Recordopens*** in a new window.

The remains of the ancient crocodile came from a series of geological features known as the fissure deposits, which are found on both sides of the Bristol Channel in southern Wales and southwest England.

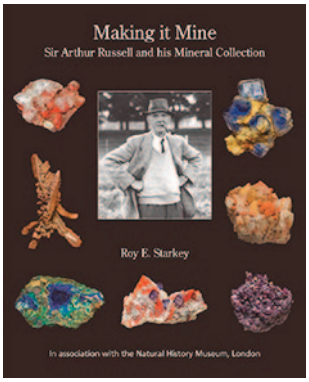
During the Late Triassic, this region would have been a coastal environment dominated by a limestone karst system. This is when the ground is made up of soft limestone, which over time becomes riddled with sinkholes and caves, a bit like those seen across the Balkan peninsula or throughout much of southeast Asia.

This means that the remains of animals that died on the surface were washed into these caves and then covered with sediment. Over time the fissures were filled with the bones of all sorts of animals that lived in the region between about 230 and 200 million years ago.

This includes the remains of some of the earliest known dinosaurs, such as Thecodontosaurus and Pendraig, but also a whole range of other animals that they lived alongside. There is an incredible selection of smaller reptiles like Cryptovaranoides, which is thought to be one of the earliest known lizards, Threordatoth, a horned lizard-like animal, and *Kuehneosaurus*, a gliding reptile.

The fossil came from Cromhall Quarry in Gloucestershire, but during the Late Triassic this region would have been a coastal environment dominated by a limestone karst system.

'Making it mine' is available from us...



In the mineral world, the name of Sir Arthur Russell is almost at the level of royalty. Sir Arthur Edward Ian Montague Russell, 6th Baronet (30 November 1878 – 24 February 1964[1]) was a eminent amateur British mineralogist. The Russell Society which is Britain's foremost society for today's mineral collectors is named after him.

Roy Starkey is well known as an author of numerous mineral books and many of you will have heard him talk at a local geological society.

Thanks to Roy, we are able to offer limited copies of his volume about Sir Arthur Russell's mineral collection "Making it Mine" at a specially reduced price - see the back cover of this issue for details.

Down to Earth

"Earth science learning for all"

Announcing our eighth Summer School...

Harper Adams University
Shropshire
August 8-15 2026

Shropshire geology at its very best!

- 6 full days of field work with a choice on some days
- Precambrian & Cambrian rocks of the Church Stretton area
- A visit to the Abberley & Malvern Hills geopark
- A visit to the Black Country geopark
- The Lapworth geological museum at Birmingham University
- Geology of the Clent & Lickey Hills
- Triassic geology of Grinshill
- Rocks of the Onny Valley
- In the steps of Roderick Murchison at Ludlow
- Coach/minibus transport to field locations with a choice on some days
- Full board accommodation in single ensuite rooms (can also be double rooms)
- Evening talks and activities from visiting speakers and our own team
- Social events and opportunities for down time

Everyone is invited to join us for our annual Summer School. The cost is £1495.00 per person whether you are in a single or shared room.

See the brochure & book online at www.geosupplies.co.uk
Email downtoearth@geosupplies.co.uk or ring us on 0114 245 5746
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Down to Earth
'Earth science learning for all'

The learning zone

Great geo-adventures in 2026 begin here...

Portreath lies on Cornwall's north coast, just a couple of miles from Redruth. It's home to some fine cliffs and fabulous rocks and structures.
(Image: Chris Darmon)

We have a couple of late vacancies on the Northwest Highlands trip trip (April 14-22) due to a cancellation - contact us for details NOW!

We can accommodate couples on each of the following trips: Central Cornwall, Minehead, Anglesey and Melrose.

Remember that there are plenty of single rooms on our Summer School to Shropshire (August 8-15).

To view a brochure, go to our to website at: www.geosupplies.co.uk or Tel: 0114 245 5746

Remember that booking forms are only available direct from us:
Email: downtoearth@geosupplies.co.uk

Residential Field trip programme 2026...

2026

- The Jurassic Coast of Dorset, March 27-April 1
- Northwest Highlands of Scotland, April 14-22 Two late vacancies
- Central Cornwall, May 1-8
- Teesdale & North Pennines, May 16-23 FULL
- Minehead & North Somerset, June 7-12
- Shetland, The Northern Isles, June 17-25 FULL
- Anglesey, July 5-10
- Summer School, Shropshire, August 8-15
- Iceland, September 13-22 - ask us
- Melrose, the Scottish Borders, October 18-24

Early booking is advised, especially if you are looking for a single room.

