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Explore Front Street Fossils!

A picture guide to some of the fossils to be found in the cobbles of Front Street, Acomb

1. Ammonites



The yellow-circled cobble in the disabled parking bay outside 63, Front Street, contains ammonite fossils.



This is what the cobble looks like when wet

And these are the fossils to be found in the cobble:



The photo above includes an impression of an ammonite (the curving groove with crinkly patterns above and below it). The photo below shows a cross-section slice through an ammonite fossil. The black circular shapes are where the chambers of the ammonite shell have filled with crystals. The paler grey-brown colour is the muddy limestone that the ammonites were fossilized within. These are likely to be early Jurassic, around 190 million years old, and similar to those found in Redcar and Robin Hood's Bay.



2. Corals



This is a limestone cobble, also to be found in the disabled parking bay outside 63, Front Street. All the pale tubes and circles inside it are corallites, the fossils of individual coral animals that lived in a coral colony. This type of fossil coral is called *Siphonodendron* ('branching siphons') and lived around 330 million years ago. It can be found in the limestone rocks of the Yorkshire Dales and Northumberland.



The coral cobble fossil outside 63, Front Street, with the Marcia Grey pub shown in the background.

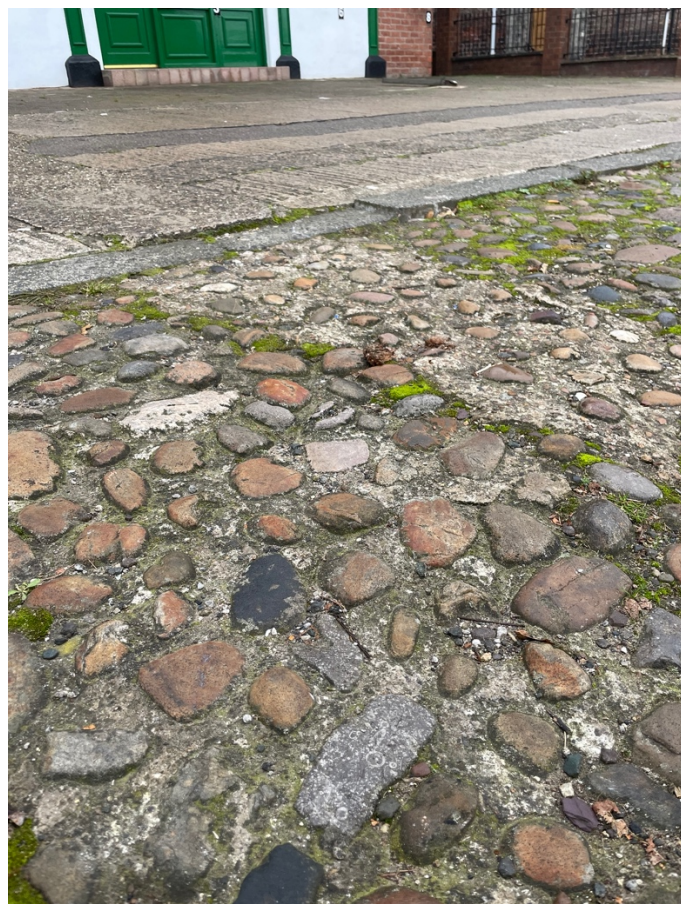
3. Crinoids



This fossil cobble is next to the bicycle racks outside Ali Barbers (43, Front Street). The pale shapes that look a bit like a toothy crocodile jaw are actually parts of the stem of an ancient crinoid, or sea lily. These animals lived in huge numbers in the tropical seas that covered Britain over 300 million years ago.



The crinoid 'croc' cobble outside 43, Front Street, with Vyner House in the background.



This crinoid cobble is outside The Old Chapel (between 83 and 85), Front Street. The pale shapes that look like polo mints are single segments (ossicles) of sea lily stems. The ossicles are made of a mineral called calcite, whilst the rest of the rock is a darker grey mudstone.



This pale pebble, also outside The Old Chapel, is also full of crinoid fossils. In fact, it is probably made of almost nothing but pieces of crinoid. It's like an ancient shelly gravel that has turned to stone.

Fossils of Front Street - Further information

SAFETY

All the fossils shown are found in roadside cobbles, which are often used for parking. We don't want anyone to get hurt whilst fossil-spotting on Front Street, so please take great care and watch out for cars, lorries, buses and bikes.

FOSSIL-SPOTTING

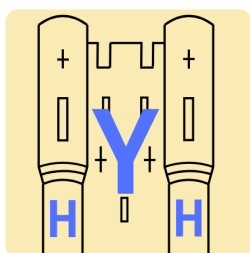
A magnifying glass is a fossil-spotter's most useful tool. It is also easiest to see fossils in the cobbles when they are wet. If it hasn't rained recently, you might want to pour some water onto the cobbles to make the patterns easier to see.

NEW FOSSILS

It is likely that there are many other cobbles on Front Street that contain fossils, including types of fossil that aren't shown in this guide. Keep your eyes peeled, and feel free to send photos to liam@earthscienceoutreach.org.uk for identification.

FIND OUT MORE

Join Fossiliam (<https://www.facebook.com/fossiliam>) or York's Hidden History (<https://www.facebook.com/yorkshiddenhist>) for a guided fossil walk in York or on the Yorkshire Coast. Or pop into Acomb Explore Library and borrow a book about fossils and palaeontology!



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