



MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY

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Dear Delegate

We are delighted that you are going to come on one of the Euroclay 2015 field trips to see: [1] the Devonian-Carboniferous Transition; or [2] The Hutton Trail; or [3] Dob's Linn and Grey Mare's Tail; or [4] Volcanoes of Edinburgh. There are three matters listed below that I need to tell you about for your own comfort, safety, and to ensure that you get the best out of the trip.

We look forward very much to seeing you in Edinburgh.

SAFETY

Each of the four field trips may involve rough walking, in some instances over stony, scree- or boulder-strewn ground or possibly wet grassy slopes. Boots, or strong walking shoes, or trainers designed for rough walking, are necessary.

Rain is not infrequent in Scotland. Conditions can be very variable from hot to cold, windy to still, dry to very wet. A light waterproof anorak with a range of adequate underclothing to ensure that the upper half of your body remains warm even if you get wet through is essential... you can always take layers off if it is too warm.

Safety helmets and high-visibility vests are provided. Safety helmets should be worn either if there is any chance of falling debris from cliffs or steep slopes, or if you fall, to avoid head injuries. High-visibility vests should be worn at all times.

If you are going to wear shorts, please make sure you wear long heavy-duty socks – if you do happen to fall against a rock there will be less damage to your skin and bones.

Midges can be one of the plagues of Scotland in the summer, particularly if the weather is hot and sultry. Either make sure you are well covered or take plenty of insect repellent, or perhaps both.

Clear skies and sun are occasionally a problem so if you are light-sensitive bring your dark glasses and sun-blocking lotions.

We hope that you will be lucky and blessed with fine weather!

Special points

Devonian-Carboniferous Euroclay field trip

Burnmouth will involve walking along the intertidal zone. The rocks, boulders and stones may be slippery, particularly if they are covered by seaweed. Considerable care is needed. A walking stick can provide an additional point of balance and the use of hands helps. There are low cliffs and you will need to wear your safety helmets.

At Pease Bay the beach is sandy. You will need to have your safety helmets.

At St Abb's Head the cliffs are high; we will be on top of them and the views are fine. If you suffer from vertigo please let one of the leaders know and we will do our best to allow you to have the views without adverse feelings! If the grass is wet it will be slippery and it is best to keep to the paths.

At Dunbar there are essentially no cliffs but the rocks we will examine are in the intertidal zone. They may be slippery with sea weeds. A walking stick can provide an additional point of balance and the use of hands will also help.

Hutton Trail Euroclay field trip

Pease Bay the beach is sandy. You will need to have your safety helmets as part of the cliffs are overhanging.

Siccar Point: Good views of Hutton's unconformity at Siccar Point can be obtained from cliff top following a walk across a grassy field of about half a mile. It is strongly advised not to try to descend the cliff to view the unconformity at close quarters, as the grassy slope is extremely steep, slippery and dangerous.

Eyemouth: Access to cliffs involves a short walk across a sandy beach. The cliffs are not overhanging but the rock is in a state of crumbly disintegration. Care should be taken when sampling. Safety helmets may be required.

Dob's Linn and Grey Mare's Tail field trip

Dob's Linn: Can be slippery. Midges may be bad, shorts could be unsuitable. Safety helmets required.

Volcanoes of Edinburgh Euroclay field trip

Suitable footwear, clothing and anti-midge consideration. Safety helmets are not needed.

2. Devonian-Carboniferous transition

A pre-trip talk on Tuesday 7 July 2015 at 16.40 in Lecture room 5

This will be a talk by Christopher Jeans about certain aspects of the Devonian-Carboniferous transition. It will give a broader picture of the possible significance of apparent environmental changes as reflected in the clay mineralogy that may be associated with important developments in vertebrate evolution. You will learn more about the palaeosoils and the limitations of using changes in clay mineral assemblages to make palaeo-environmental reconstructions.

3. Pre-field trip soiree

On Tuesday 7 July 2015 at 17.15 – 18.15, Lecture Room 5, Appleton Tower

This is 45 min of entertainment by a well known accordionist, Norman Mackay, playing music of the Scottish Borders combined with appropriate readings by Euan Clarkson (a famous palaeontologist), including works by the Scottish poet, Robbie Burns. The first 15 minutes will be a discussion of certain safety matters to ensure that you return home safe and sound!

With best wishes,
Christopher Jeans