
40 Duddo Stones

Theme: Heritage and mining

Location

A 2 kilometre walk north of the village of Duddo [NT 930 437].

Description

Today there are five standing stones up to 2.3 metres high, made of well weathered and naturally sculpted sandstone. There were originally 6 or 7 stones, then only 4 until a fifth was added in the early 20th century. The views over Northumberland are panoramic and dramatic, especially towards the Cheviot hills.

The stones were erected by Neolithic or Bronze Age people around 4000 years ago. The sandstone is Carboniferous in age and over 330 million years old. Early archaeologists found charcoal and pieces of bone in a pit in the middle of the stones. This might have been from a human burial. Modern experts say they do not fully understand exactly what these stone circles were for. But they must have been important ritual sites. Perhaps for the burial of the dead, or for calculating the seasons and astronomical events. Or perhaps they were a place that people would gather. Or maybe all of these reasons? What we do know is that, while it was for very different reasons, rocks and stones were just as important in their lives as they are in ours today.

The area directly around the stones has been left fallow, but the surrounding land is arable, growing cereal crops. Look out for bullfinches, redstarts and yellowhammers in the hedges. You may also see buzzards, kestrels, wheatears, linnets, tree sparrows, and meadow pipits.

Photographs

(Photo 40-1) Duddo Stones, Carboniferous sandstone.

(Photo 40-2) Duddo Stones looking north.



(Photo 40-1) Duddo Stones, Carboniferous sandstone.



(Photo 40-2) Duddo Stones looking north.