

Abbey Wood Fossils

Abbey Wood is a geological locality situated in a park in south-east London.

It is famous, world-wide, for its fossil sharks' teeth and shells.

It was first mentioned in 1872 by William Whitaker of the British Geological Survey, who found sharks' teeth in the rabbit holes.



What is Abbey Wood?

The Abbey Wood Shell Bed is an ancient shell-bank, a mixture of sand, shells and round black flint pebbles.

It was laid down in a shallow tropical sea, close to the shore, about 54.5 million years ago.

It contains a mixture of freshwater, estuarine and marine shells, as well as sharks' teeth, fish, crocodile, and turtle bones and rare mammal teeth.



How this works



Picture of real specimens imaged on a flat bed scanner.

A white line between specimens means that there are two views of the same fossil.

5mm

Scale Bars - 5mm in Green - 1cm - in Orange.

Angel Shark

Common (vernacular) name - in Yellow.

Squatina prima

Scientific (Latin) name - in Green.

Teeth & vertebrae

Part of animal - where not obvious - in Purple.



Reconstruction of the living animal.

Sharks' Teeth



Sand shark
Striatolamia macrota



Sand shark
Sylvestrilamia teretidens



Shark Remains



Sand shark
Gluekmanotodus heinzeli



Sand shark
Jaekelotodus robustus



Shark vertebra

Shark and Rabbit Fish Teeth



1cm

Sand shark
Palaeohypotodus
rutoti

1cm



Rabbit fish or Chimaeroid
Amylodon eocaena
Lower plate



1cm

Rabbit fish or Chimaeroid
Elasmodus hunteri
Upper anterior plate



Ray Remains



Guitar fish
Hypolophodon sylvestris
Dermal denticles (top) & teeth



Angel Shark
Squatina prima
Teeth & vertebrae

Bony Fish Remains



1cm

Extinct wrasse
Phyllodus toliapicus
Upper palate



1cm

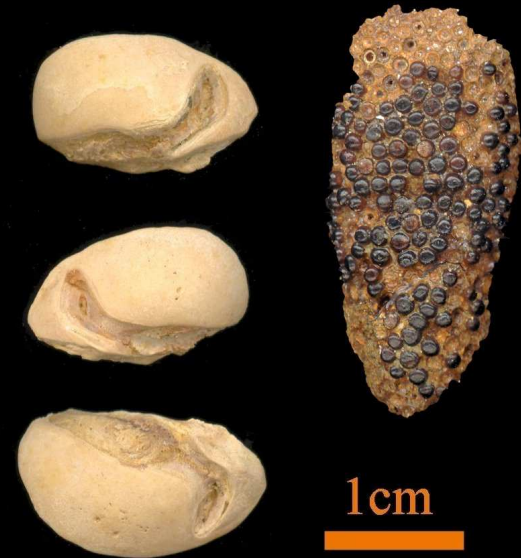
Gar pike
Lepisosteus suessionensis
Teeth, scale & vertebrae



