

**Sutton Coldfield Natural History Society**  
Outdoor Meeting Saturday 11 April 2015  
Cuckoo's Nook and The Dingle LNR, Walsall, West Midlands

Leader – Peter Coxhead. Members attending – 15.

The site, managed by Walsall Council, displays two distinct soil types and 60 million years of geological time owing to the reserve straggling a fault line. On one side the coal measures are near to the surface, on the other limestone is uppermost. The Dingle has alkaline soil (limestone), Cuckoo's Nook acidic soil. This has a profound effect on the flora found on either side of the fault line. The site makes a very pleasant circular walk. Some members enjoyed refreshment at the Garden Centre afterwards.

### **Geological Notes by Kate Ashcroft**

Visitors travelling from Sutton Coldfield to our starting point must cross a major Midlands geological fault to get to the start of this walk. At the Crown Pub near to the garden centre lies the Eastern Boundary Fault of the South Staffordshire Coalfield. The land to the west of this has been upfaulted as a [horst block](#) bringing older rocks nearer to the surface.

So our walk through the nature reserve commenced over the upfaulted Barr Limestone, though at times there was much mud included in the limestone. The limestone had been deposited in warm shallow clear seas but land based rivers could bring mud into the sea at times. The plants we saw benefitted from the lime in the soils; the wild garlic, and the ash and beech trees were all typical of lime-loving plants. The rocks were 426 to 428 million years old, of Silurian age. Some of the limestone had been quarried out.

Cuckoo's Nest reserve had a totally different flora for it lies to the east of the fault where lie younger, 307–309 million year old, Carboniferous rocks, laid down as sands and gravels by rivers over a land surface. It had given rise to more acid soils so flora was totally different with acid-loving holly and bluebells.

<b>Plants in Flower (15 species)</b>	
Lesser Celandine	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>
Wood Forget-Me-Not	<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>
Hairy Bittercress	<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum</i> agg.
Dog's Mercury	<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Common Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Early Dog-violet	<i>Viola reichenbachiana</i>
Wild Garlic	<i>Allium ursinum</i>
Wood-sorrel	<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>
Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>
Slender Speedwell	<i>Veronica filiformis</i>
Green Alkanet	<i>Pentaglottis sempervirens</i>

Red Currant	<i>Ribes sanguineum</i>
Wood Anemone	<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>
<b>Birds (9 species)</b>	
Long Tailed Tit	Blackbird
Chiffchaff	Mistle Thrush
Blue Tit	Nuthatch
Robin	Grey Heron
Great Tit	