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If you haven't joined one of our residential field trips before, what can you expect?

- ***Our residential field trips are suitable for adults of all levels of interest and geological knowledge.***
- ***Our trips are friendly and informal and usually comprise 15-20 people. Overseas trips are usually larger.***
- ***We usually make use of comfortable small hotels and guest houses and all meals are included.***
- ***You have the services of Chris Darmon and Colin Schofield as field leaders. Both are highly experienced and knowledgeable field geologists.***
- ***For some trips we have a hired minibus but on other trips we will use shared cars, or even public transport.***
- ***Dates shown in this listing are the start and finish dates.***
- ***Where prices are quoted, they are per person in a shared twin/double room.***

If you still have any questions or queries, don't hesitate to email us at: downtoearth@geosupplies.co.uk or tel: 0114 245 5746

Before you book on one of our trips...

We are always pleased to welcome new people along on our trips. So if you are thinking about it, what do you need to know before you 'take the plunge'?

Who are the trips aimed at?

The short answer is that they are not aimed at any particular group of people. Our participants are mainly older retired people who want to keep their minds and bodies active, but younger people are welcome.

Some people have lots of geological field experience whilst others are complete beginners. As one person put it to us "I've forgotten all I once knew and need to come along to hear it again." Our UK trips are all small groups of 15 to 20 people maximum so we can make lots of what we say personal to you.

In recent years we've run several special trips for American geologists and now some of them join us on our regular trips, adding greatly to the character of our field experiences.

Will I be able to manage the walking?

We always try to keep walking to a minimum, but, almost by definition, some walking will be involved. If you can't manage a particular walk, just tell us and it will never be a problem for you not to do it. We have one person who really enjoys sketching - she's done some amazing sketches while the rest of us visit a quarry!

How do we get about on trips?

It varies a lot from trip to trip. Sometimes we hire a minibus, on other occasions we use public transport and at other times we'll make use of shared cars. Look at the details for each trip to find out.

What about accommodation?

We always try to use hotels or guest houses that have ensuite rooms as standard. Most of our accommodation will provide breakfast and evening meals, but sometimes we eat in local restaurants. We include the cost of all food, including a packed lunch for each field day.

We prefer to use small family run hotels and guest houses but they are getting harder to find, so sometimes we use larger hotels such as Premier Inns and hotels in the Leisureplex group. Once again, see the individual trip brochures for details.

Are your bookings safe with us?

Yes indeed they are! We've been in the business of running trips a long time and ensure that all the money you pay us is safe in a client trust account until your trip is completed.

The 2026 programme...

We are delighted with how well our programme of field trips for 2026 has been received. That said, we still have vacancies on some trips especially for couples or people willing to share a twin room.

If you haven't been with us before, you are particularly welcome, but please don't leave it too long before making your booking. Over the past year we've lost count of the number of people who have left it too late and we have had to decline their booking.

The Jurassic Coast of Dorset, March 27-April 1 £995
Believe it or not, we have not visited the famous Jurassic Coast of Dorset since 2017, so it's high time that we put that right! As on the last occasion, we're basing our trip at the seaside town of Weymouth which is well connected in terms of public transport and also has suitable accommodation for us to use. We're going early in the season so that we can offer you a good value trip, but with the recent pattern of mild winters, we hope that by the end of March it will be reasonably warm.

The magnificent Durdle Door (Image: Visit Dorset)

As for the magnificent geology what can we say? We hope to take in some of the area's 'gems' including Durdle Door, Lulworth Cove and Swanage. It would also be good to call in on Mary Anning's favourite stomping ground of Lyme Regis. We also hope to take in the amazing fossil collection on show at Dorchester Museum.
We have a possible single and a double vacancy for this trip!

Welcome to our exciting world!

The Northwest Highlands of Scotland, April 14-22 £1695
Ask Colin and Chris what their favourite trip is and they will answer "the Northwest Highlands". It combines their favourite hotel with their favourite geology and landscape! Accordingly we are once again offering this 8-night gem even though we were last there in 2024. On this trip we pay homage to Britain's oldest rocks in the form of the 3 billion year old Lewisian Gneisses, along with the overlying Torridonian Sandstones and the Cambro-Ordovician sediments. These all came together as a result of the Caledonian Orogeny some 420 million years ago.

