



JURASSICCOAST

DORSET AND EAST DEVON
WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Welcome to the Jurassic Coast - England's first natural World Heritage Site. This unique stretch of coastline has joined the ranks of the Great Barrier Reef and the Grand Canyon as one of the wonders of the natural world. The Dorset and East Devon Coast has become a World Heritage Site due to its outstanding geology, which represents 185 million years of earth history in just 95 miles. It displays not just superb Jurassic, but older Triassic and younger Cretaceous rocks too. Take a 'walk through time' along the coast and see the geological story for yourself!



Purbeck Stone

Purbeck Marble has been quarried since Roman times and can be found inside many cathedrals and churches across the U.K. It is not a true marble but a limestone that can take a fine polish. The stone itself has characterised the local architecture of the villages and towns. The history of Purbeck Stone is told in local museums and Visitor Centres.

Parts of the coast are world famous for fossils and new discoveries are constantly uncovered, including exceptionally well preserved dinosaurs and dinosaur footprints. The best place to find fossils is in West Dorset - just remember that it is better and safer to look on the beach, not in the cliffs. It's also worth remembering that the ideal time to find fossils is during the winter months after rough seas have washed away soft mud and clays: making the Jurassic Coast the perfect choice for a winter break.

Geology in the Landscape

Purbeck is a classic place to see how the underlying rocks control the development of the landscape and coastline. Around Lulworth, hard bands of Portland Limestone form a barrier to the sea but once breached, the softer rocks behind are eroded away to form a bay. Eventually a number of bays join together leaving fragments of the limestone in the sea. Stair Hole is the start of the process, Lulworth Cove is a perfect cove while Man O' War Cove is formed from a number of bays that have joined together. The beautiful arch of Durdle Door is carved from a fragment of the hard limestone. Lulworth Heritage Centre contains displays and offers guided walks.

Inland, the underlying geology controls the form of the landscape. A huge fold in the rocks runs between Lulworth and Ballard Down, creating a striking chalk ridge upon which Corfe Castle is built. To the north, younger sands and clays give rise to the heathland character around Poole Harbour.

The National Trust

The National Trust owns and manages nearly a third of the land along the Jurassic Coast.



Stair Hole

Dinosaur Footprints

In the course of quarrying, dinosaur footprints and trackways are regularly uncovered in Purbeck. Recently, footprints were discovered in a working quarry on Portland for the first time. To see dinosaur footprints for yourself, visit local museums.



Dinosaur Footprints



Fossil Beggars

Traces of the Past

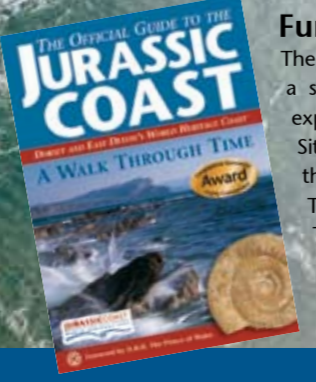
Beaches between Bowleaze Cove and Osmington contain clearly visible traces of the past in the form of fossilised burrows and ripple marks and these provide evidence that Dorset was once a tropical paradise similar to the present day Bahamas! We can't guarantee the weather today, but these beaches are still well worth a visit.



Swanage

Boat Trips

One of the best ways to see the Jurassic Coast is from the sea. Boat trips run from various places along the coast and are usually advertised around the local harbours or quaysides.



Further Information

The Official Guide to the Jurassic Coast is a sixty-four page full colour guide, which explains the stories of the World Heritage Site, including the rocks, fossils and features that make it a place of global importance. The guide costs £4.95 and is available from Tourist Information Centres, museums and attractions throughout the World Heritage Coast.

The South West Coast Path

The South West Coast Path National Trail is over 1000 km (630 miles) long. It provides a continuous coastal adventure through the World Heritage Site and offers many different options for long walks or short strolls - a great way to get closer to the Jurassic Coast and experience the breathtaking scenery. The South West Coast Path is easy to follow - just look for the acorn symbol.

The Fossil Forest

The extraordinary fossil forest is exposed on the cliffs just east of Lulworth Cove. It formed when sea levels dropped and land emerged. The trees grew but were then submerged in a swamp. Thick layers of sticky algae grew around the tree stumps and fallen logs. Sediments stuck to the algae and turned into limestone 'burrs', the doughnut shaped structures you can see today.



