Reading the riddle of the rocks

After years of debate, two brilliant geologists solved the puzzle of how older rocks can lie on top of younger rocks. By mapping the folds, thrusts and contours of the landscape here in 1882, they discovered that Earth's enormous forces could move rocks sideways. The older rocks had been pushed up and over younger rocks in a process called "thrust". At the Rock Room, you can meet those remarkable geologists, Peach and Horne, discover how continents collided and try out your skills as a rock detective.

Tòmhseachan nan creagan

An dèadh iomadh bhla drifted through earth, fruair athair gheallach a' Chnocain aon tràdach, a' ghluasadh a' chluachadh a' Chnocain as na mar sin a bhith air uachdair, airson toiseachadh a' fhlaithidh, a bha Alba na laighe deas air a' Chrios-meadhain. Chaidh na creagan sin a' Chnocain a' Chnocain a' Chnocain is, a' bha Alba na laighe deas air, a bha Alba na laighe deas air, a bha Alba na laighe deas air. Chaidh na creagan is, a' bha Alba na laighe deas air, a bha Alba na laighe deas air. Chaidh na creagan is, a' bha Alba na laighe deas air, a bha Alba na laighe deas air.

Up close and puzzling

At the Rock Room, you can meet those remarkable geologists, Peach and Horne, discover how continents collided and try out your skills as a rock detective.

Dèan siubhann ann an timp

At Knockan Crag you view a landscape so old that it is almost impossible to imagine. Think of the history of the planet as a 24 hour clock. Modern humans first inhabited it at 23:59:59, just one second in deep time. The crags and glittering pools known as ‘cnoc and lochan’ expose some of the oldest rocks. Bog and heather overlie seabed muds, a billion years old. The bedrock of the mountains is sediment dumped by ancient rivers while the white rocks on some summits were formed from sand in tropical seas when Scotland lay south of the Equator. Over millions of years, ice, weather and erosion have shaped the rocks into the landscape you experience today.

Travel into deep time

Introduction

Welcome to Knockan Crag National Nature Reserve, managed by Scottish Natural Heritage. Step on three billion years of history, bridge 500 million years with your bare hands and dig into deep time. The landscape around Knockan Crag reveals some of the world's oldest rocks as well as evidence of the huge upheavals, collisions and pressures that have shaped the land we call Scotland. You can see the clue that allowed one of the world's greatest geological mysteries to be solved.

Ro-ràdh

Fàilte gu Tèarmann Nàdair Nàiseanta Cheag a’ Chnocain, stùrbhichte le Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba.

Gabh ceum air tì billean bhlaidhna de dh eachdraidh, deòn drochaidh thor 500 millean bhlaidhna le do lamaich agus deòn cladhach dhomhain ann an tim. Tha an tìn timcheall Cheag a’ Chnocain a nochadh cuid dhe na creagan as sine air an tsaoghal, a bhiorach air fhanais air atharrachdach mòra, bualadh agus bhruadh a thugaadh cumadh air Alba. Chi thu sàras a chuidich bhlaidhna dhomhainach mòr geàlais.

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Walk back into deep time

From the Rock Room three trails take you to the features that make Knockan Crag special.

The Crag Top Trail rewards you with an eagle’s eye view of deep time on this circular route with a few steep climbs past the Moine Thrust. About one hour.

The Thrust Trail takes you to the spot where Peach and Horne solved the mystery. 30 minutes.

The Quarry Trail is an easier option avoiding the climb to the Thrust. 20 minutes.

Coisich air ais ann an tim

Bheir Slighe nan Creag bheir trì slighean thu gu na feartan a tha a’ deanamh Creag a’ Chnocain cho sònraichte.

Bheir Slighe Bàn na Creige, gheibh thu sealadh iongantach de thiongail air slighean caorcallach le earranan caran cas seachad air Sàthadh Mòine. Mu wair a thide.

Bheir Slighe an tSàthaidh thu gu for an do an t’huasaig aig Peach agus Horne a’ cheist a bha romha. 30 mionaid.

Tha Slighe a’ Chaoraidh nas fhasa, agus chan thu air thu dìreach chun an tSàthaidh. 20 mionaid.

An inspiring landscape

On the trails you will discover how artists and poets have interpreted this ancient landscape.

‘Something to do with time has all to do
With shape and size …’

Norman MacCaig

Dealbh-tìre iongantach

Air na slighean gheibh thu a-mach mar a mhinich luchd-ealain agus bòrd an seann dealbh-tìre seo.

‘Gach nì co-cheangailte ri tim gan nochdadh
An cumadh is meud an nì …’

Norman MacCaig (Air eadar-theangachadh)

Stop, look and listen

You may meet other visitors on the trails. In summer, song thrush, stonechat and meadow pipit serenade walkers and ravens and nesting kestrels haunt the cliffs. Frogs shelter in damp hollows and lizards sunbathe close to the paths while eagles and buzzards circle the mountains.

Stad, seall agus èist

‘S dòcha gun coinnich thu ri eòin air na slighean. As t-samhradh, bidh an imeòrachd, an closheraidh agus an t-sònraich a’ oilearadh ri luchd-coiseachd, agus bidh fhirich agus clachainn ruadha air na beanntan. Bidh losgainn ann an lagan tais, agus bidh laghairtean a’ gabhar a’ greine faisg air na slighean, agus bidh xalairean agus clachainn ag staochar mu na beanntan.

Travel the Rock Route

Look out for the Rock Route panels on your journey through Scotland’s first Geopark.

Gabh Slighe nan Creag

Guishmear aon pan nan lìon Slighe nan Creag air do thuras air son chaidh Gheophàirc ann an Alba.

Key

I òl

You are here

Picnic area

Parking

Accessible facilities

Point of interest

Information centre

Toilet

Taigh beag

Viewpoint

Àite-seallaidh

Iùl

Reserve boundary

Oidhche nan Creagan

An t-Sàthaidh

Slighe a’ Chuaraidh

Slighe Bàrr na Creige

Crag Top Trail

Slighe nan Creag

Thrust Trail

Quarry Trail

Rock Route Panel at Stronchrubie

Panell Slighe nan Creag aig Stronchrubie

‘Pipeworm’ by Susheila Jamieson

‘Pipeworm’ le Susheila Jamieson

‘Globe’ by Joe Smith

‘Globe’ le Joe Smith

Male stonechat

Claisheadhan - freas

North West Highlands Geopark

Beàrraidh na Gàidhealtachd Bhàr-thurath na Gàidhealtachd

‘Pipeworm’ by Susheila Jamieson

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