

Essential Health and Safety

Unstable cliffs: The cliffs around East Wemyss are unconsolidated and unstable. Do not under any circumstance walk close or fossil hunt by the cliffs.

Eye protection: As people will be using hammers and chisels everyone must wear eye protection while fossil hunting on the beach. We will bring some safety specs from IMPS but please bring your own if you have some. Eye injury from shards of rock caused by hammering is common and in most cases it is not the person hammering but people standing close by who are injured – therefore it is essential to wear eye protection.

Weather and tide: The coastline is exposed and will be cold. Please bring appropriate cold weather clothing. We will arrive close to low tide (which is around midday) so the tide will gradually be coming in while we are on the beach so please be aware of this. We will be off the beach well before high tide around 7.30 pm.

Rocky Beach: The rocky beach can be slippery underfoot so please wear appropriate footwear.

Timings

We will meet in the carpark around 11.45 and walk to the beach together for 12.

Location

Travel by car: (See Map) Parking is available at East Wemyss: <https://goo.gl/maps/gfEh8panH4HoiLcF9>. Please consider sharing a lift from Edinburgh. 56°09'24.0"N 3°03'57.5"W. Google Plus Code: 5W4M+MJ7 Kirkcaldy

Travel by public transport: The closest train station is Kirkcaldy. Buses are then available to Wemyss.

Fossil collecting location: (See Map) We search for fossils on the beach south of the car park (see map attached). The entrance down to the beach is roughly a 700 m walk from the car park. Walk south from the car park following Back Dykes road until it turns into the coastal path. Continue on coastal path for roughly 400 m until you can see access to the beach on your left down an area that has been recently cleared for a drainage pipe that can be seen on the beach.

Toilets / shops: (See Map) There are **no toilets or shops at the parking space** or on the beach. The closest shop is the Spar in East Wemyss.

Kit list

Clothing (The coastline is exposed and cold so please bring plenty of suitable warm clothing)

Warm clothing: Hat, gloves, full warm and waterproof layers.

Sturdy footwear – e.g. walking boots.

Food and drink

Water, hot drinks, packed lunch, food for Sophie's grill (BBQ at the end of the Event)

Fossil collection material

Hammer, chisel, newspaper for wrapping up specimens, bags for putting fossils in e.g. zip seal bags.

Fossil collection guidance

The Firth of Forth is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (<https://sitenlink.nature.scot/site/8163>)



It is therefore very important that we follow the guidance from Scottish Fossil Code (<https://www.nature.scot/doc/scottish-fossil-code-and-guidance>). To quote from the guide:

ESSENTIALS OF THE SCOTTISH FOSSIL CODE

Collector responsibilities:

If collecting fossils in Scotland, please do so responsibly and follow the best practice in the collection and storage of fossil specimens outlined in the Scottish Fossil Code.



Seek permission

Traditionally common fossils and small geological specimens are collected without permission and hindrance. However, lawfully the right thing to do is to obtain permission to extract, collect and retain fossils.



Access responsibly

Consult the Scottish Outdoor Access Code prior to accessing land. Be aware that there are restrictions on access and collecting at some locations protected by statute.



Collect responsibly

Exercise restraint in the amount collected and the equipment used. Be careful not to damage fossils and the fossil resource. Record details of both the location and the rocks from which fossils are collected.



Seek advice

If you find an exceptional or unusual fossil do not try to extract it; but seek advice from an expert. Also seek help to identify fossils or dispose of an old collection.



Label and look after

Collected specimens should be labelled and taken good care of.



Donate

If you are considering donating a fossil or collection choose an accredited museum, or one local to the collection area.



Owner and land manager responsibilities:

Owners of fossil localities and those that manage the land where they occur have an important role in looking after the fossil resource. Your responsibilities may include ensuring that any fossil collecting taking place on your land follows the best practice guidance set out in the Scottish Fossil Code. This is particularly the case if a fossil locality on your land has statutory protection.



‘It is an offence for any person to intentionally or recklessly damage the natural features of an SSSI.’

‘SSSI protection helps safeguard sites from development but can also help safeguard them from damaging fossil collecting. In many cases, owners and managers of fossil localities will need consent from NatureScot to excavate and remove fossils and also to allow other people to do so (also see Section 4.1.1). Generally speaking, collecting loose fossils in many SSSI is not a concern from conservation and scientific perspectives, but collecting fossils from bedrock is a different matter.’

Based on this guidance it is very important that people collect responsibly, and in no instance damage the bedrock.