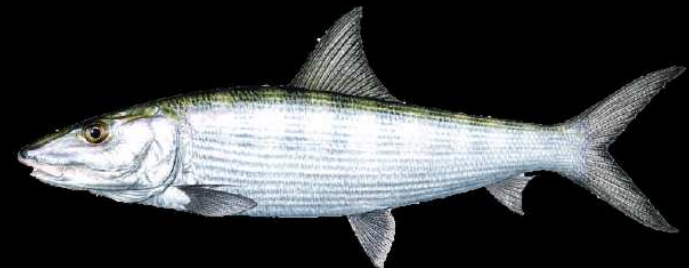
Bony Fish Remains



Sturgeon
Acipenser toliapicus
Dermal scute



Lady fish
Albula eppsi
Otoliths (ear stones) & upper palate



Bony Fish Remains



1cm

Bowfin
Amia barroisi
Lower jaws



1cm

Extinct wrasse
Diaphyodus sauvagi
Paired upper and
lower palates

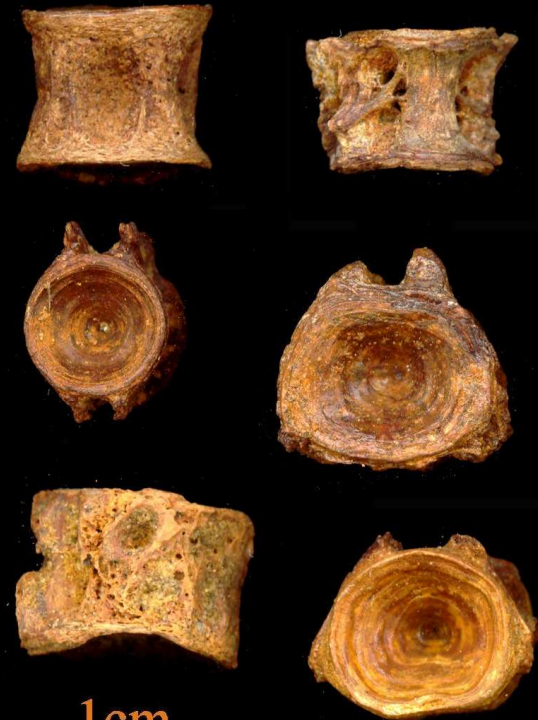


Bony Fish Remains



1cm

Barracuda
Pelamys palaeocenica
dentary (lower jaw) and
quadrate bone



1cm

Unidentified vertebrae

Reptile Remains



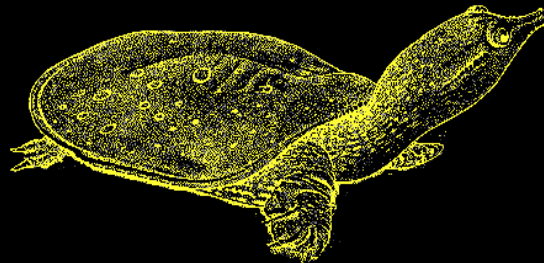
5mm



Dwarf crocodile
Teeth



1cm



Soft shelled turtle
Trionyx
Carapace (upper shell)

Mammal Remains



5mm

3rd molar tooth
Hyopsodus wardi



5mm

Rodent
Upper incisor tooth



Bivalve molluscs



Extinct Clam
Caestocorbula sp.



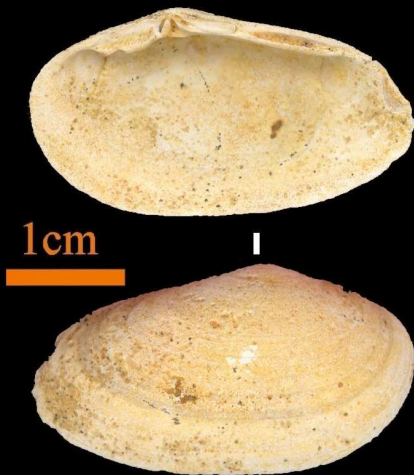
Extinct Clam
Lentidium
arnouldii



Nut clam
Nucula gracilentia.