In much more recent times, the Ice Ages of the last 2 million years have given us the most beautiful and unspoilt landscape that we can enjoy today.
Thanks to late cancellations to have vacancies on this trip.

Central Cornwall, May 1-8 £1595
We discovered Tricky's at the Tolgus Inn in Redruth in time to take two groups of Americans during 2025. Now we are offering the location to our regular clients! Redruth is centrally located on the main railway line from London Paddington and allows us to reach most of the main parts of Cornwall without long journeys.

Old mines and magnificent coasts.
(Image: Into Cornwall)

During this week we'll be taking in the granites of Lands End, the ophiolites of the Lizard, the china clays of St Austell and the amazing folded rocks of North Cornwall around Tintagel and Boscastle. We'll also go down a tin mine and visit Wheal Martyn China Clay Museum. We'll have the use of a locally hired minibus or coach to get around on this trip, making it possible for everyone.
We still have some double and twin rooms available!

Teesdale and the North Pennines, May 16-23 £1395
We've been looking to visit this area for some time and have never quite got around to it until now! Finding the wonderful family run Teesdale Hotel was the final piece in the jigsaw and hey presto - here we have a new location! We'll be taking in the wonderful Upper Teesdale with its Lower Palaeozoic inlier along with High Force, Lowe Force and Cauldron Snout. There's great limestone scenery as well as the Great Whin Sill. Over in Weardale we'll take in the lead mines around St John's Chapel and Killhope as well as the Frosterley Marble and the fossil tree at Stanhope.
This trip is now fully booked, ask us about cancellations.

Minehead & North Somerset, June 7-12 £995

The fabulous coastal cliffs at Watchet in North Somerset.
(Image: Chris Darmon)

Everyone knows about Dorset's 'Jurassic Coast', but similar fossiliferous rocks also outcrop to the east of the seaside resort of Minehead, around Watchet & Blue Anchor on Somerset's North Coast. During this 5-night trip we'll be taking in these rocks, as well as fabulous coastal scenery to the west around Ilfracombe and the Valley of Rocks at Lynton which are carved in Devonian strata. We will also take in some great Carboniferous limestone strata around Weston-super-Mare and Portishead that also includes rare basalt.

Private minibus transport will be provided each day allowing everyone to enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Exmoor National Park. We stay at a 4-star guest house in Minehead and enjoy excellent food in local restaurants for our evening meals. All this with the added bonus of a ride on the Lynton cliff railway!
We can still accommodate a few more people in twin or double rooms.

Shetland - the North Isles, June 17-25 £1895
Everyone should visit the Shetland Isles at least once in their lives, so says Chris, who's been there around a dozen times over the past 40 years. The best time to visit Shetland is around mid-Summer when it never really gets dark.

We invite you to join us as we take in the North of Mainland and the Northern Isles of Unst, Fetlar and Yell, home to some of the most amazing geology in the entire UK. Visit the Moho in a small quarry in Unst and get yourself a sample of serpentine to rival any from Cornwall.Why not begin our Shetland adventure with an overnight boat trip from Aberdeen?
This trip is now fully booked, ask us about cancellations.

Anglesey, July 5-10 £995
We love going to Ynys Mon, or as the English know it, Anglesey. As a long established geopark it's geology is superb and also unique as the main location to see rocks of the Mona Complex.Based at the former copper port of Amlwch in the north of the island we will explore some of the best sites on the island, many of which are close to our base.

The Dinorben Arms Hotel, our base on Anglesey

Come with us to see some very rare rocks and also experience some fine coastal scenery. On this trip you get to see sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic rocks of many types!
We have double and twin rooms available for this trip.

Come and join our Summer School!
Our Summer School is modelled on those that used to be run by the Open University a number of years ago. All are based on a campus of one sort or another where we can sleep in largely single, en-suite study bedrooms and enjoy on site meals. They are also more than just field trips with dedicated transport each day. There's an evening programme of talks from local experts and also social events. In short - something for everybody, including those with limited mobility!

Summer School at Harper Adams University in Shropshire
August 8-15 £1495
For our ever popular Summer School week, we are returning to the campus of Harper Adams Agricultural University which sits in lovely grounds in Shropshire. We last visited in 2018 and have a packed itinerary planned including some new localities.

