Walk 8: Blackbrook Reservoir

Start: grid reference [SK 4679 1740]

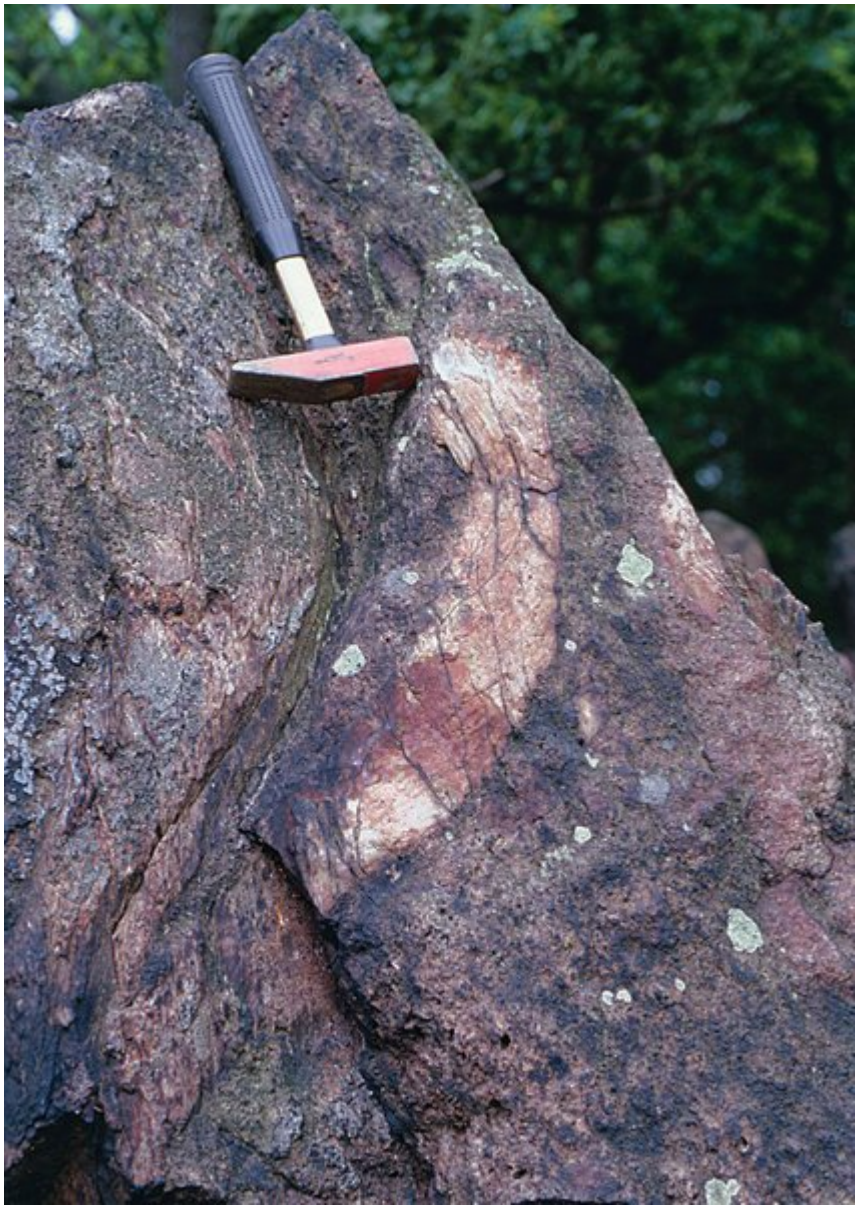
Above Blackbrook Reservoir we can see the South Quarry Breccia Member, which is an important ‘marker horizon’, separating the Ives Head Formation from the overlying Blackbrook Reservoir Formation. There is limited roadside parking opposite ‘Botany Bay’, from where you can walk down the unmade One Barrow Lane and then along to the beginning of the viaduct across Blackbrook Reservoir. Here, mudstones and siltstones of volcanic origin form the top of the Ives Head Formation. Retrace your steps and find a safe place to scramble up the wooded slope of One Barrow Plantation, on the north-west side of the road. The South Quarry Breccia is at the summit of the plantation hill, overlooking the flooded South Quarry. Be careful here: the slope into the quarry is precipitous and there is nothing to be gained by trying to explore any further in that direction. Striking features of this breccia are the contorted rafts of white-weathering, laminated volcaniclastic siltstone and mudstone. They are enclosed by a pale grey, coarse-grained and poorly-sorted matrix full of quartz crystal fragments. The breccia is one of the earliest examples of submarine landsliding (see Walks 1 and 5) within the Precambrian sequence.

Figures

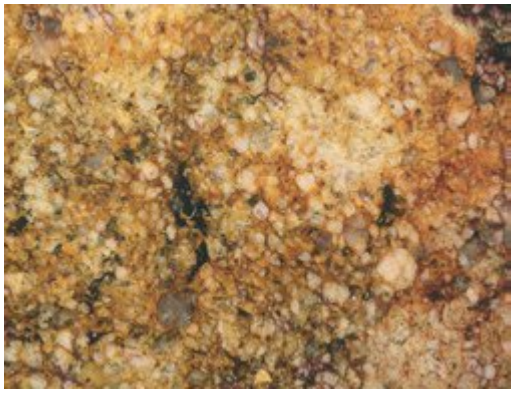
(Figure 64) White-weathering mudstone fragment in the sandy matrix of the South Quarry Breccia.

(Figure 65) Polished slab of the breccia matrix, showing abundant white quartz and feldspar crystals.

(Figure 66) In the wall of the Abbey, slabs of the Peldar Dacite Breccia can be examined.



White-weathering mudstone fragment in the sandy matrix of the South Quarry Breccia.



Polished slab of the breccia matrix, showing abundant white quartz and feldspar crystals.

In the wall of the Abbey, slabs of the Peldar Dacite Breccia can be examined.