
12 Cuddy's Crag

Theme: Volcanoes and molten rock

Location

Cuddy's Crag is 750 metres west of Housesteads Fort [NY 783 686]. The Hadrian's Wall bus service stops here and there is a large car park at the Housesteads Visitor Centre.

Description

This is one of the best views of the Roman Wall marching eastwards. It is a fantastic and extensive outlook on the Whin Sill, the hard igneous rock, called dolerite, which forms steep cliffs facing north.

The Whin Sill was inserted as a sheet into local Carboniferous rocks 295 million years ago. But there have been millions of years of erosion since which has left the hard dolerite standing proud. The rock was once billions of tons of molten magma injected from deep in the Earth in between the layers of Carboniferous limestones, sandstones and shales. Then it cooled and solidified and contracted forming prominent vertical cracks and fissures.

All the ups and downs of Hadrian's Wall and the National Trail along it, are a result of ice and meltwater during the last Ice Age eroding through the Whin Sill ridge. So you can blame geology for those tired legs after you have finished your day's walking!

The Wall is home to the common lizard, stoat, nesting wheatear, maidenhair spleenwort and wall rue. Thyme and lady's bedstraw grow both on the Wall and alongside it. Skylark, meadow pipit and raven soar. Further west rock-rose delights. golden-scaled male-fern clothes the Crag's northern face.

Photographs

(Photo 12-1) The Whin Sill at Cuddy's Crag.

(Photo 12-2) The Roman Wall looking east over Cuddy's Crag.



(Photo 12-1) The Whin Sill at Cuddy's Crag.



(Photo 12-2) The Roman Wall looking east over Cuddy's Crag.