Shropshire is home to a wealth of geology spanning many time periods and covering many types of rocks and landscape. We'll be taking in the Precambrian rocks of the Church Stretton area, the Lower Palaeozoic sediments of Wenlock Edge and the Lickey Hills as well as later rocks in Cheshire and the Black Country.

Highly fossiliferous Silurian limestones at the Wren's Nest National Nature Reserve in Dudley.
(Image: Visit Birmingham)

Yes, there's something for everyone and that's before we add in the evening talks and activities as well as the excellent company.
We have plenty of single rooms available on this trip!

Iceland - the North & East Fjords, September 13-22 £2595
These days a lot of people go to Iceland, but they very rarely visit the north and east of country. In this trip with our usual guide and driver Ingi, we'll begin at Keflavik near the airport and then travel to Akueyri before working our way clockwise to Myvatn to the volcano Krafla before heading to the beautiful east Fjords.

We'll stop in the amazing geo-village of Borgarfjarðar Eystri to see Iceland's most colourful rhyolitic rocks. The last time we were here we did see the Northern Lights in all their glory! Iceland is an amazing place but these days much of it is over visited by tourists. This cannot be said for some of the places that we will be visiting on this trip. This is the real Iceland, where natural wonders and beauty are able to shine without the smell of hamburgers!To complete our trip we travel back from Hofn to Keflavik completing our circuit of Iceland. There's an option of an additional night at the end to have a day looking at the most recent volcanic activity on the Reykjanes peninsula and viewing the recent - and still hot - lavas.
Two places in shared twin rooms available - one male & one female

Melrose in the Scottish Borders, October 18-24 £995
We end the year with a good value 6-night trip to a new area of the Scottish Borders. Melrose is in the heart of an excellent area of fine geology, with sediments from the Ordovician, Silurian and Devonian along with a fine array of igneous rocks, both extrusions and intrusions that mainly date from the Carboniferous.

During this trip we'll be taking in the famous localities of Dob's Linn near Moffat where Charles Lapworth established the Ordovician and Silurian boundary and also James Hutton's famous inconformity at Jedburgh. We'll also have a day in Edinburgh exploring some of the famous sites in Holyrood Park.

The Waverley Castle Hotel on the outskirts of Melrose is our base for this 5-night trip.

Our base for the trip is the comfortable Waverley Castle Hotel which sits in beautiful grounds on the outskirts of the small town. Unusually, we have been offered a number of single rooms, at a very modest supplement - but get in quickly to secure your place!
We can still accommodate people in double or twin rooms.

To make a booking email us at:
downtoearth@geosupplies.co.uk or ring us on: 0114 245 5746
BOOKING FORMS ARE ONLY AVAILABLE BY CONTACTING US!

Learning with us is FUN...

We've been offering online and distance learning since before Covid and over that time hundreds of people have taken part in our learning programmes from the UK and around the world. All our learning programmes are created and delivered by our in-house team of Chris Darmon and Colin Schofield. Both are experienced teachers of distance learning over many years.No one is required to carry out any sort of assessment and there's no entry requirements or formalities. Just sign up and go!

IMPORTANT:

We are getting concerned at the number of people who leave it to the very last minute to book onto a Zoom session. We urge everyone to book at least 24 hours before a session and be aware that late bookers may not be accepted.

You can still book Zoom session during the month of March...

The Wednesday Club
We started this eclectic mix of subjects on Wednesday afternoons and evenings last year and they've proved to be highly successful. We hope that you like this new selection - they are all designed to bring you up to speed on some of the very latest ideas.

Wednesday Club members are as eclectic as the subjects we study, they are of all ages and backgrounds and come from all over the UK and even beyond. You will always be made welcome - come and join!

