
21 Berwick-upon-Tweed

Theme: Earthquakes and folded rocks

Location

Just to the east of Berwick-upon-Tweed [NU 003 535]. A short walk from the town centre.

Description

On the foreshore just east and north of Berwick-upon-Tweed is Ladies Skerrs. When the tide falls it reveals a dramatic series of rocky whorls and swirls; concentric rings and curves. They look like a bomb crater, or as if someone has sliced through pudding bowls stacked upside-down. At Bucket Rocks, beside it, the bowls are the right way up.

The rocks are limestones, sandstones, shales and thin coals deposited in Carboniferous times 330 million years ago. While it doesn't seem possible, even brittle substances like rocks can be bent and folded if the process is slow and steady and done very, very gradually.

The rocks were bent and folded when Britain and northern Europe were part of the building of an enormous mountain chain about 300 million years ago. The sea has then eroded away the top parts of the rock "bowls".

The coast here is full of wildlife: gulls, geese, ducks (including eider ducks), many swans (Whooper and Mute) for which Berwick is famous; plus bottle-nosed dolphins and sometimes whales.

Photographs

(Photo 21-1) Cliff at Ladies Skerrs, Berwick-upon-Tweed.

(Photo 21-2) Sandstones, limestones and shales folded into a dome and eroded by the sea at Ladies Skerrs, Berwick-upon-Tweed



(Photo 21-1) Cliff at Ladies Skerrs, Berwick-upon-Tweed.



(Photo 21-2) Sandstones, limestones and shales folded into a dome and eroded by the sea at Ladies Skerrs, Berwick-upon-Tweed