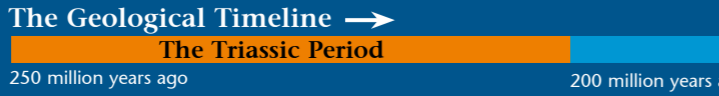
Lulworth Fossil Forest

Isle of Portland

Here the rocks are 140 million years old



Durdle Door



The Geological Timeline →
250 million years ago 200 million years ago 140 million years ago 65 million years ago

Coastal Visitor Centres

Axmouth Sea Discovery Centre	01297 24774
Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre	01297 560772
Chesil Beach Centre	01305 760579
Christchurch, Steamer Point Visitor Centre	01425 272479
Kimmeridge Marine Centre	01929 481044
Lulworth Heritage Centre	01929 400587
Portland Bill Visitor Centre	01305 861233
Studland Beach Information Centre	01929 450259
Swanage, Durlston Country Park	01929 424443
Swanage Heritage Centre	01929 421427

Tourist Information Centres

Axminster - Church Street	01297 34386
Bournemouth - Westover Rd. www.bournemouth.co.uk	01202 451700
Bridport - 47, South Street www.westdorset.com	01308 424901
Budleigh Salterton - Fore Street www.eastdevon.net/tourism	01395 445275
Christchurch - High Street www.christchurchtourism.info	01202 471780
Dorchester - Unit 11, Antelope Walk www.westdorset.com	01305 267992
Exeter - Civic Centre, Paris Street www.exeter.gov.uk	01392 265700
Exmouth - Alexandra Terrace www.exmouthguide.co.uk	01395 222299
Lyme Regis - Church Street www.westdorset.com	01297 442138
Honiton - Lace Walk Car Park	01404 43716
Ottery St Mary - Broad Street www.eastdevon.net/tourism	01404 813964
Poole - 4, The High Street www.pooletourism.com	01202 253253
Seaton - The Underfleet www.eastdevon.net/tourism/seaton	01297 21660
Sidmouth - Ham Lane www.visitsidmouth.co.uk	01395 516441
Swanage - Shore Road www.swanage.gov.uk	01929 422885
Wareham - South Street www.purbeck-dc.gov.uk	01929 552740
Weymouth - The Esplanade www.weymouth.gov.uk	01305 785747

Other Useful Contacts

TRAVELINE (For information on public transport)	0870 6082608
Dorset Tourism	01305 221001
South West Coast Path Association www.southwestcoastpath.com	01752 896237
National Trust Charmouth	01297 561900
National Trust Devon and Cornwall	01392 881691
National Trust Wessex www.nationaltrust.org.uk	01985 843600

Lulworth Army Range Office (information on opening of Range Walks) 01929 462721 ext 4819
www.dorsetrifs.com
www.devon.gov.uk/geology



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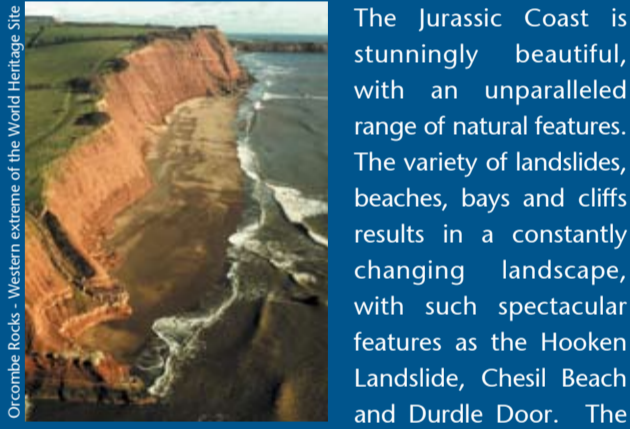
For further information please visit
www.jurassiccoast.com

Ocombe Rocks - Western extreme of the World Heritage Site

The Jurassic Coast is well served by the towns and villages which act as gateways to the Site. Whether you chose to stay in a bustling resort or a small rural village, you will notice a distinct and changing character along the coast due to the use of local stone. Such famous stones as Beer, Portland and Purbeck have shaped the local character of the towns and villages and have also been used in many of the finest buildings, cathedrals and churches throughout this country and abroad.

The range of interests along this fascinating coastline offers something for everyone. Explore the Jurassic Coast and see for yourself why this internationally important place has become England's first natural World Heritage Site.

The Jurassic Coast is stunningly beautiful, with an unparalleled range of natural features. The variety of landslides, beaches, bays and cliffs results in a constantly changing landscape, with such spectacular features as the Hooken Landslide, Chesil Beach and Durdle Door. The varying landscape lends itself to a diverse range of birds and wildlife - puffins and dolphins included!



Cliffs near Winspit

Old Harry Rocks - Eastern extreme of the World Heritage Site

