

OGG FIELD REPORT

GREAT ELM

Filed by

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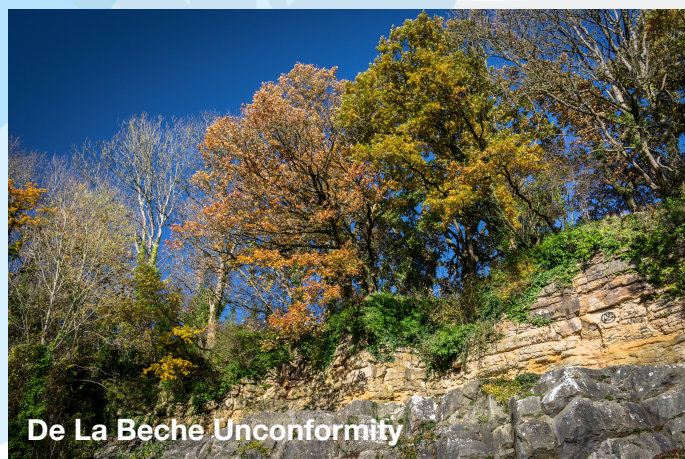
The field party has returned from the very successful Martin Brasier Memorial Field Meeting. After driving down to the Mendips, the day began with a visit to the spectacular De La Beche angular unconformity at Vallis Vale, introducing the key lithologies of the day. Here, the subhorizontal Inferior Oolite of the Middle Jurassic overlies the steeply dipping Early Carboniferous Vallis Limestone, with a 180-million-year gap between them. The field party was able to examine the highly fossiliferous crinoidal Vallis Limestone.

After an excellent lunch at the Holcombe Inn, the party returned to the field, reaching Tedbury Camp Quarry after a short walk up the sides of the valley. This impressive exposure reveals a palaeo-seabed, where the crinoidal Carboniferous limestones, after being folded and faulted during the Variscan Orogeny and buried under a 1500 m high mountain chain, were eventually exhumed in a shallow tropical sea, as evidenced by boring, and the deposition of the oolitic biomicrites of the Inferior Oolite above. This story gradually unfolded after an hour of exploration around the Quarry. Also exposed here is evidence of complex, small-scale deformation, in the form of fault-bounded tightly folded Carboniferous Clifton Down Limestone, which may represent synsedimentary deformation.

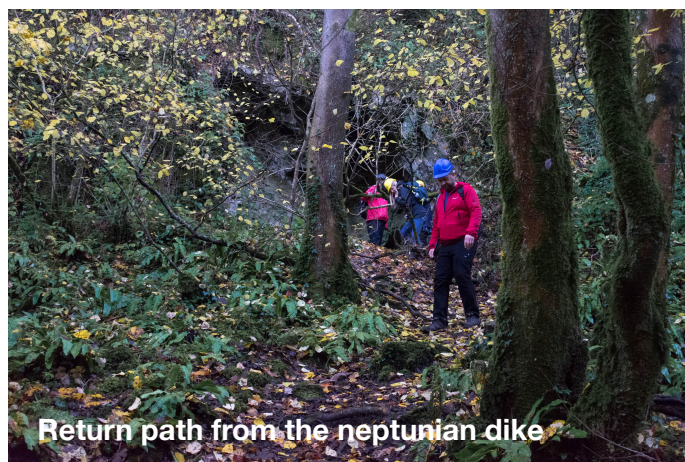
Finally, the field party walked through the forest, the autumn colours beautifully illuminated in the light of the late afternoon, to an excellent example of some neptunian dikes. Here, cracks in the deformed Carboniferous limestones were infilled with

brecciated sediments bearing the characteristic red colouration of the arid environments of the late Palaeozoic and early Mesozoic. This required some careful scrambling up some muddy slopes, but all made it out in one piece. After a talk about the outstanding contributions of Martin Brasier to both palaeobiology in general and the Oxford Geology Group, the field party set off back to Oxford.

We are particularly grateful to Paul Sargent whose outstanding guidance and leadership made the field meeting a great success.



De La Beche Unconformity



Return path from the neptunian dike



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