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## Thrislington Quarry 431200 533200

Working Quarry

LaFarge Aggregates

The Marl Slate Formation at this site has yielded extensive amounts of typical fossil fauna and flora. It also probably possesses the largest amount of Marl Slate available for safe specimen collection at a single site.

**Proposed action** Continue to stockpile Marl Slate and allow collection by supervised parties.

Consider periodic open days.

**Existing designations** CGS

**Existing on site interpretation** None

**Major geodiversity interest** Exposures from Yellow Sands Formation, through the Marl Slate Formation and the Raisby Formation to the Ford Formation lagoonal facies.

**Biodiversity interest** Thrislington Plantation SSSI has magnesian limestone grassland

**Other heritage links** None

**Additional comment** Could make good link with Thrislington Plantation grassland

**Date of photography** 2004

(Photo 12) Thrislington Quarry.

(Plate 22) Fossil found by a young person during RSPB organized visit to the working Thrislington Quarry in 2003.

[References](#)



### Rare fossil find at quarry

A 12-year-old girl discovered a rare fossil in Thrislington Quarry during a school field trip organised for the 'white engine' club of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Eighteen-year-old Hannah spent a day with a group of 'engineers' from the quarry near Thrislington, where she discovered a fossil of a small insect-like creature.

The fossil is a rare species, which has been found in the Thrislington Quarry, near Thrislington, where she was on a school trip to see the quarry.

Hannah, of Thrislington, West Yorkshire, was visiting the quarry with her school for a day.

The quarry is a rare species, which has been found in the Thrislington Quarry, near Thrislington, where she was on a school trip to see the quarry.

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(Photo 12) Thrislington Quarry.

# Rare fossil find at quarry

A 12-year-old girl discovered a rare fossil at Thrislington Quarry during a special fossil hunt organised for the wildlife explorers' club of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Stephanie Gomersall hammered apart a large piece of slate at Lafarge Aggregates' Thrislington Quarry, near Ferryhill, and found the imprint of a fish called 'Coelacanthus' which is about 250 million years old.

She showed it to the organiser of the fossil hunt, Steve McLean, curator of the Hancock Museum, Newcastle, whose suspicion that it was a rare specimen was later confirmed by the Natural History Museum in London.

Stephanie, of Ponteland, Northumberland, was searching the last pieces of stone when she made her discovery... "I was quite amazed as it's the first time I've looked for fossils".

Her father Richard, who works in the advertising department of the Newcastle Journal newspaper, had co-ordinated the fossil hunt for the RSPB Wildlife Explorers' Club. Stephanie has donated the fossil to the Hancock Museum which is putting it on display.

Steve McLean said: "Coelacanthus is a rare fossil. We only have a few in the collections at the Hancock Museum. It is a very interesting type of fossil because it was thought that fish of this type were extinct until a modern coelacanth was caught by a fishing boat off the coast of South Africa in 1938. They are still being caught today.

"It's great to find this fossil specimen in Durham and I thank Lafarge Aggregates for hosting the fossil hunt in their quarry".

Quarry manager Graeme Parkin said: "Lafarge's partnership with the museum means we can organise these fossil hunts from time to time".

The Hancock Museum is also putting on display another specimen found at Thrislington Quarry. Shotfirer Keith Farley was preparing some slate for a visit of school pupils and discovered what is commonly called a shark's head fossil but in fact is the imprint of a fish called *Jamara* which was ray like and fed on the bottom of the sea.

"It is quite a rare find and although this specimen is somewhat mangled we can see evidence of the skin and the mouth and teeth of the fish", added Steve.

- The fossil find follows the recent unearthing of a 40,000-year-old skeleton of a woolly rhino at another Lafarge quarry in Staffordshire.



12-year-old Stephanie Gomersall and Steve McLean, Curator of the Hancock Museum, with the rare fossil

(Plate 22) Fossil found by a young person during RSPB organized visit to the working Thrislington Quarry in 2003.