Oyster
Ostrea bellovacina

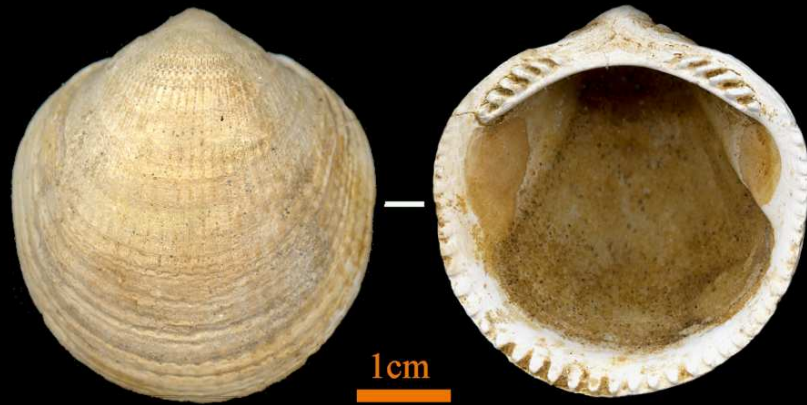


Extinct Clam
Tellinocyclus tellinoides

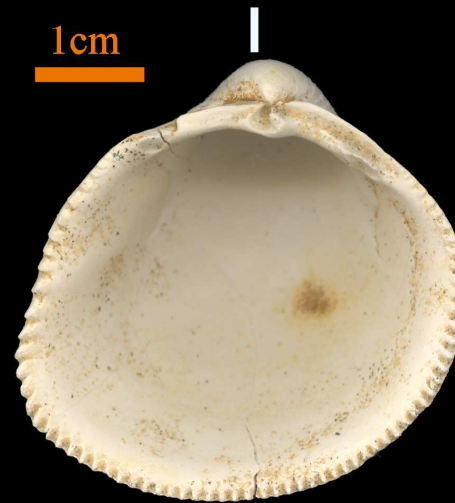


Marsh clam
Corbicula cuneiformis var. *forbesii*

Bivalve molluscs



Bittersweet cockle
Glycymeris plumstediensis



Extinct cockle
Nemocardium plumstedianum

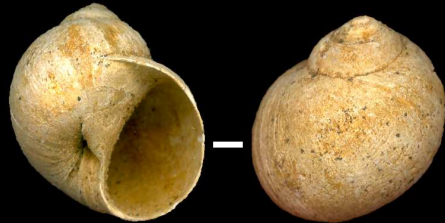


Mussel
Mytilus mitchelli



Ship worm
Teredo sp.

