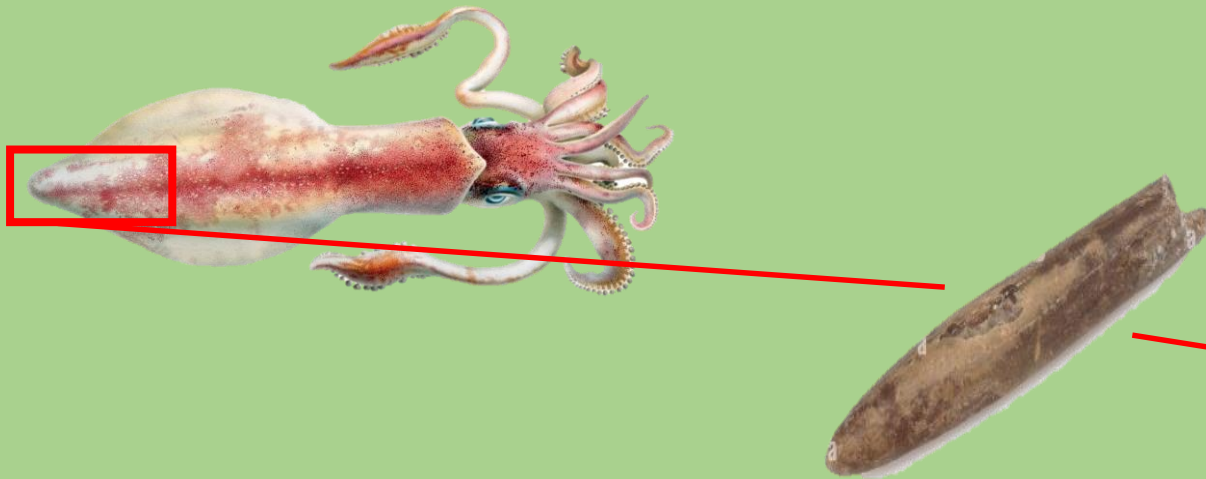


# Belemnites

'If you find a bullet-shaped fossil you could well have found the remnants of an ancient squid. These fossils are called belemnites. The original creature was a ten-armed squid-like cephalopod related to the modern cuttlefish, and it lived in the seas up until 66 million years ago, dying out at the same time as the dinosaurs. Soft tissue doesn't fossilize well, so the bit most commonly found as a fossil is the last fifth of the body, where a heavy calcite guard grew to balance the creature while swimming. These fossils are usually found on the Jurassic coast in Dorset



# Ammonites

Ammonites look a lot like coiled snail shells, but they were actually sea predators. You tend to find them in sedimentary rock, which is rock that has been laid down in layers underwater. Quarries and cliffs where this rock is being exposed can be good places to find them.

The ammonite was a tentacled sea creature that lived between 400 and 66 million years ago, similar to today's nautilus but more closely related to octopuses and squid. All that we see these days is its curled shell, which was divided into sections.

They are also commonly found on the Jurassic Coast.



# Devil's Toenails (Gryphaea)

Although these commonly found fossils look like the claw of an ancient animal or, indeed, a devil, they were created from oysters that once lived on shallow sea beds.

They are between 200 and 66 million years old, relics of a time when what is now the land in Britain was covered by the sea, and are particularly common on the coast of Yorkshire.



# Sea Urchins

Sea urchins have a long history, existing from 450 million years ago right up to today. Along with the sponges that once lived in similar conditions across underwater Britain, they make fairly common fossils, although we only see the hard parts of their bodies.

We get a lot of fossilized sea sponges and sea urchins along the South Downs. The sea urchins can be as small as a Brussels sprout or as big as a grapefruit.



# Shark's Teeth

As a shark feeds throughout its life, its teeth can become dislodged or trapped in its prey. This doesn't matter to the shark, as it has a constant supply of replacement teeth growing from inside its jaw.

This means that shark teeth, lost on the bottom of ancient oceans, have fossilized and can now be found in sedimentary rocks. A lot of people find fossilized shark's teeth, and some of these can be as large as your hand. One place they are often found is the Essex coast.

