

Geowalks: Eigg

Saturday 17 to Thursday 22 April 2021

The small Hebridean island of Eigg is an enchanting mix: beautiful scenery, a surprising variety of rocks, and a friendly and innovative local community. There are many geological riches to explore, including important fossil-rich sedimentary rocks and the singing sands, fringed by sandstone cliffs cut by basalt dykes. The famous Sgùrr forms the high point of the island.

Eigg is mostly formed from basalt lava flows and intrusions, the remains of extensive volcanic activity 60 million years ago. These are underlain by sedimentary rocks from the Jurassic Period. The rocks of An Sgùrr were formed by a final, violent volcanic eruption, the last known volcanic activity in this area.

This trip will explore Eigg's geological variety, including the west coast, the south of the island and An Sgùrr. The itinerary will include short walks over rough and sometimes boggy ground.

Important note: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the trip might be cancelled or arrangements may need to change at short notice. Details cannot be confirmed until nearer the time, and participants will need to follow procedures to minimise the risk of virus transmission.



Outline Programme

Saturday 17 April Travel to Eigg, departing from Mallaig early afternoon.

Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday Day walks from the Glebe Barn exploring different sections of the island, options include:

1. The west coast. Explore the Bay of Laig and follow the low cliffs of sandstone round to the singing sands; the sandstones contain amazing concretions and are cut by many basalt dykes – my favourite geological walk!
2. Climb An Sgùrr, following a reasonable but boggy path beneath the cliffs and up onto the rocky ridge, for great views of the Hebrides and the mainland.
3. The rough south coast, with caves, intruding dykes, crofting villages and views of the varied An Sgùrr ridge.
4. Walk to the northern tip of Eigg to see the result of post-glacial landslides that have ripped into the layers of basalt lava, and follow the footsteps of Hugh Miller and search for fossil-rich rocks on the beach.

Thursday 22 April Further exploration in the morning, depart Eigg for Mallaig early afternoon.

Details

Cost

Course fee £420 per person. This includes four nights accommodation and all food, but not travel to Eigg.

Booking

Contact Angus to reserve your place. Payment will not be due until all arrangements are confirmed. If the trip has to be cancelled, you will receive a full refund.

If you need to cancel your booking before the start of the trip because you develop Covid-19 symptoms, or because of any Scottish Government restrictions to travel, you will get a full refund.

It will not be possible to refund any other costs, such as travel.

Accommodation & Catering

We have exclusive use of the Glebe Barn hostel www.glebebarn.co.uk, a very comfortable and superior hostel in a fantastic setting overlooking the harbour bay. The number of people in the group will be determined by how many can be safely accommodated.

All food is provided, including substantial, catered two-course evening meals, self-service breakfasts and packed lunches.

Transport to Mallaig

Mallaig is accessible by public transport, either by bus or on the famed West Highland railway. Timings require an overnight stay before the trip.

Level of fitness required

The trip will involve short walks often on rough ground (up to 5-6 miles with longer optional extensions). There will be some flexibility in the programme, allowing you to opt out and do your own thing if you wish. Suitable for people who walk regularly and are accustomed to rough ground.

Recommended Reading

The Geology of Eigg, John D Hudson, Angus D Miller, Ann Allwright. Edinburgh Geological Society, ISBN 9780904440164.

Rum and the Small Isles, in the SNH Landscape Fashioned by Geology Series, 2004. Available from www.scottishgeology.com
The Cruise of the Betsey, Hugh Miller, 1858. Facsimile edition published by NMS Publishing, ISBN 1-901663-54-X.

Volcanoes and the Making of Scotland, Brian Upton, 2nd edition, 2015. Dunedin, ISBN 978-1-78046-056-7.



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