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## Glossary of geological terms

**Basalt** Dark-coloured, fine-grained basic igneous rock

**Basic igneous rock** Containing a low proportion of silica and a high proportion of calcium, iron and magnesium

**Brackish** Saline water with a salt content less than that of seawater

**Breccia** Sedimentary rock containing large, angular blocks

**Calcite** Common crystalline form of calcium carbonate

**Conglomerate** Sedimentary rock containing large, rounded cobbles or boulders

**Cretaceous Period** Sub-division of geological time; see Eigg timescale (*inside back cover*) for details

**Dyke** Tabular body of igneous rock intruded into surrounding rocks; generally vertical or nearly so

**Erosion** Wearing away of the land surface as a result of weathering and transport of material by rivers, glaciers, etc.

**Feldspar** A group of pale-coloured aluminium silicate minerals forming tabular crystals; the most common minerals in igneous rocks

**Igneous rock** Rock formed from the solidification of molten magma

**Ignimbrite** Rock formed from material deposited by a pyroclastic flow

**Intrusive igneous rock** Rock formed by crystallisation of magma injected into pre-existing rocks

**Jurassic Period** Sub-division of geological time; see Eigg timescale (inside back cover for details (Figure 43)).

**Limestone** Sedimentary rock formed mainly of calcium carbonate

**Metamorphic rock** Rock that has been changed from its original state by the action of heat and pressure

**Mudstone** A sedimentary rock formed from the consolidation of clay or silt

**Peperite** Sedimentary rock that contains fragments of igneous material that is formed when magma comes into contact with wet sediments

**Pitchstone** A glassy, i.e. largely non-crystalline, silicic igneous rock

**Palaeogene Period** Sub-division of geological time; see Eigg timescale (*inside back cover*) for details

**Pumice** Silicic volcanic rock containing numerous gas bubbles

**Pyroclastic flow** A fast-moving current of hot gas and rock resulting from an explosive volcanic eruption, usually of silicic magma

**Quartz** The common crystalline form of silica (silicon dioxide)

**Sandstone** A sedimentary rock consisting of sand-sized grains, generally predominantly quartz

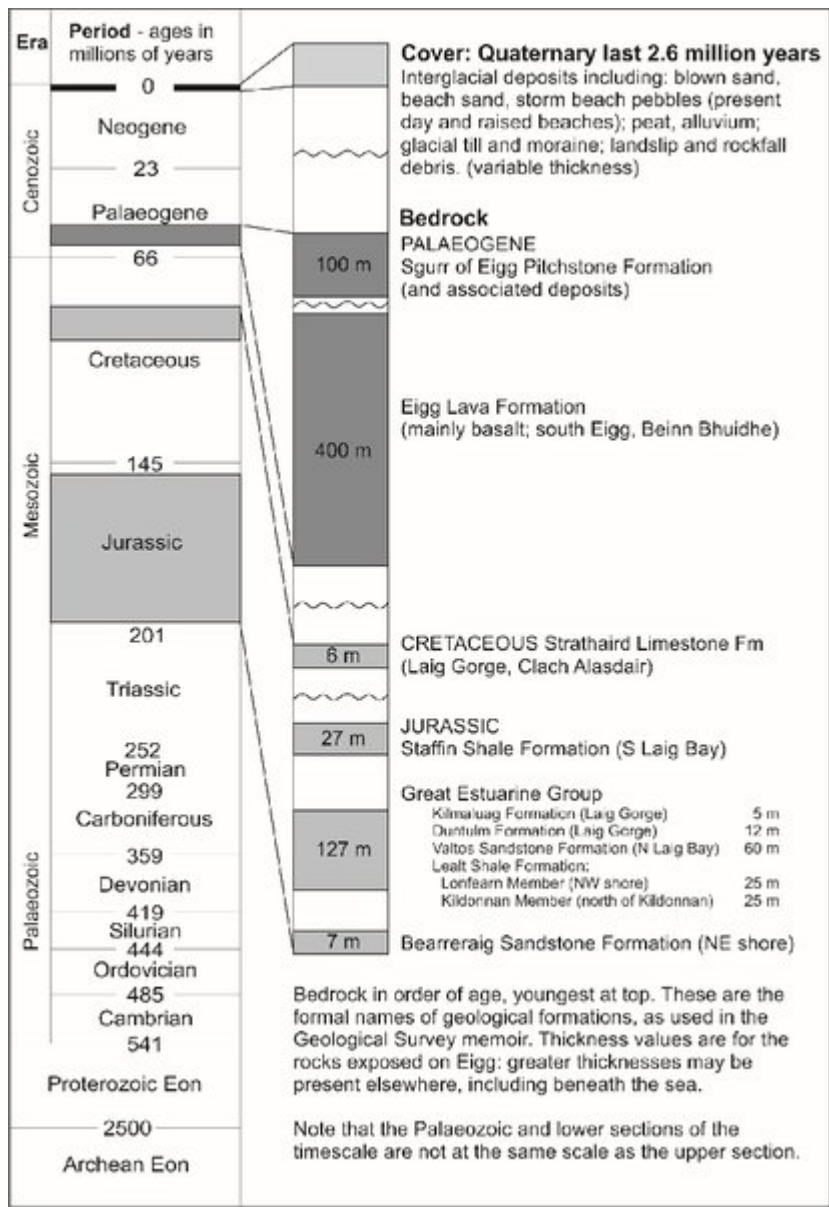
**Sedimentary rock** Rock formed from the consolidation of sediments, such as sandstone, mudstone and limestone

**Silicic igneous rock** Containing a high proportion of silica, therefore formed mainly of high-silica minerals such as quartz and feldspar e.g. granite

**Sill** A tabular body of igneous rock, formed from magma intruded into sedimentary rocks parallel to their bedding; often near horizontal

**Till** Glacial debris deposited beneath an ice sheet (formerly known as boulder clay)

**Weathering** The fragmentation and alteration of rocks by physical means such as frost action or by chemical change due to attack by water and the atmosphere, without transport (cf. erosion)



Geological timescale on Eigg.