Gastropod molluscs



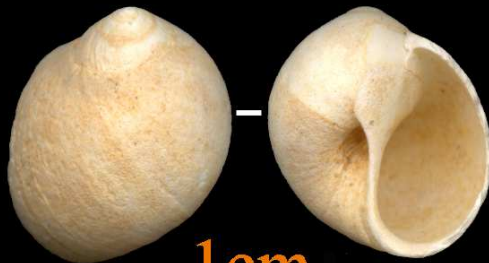
1cm

Moon snail
Euspira glaucinoides



5mm

Banded pea shell
Theodoxus pisiformis



1cm

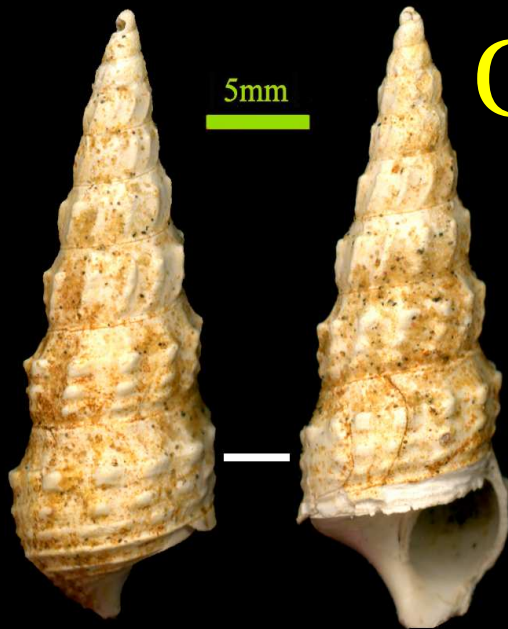
Moon snail
Euspira bassae



5mm

Banded nerite
Nerita semilugubris

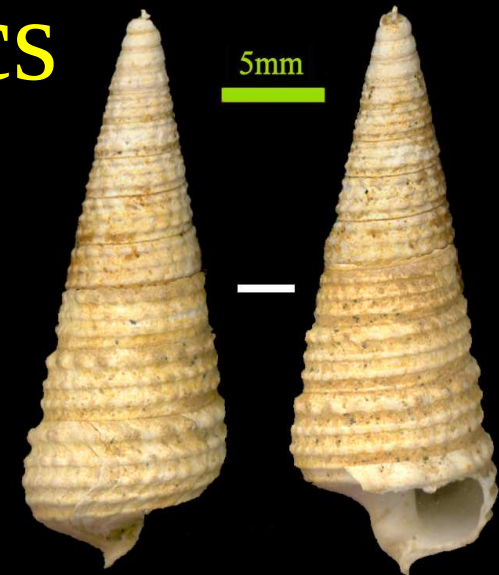
Gastropod molluscs



Marsh creeper
Brotia melanoides



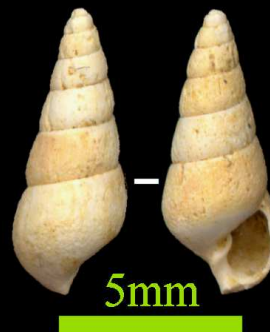
Auger shell
Mirula plicatula



Marsh creeper
Tympantonus funatus



Freshwater snail
*Melanopsis
antidiluviana*

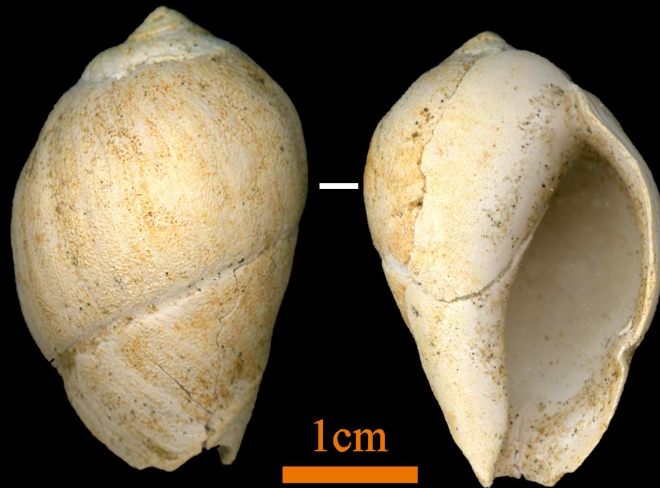


Clam sucker
Odostomia sp.



Freshwater snail
Bayania triticea

Gastropod molluscs



Fissured false olive
Pseudoliva fissurata

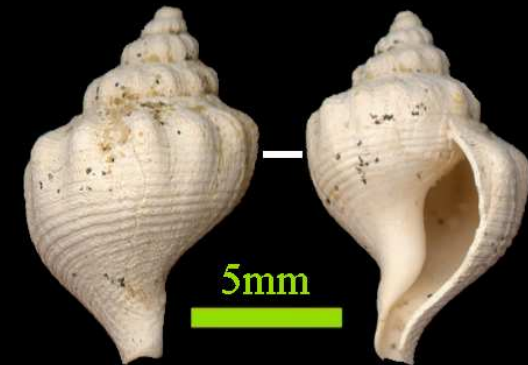


False limpet
Sigapatella echinulata

Whelk
Eocantharus
cf. latus



Whelk
Streptolathyrus sp.



Whelk
Pseudoneptunea subnodosa

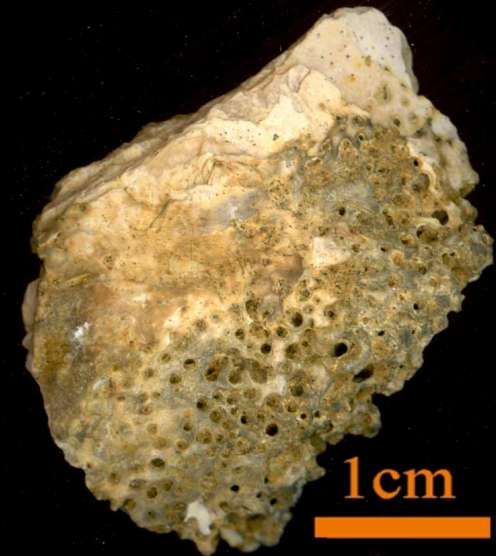
Trace Fossils



Holes in oyster shell

Entobia sp.

Burrowing sponge



Predation borings
Oichnus paraboloides
Attributed to *Euspira* spp.
(below)



Mud pellet burrow
Ophiomorpha nodosa
Callianassid shrimp

