

## Fossils along the Fleet.

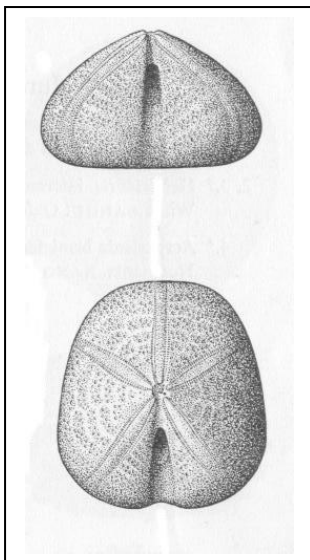
Meet at Ferrybridge Heritage Centre GR SY 668756, DT4 9XE.

### Pirates Lane, Wyke Regis

Walk down footpath of Pirates' Lane to Fleet Shore. Working south exposures of Corallian and Kimmeridge Clay. The large oyster *Ostrea delta* is common.



Working north of Pirates' Lane to the Bridging Camp at Camp Road is an outcrop of oolitic limestone (Osmington Oolite from the Corallian stage of the Jurassic 155 million years). Fossils found include the small echinoid *Nucleolites scutatus* which looks rather like a small pebble. The oolitic limestone tells us about the environment of the time similar to modern day Bahamas with shallow tropical seas.

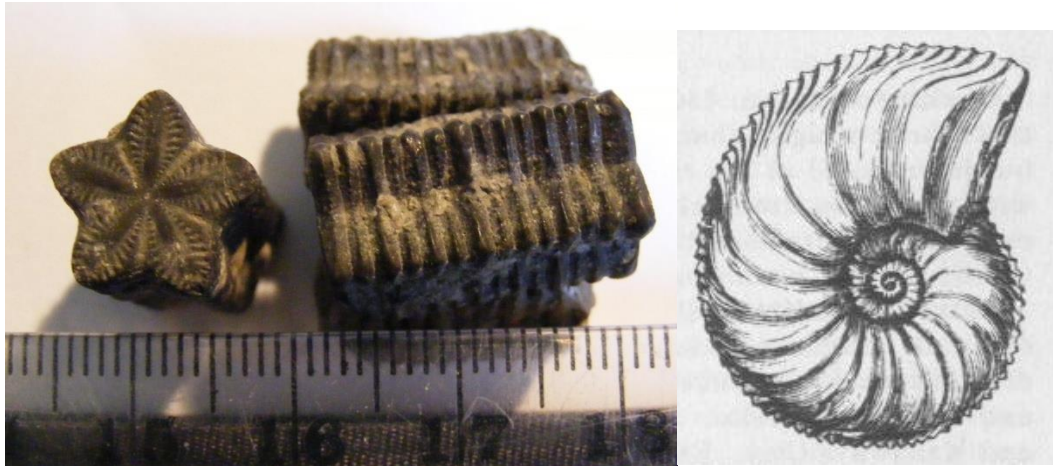


Most of the creatures living in the sea at the time were broken up by strong currents but the echinoids survived as they lived buried in the sediment. Occasionally bivalves (oysters) and gastropods (snails) can be found but preservation is often poor.

## **Tidmoor Point, Chickerell.**

Take footpath on south side of the army firing range and on reaching the Fleet shore walk north. If firing is taking place go south into Tidmoor Cove.

The Oxford Clay (160 million years) outcrops along the Fleet north and south of Tidmoor Point. Ammonites can be found, sometimes as compressed casts and sometimes pyritised. The main one is *Quenstedtoceras lamberti* which is the zone fossil for part of the Oxford Clay. Bullet shaped belemnites are numerous but small. Bullets from the firing range can also be found!



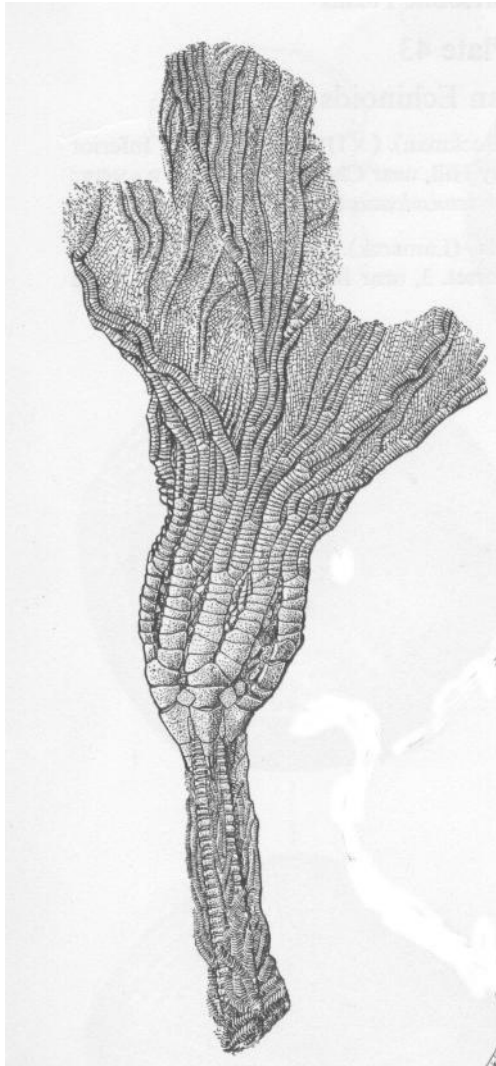
Pentacrinus can also be found which have a distinctive 5 pointed star shape form. This is a different type to the crinoid illustrated on page 2. Occasionally crystals of gypsum can be found. These are colourless and transparent and can be scratched with a finger nail as the mineral is quite soft (Moh's Scale of hardness 2).

## **Moonfleet**

The Forest Marble extends along the Fleet to the Moonfleet Hotel where on the beach pieces of very fossiliferous thinly bedded limestone can be found. The fossils are mostly broken up and the rock was formed in a high energy (shallow



water) marine environment. The shells were probably transported into the area after the organisms died. Fossils include crinoids (sometimes known as sea lilies).



Fragments are found rather than the whole but you may find the calyx as seen above right. Fragments of oysters and brachiopods are also common. You will need to look carefully!