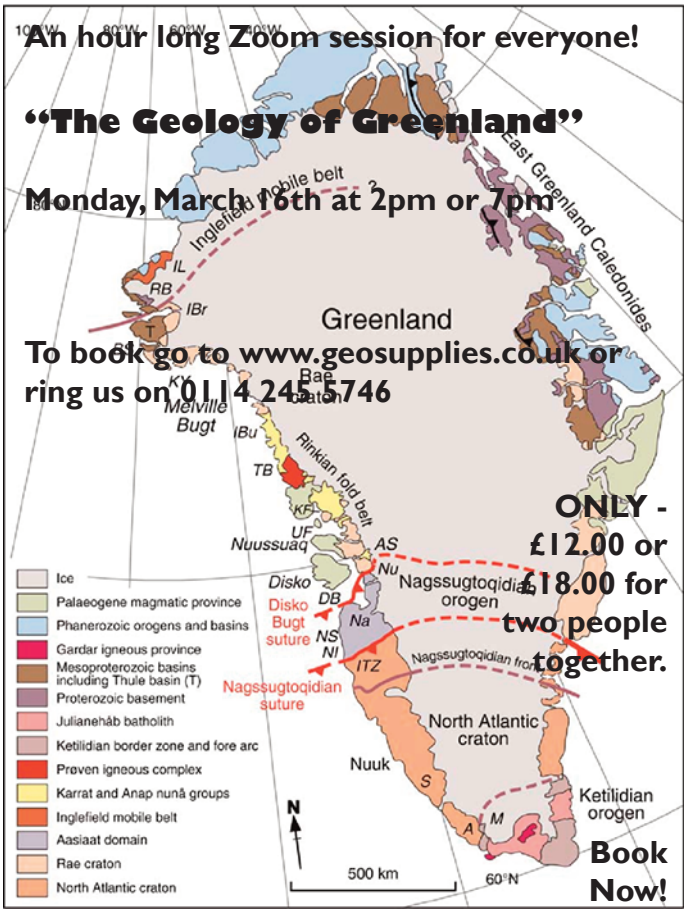
February 25	**The geology of the Scottish island of Raasay**
March 4	**The China Clay industry of Cornwall**
March 11	**Fabulous plants of the Rhynie cherts**

Cost: Individual talks £11.00 or £16.00 for 2 people.
Timings: Wednesdays at 2.00 or 7.00pm - your choice.

The Geology of Greenland - a one-off live Zoom special
Greenland, the world's largest island is home to some of the planet's oldest rocks dating back to almost 4 Ga. It also has a rock record that includes basalts similar to those found at the Giant's Causeway. Come and join us as we explore Greenland's fascinating geological journey.

Monday, March 16th at 2pm or 7pm (you choose) £12.00 or £18.00 for 2 people studying on the same computer.

Fabulous geology, and amazing scenery in Greenland
(Image: James Cresswell, GeoWorld Travel)



Life on Earth - the ups & downs of the Fossil Record in around 100 minutes!
Join us on this extended live Zoom session to take in all of the major extinction events that have taken place during Phanerozoic time. In around 100 minutes you'll get the feel of the fossil record and how it has been rocked by massive external events ranging from asteroid impacts to sudden changes in tectonics and environments.

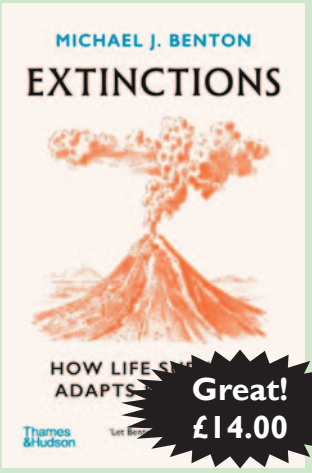
Cost: £15.00 or £22.00 for 2 people on the same computer.
Wednesday, March 18th at 2pm or 7pm

Extinction is never far away!
(Image: Earth.org)

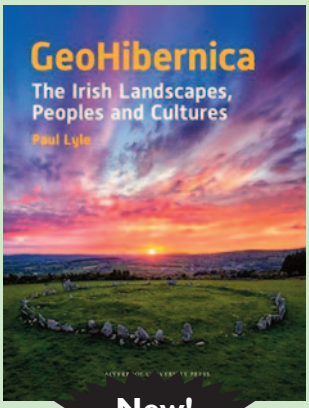
To find out more or to enrol, email us at:
downtoearth@geosupplies.co.uk or ring us on: 0114 245 5746
You can enrol via our online shop at: www.geosupplies.co.uk
by entering our online shop and then choosing courses.

Featured books for March 2026

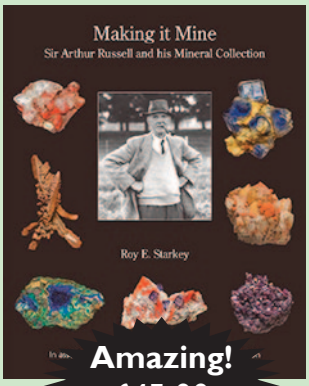
In each issue we are pleased to be able to introduce you to a range of featured books. Where they are being offered at reduced prices, these will be current to the end of March 2026 provided that stocks are available. This month we feature a variety of different books. Please note, all prices include UK postage.



