

Cornuboniscus Budensis, the Bude Fish - The Castle Heritage Centre



In 1932 the remains of a fossil fish were discovered in the Bude rock formation. It was classified as a new species and named 'Cornuboniscus Budensis' in recognition of where it was found. It was roughly the size of a sardine and had razor sharp teeth a bit like a piranha. It has been proved that the fish lived in a lake, rather than open sea. At the time it was alive, most of Devon and Cornwall was covered by a vast lake. Conditions during that period would have been far more tropical, similar to modern Africa. The fish had unusually high pectoral fins. In 1985, geologist Dr Roger Higgs, discovered fossilised trails that could only have been made by a fish propelling itself along the bottom of a lake bed. This would explain the high position of the fins found on Cornuboniscus Budensis. It is thought that it fed on small crabs, using its teeth to pierce the shells. It has been found nowhere else in the world so is unique to Bude. The fish lived 300 million years ago, before the dinosaurs. The rock formation it was found in is also unique, consisting of folds and zig zags that extend along the coast, it is known as the 'Bude Formation'. So famous is the rock formation, that it has been studied by generations of eminent geologists as well as universities and oil companies.