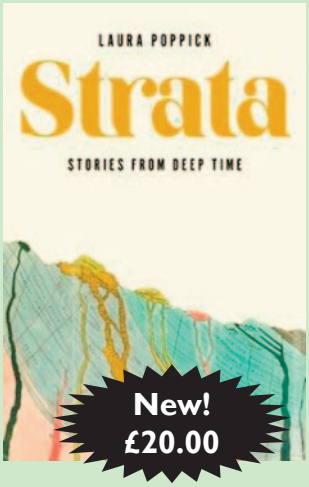
Great!
£14.00



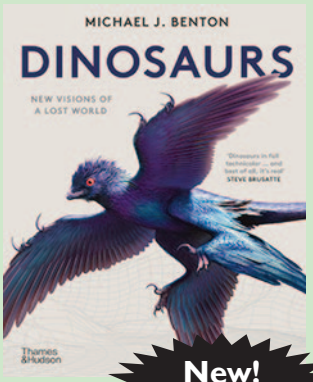
New!
£50.00



Amazing!
£45.00

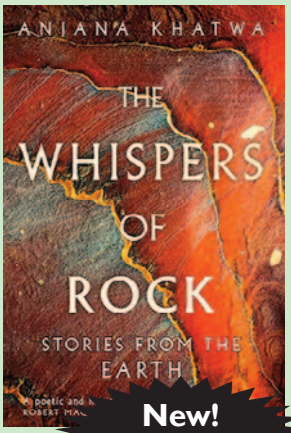


New!
£20.00

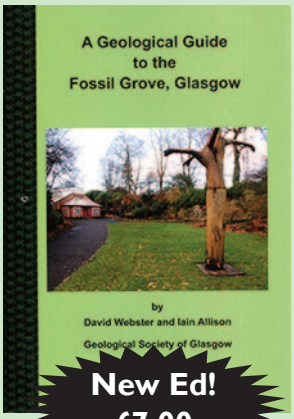


New!
£22.00

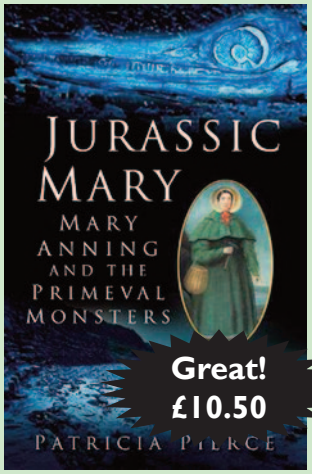
New!
£15.00



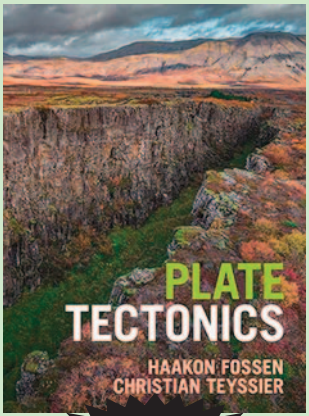
New!
£25.00



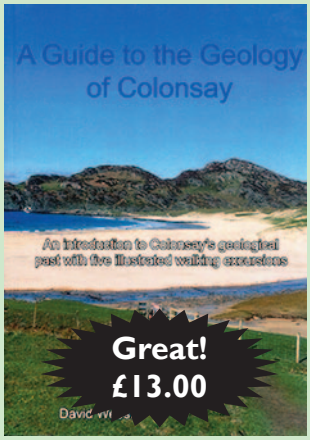
New Ed!
£7.00



Great!
£10.50

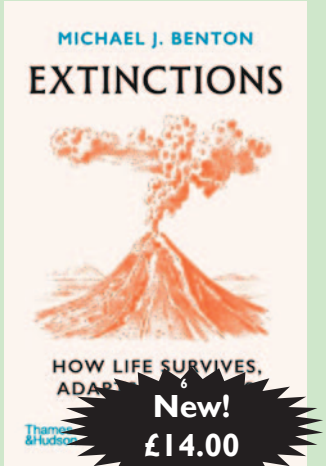


Terrific!
£50.00



Great!
£13.00

Ask about new guides to Islay & Jura!



New!
£14.00

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