

Mary Anning

Fact File

Name: Mary Anning
Year of Birth: 1799
Place of Birth: Lyme Regis in Dorset.
Famous For: Discovering many important fossils along the Jurassic Coast.



Mary's Curiosities

Mary would spend hours on the beach with her father hunting for fossils when she was a child. They collected these curiosities but didn't call them 'fossils' because they did not know what they were or how they were made.

Did You Know... ?

Mary's family were poor so they made extra money by selling their curiosities to tourists for a penny each.

Mary became friends with a fossil collector called Elizabeth Philpot. She taught her more about her collection of curiosities.



Dear Diary,

Today has been an extraordinary day!

My new friend Elizabeth showed me some of her books and told me that my 'curiosities' are actually called 'fossils'. They are the remains of creatures that had lived on the Earth millions of years ago. Can you believe that our Earth is really that old?

Mary's Ichthyosaur

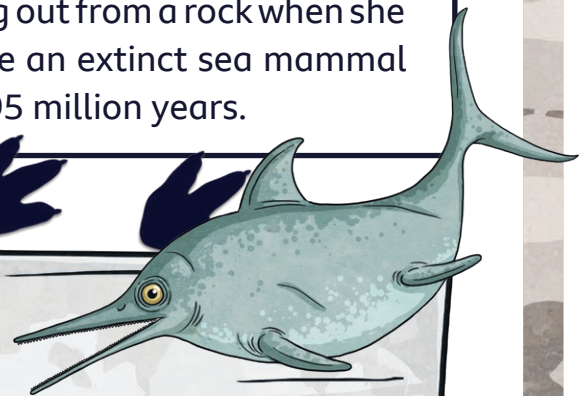
Mary discovered a mysterious creature poking out from a rock when she was 12 years old. This fossil turned out to be an extinct sea mammal called an ichthyosaur dating back around 195 million years.

Dear Diary,

Today, an important man of science travelled all the way from London to take a look at my specimen.

He could tell instantly that it was something special. He said it was like nothing he'd ever seen before and that he'd never seen a creature with such an enormous eye.

They called it an ichthyosaur, which means 'fish lizard' in Greek.



Did You Know... ?

Mary was a poor woman who did not go to school so she was not talked about in any books or papers at the time.

Remembering Mary

Today, many people believe that Mary's fossils are some of the most important scientific discoveries of all time. Her ichthyosaur and other fossils are on display at the Natural History Museum in London.

Did You Know... ?

The Jurassic Coast was given special protection in 2001 for its important rocks and fossils.



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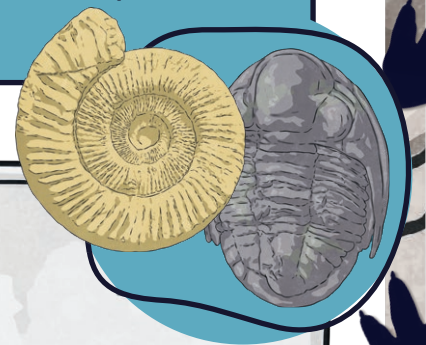
Mary's Curiosities

As a child, Mary would spend hours on the beach with her father hunting for fossils in the rocks. They collected these curiosities but didn't call them 'fossils' since they did not know what they were or how they were made.

Did You Know... ?

Mary's family were poor so they made extra money by selling their curiosities to tourists for a penny each.

Mary became friends with the fossil collector Elizabeth Philpot. She taught her more about her collection of curiosities.



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Mary's Ichthyosaur

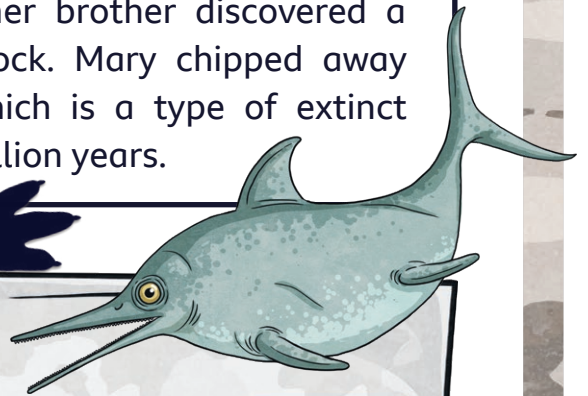
When Mary was 12 years old, she and her brother discovered a mysterious creature poking out from a rock. Mary chipped away at the rock and found an ichthyosaur which is a type of extinct marine mammal dating back around 195 million years.

Dear Diary,

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They called it an ichthyosaur, which means 'fish lizard' in Greek.



Did You Know... ?

Because she was a poor and uneducated woman, Mary was not given any credit for her discoveries at the time.

Mary's Legacy

Mary went on to make many more remarkable discoveries and these were put on display in London. Over recent years, there has been a growing interest in Mary's life and work. Many people believe that her fossils are some of the most remarkable scientific discoveries of all time. Today, Mary's ichthyosaur and other fossilised creatures are on display at the Natural History Museum in London.

Did You Know... ?

In 2001, the Jurassic Coast was awarded the important UNESCO World Heritage status for its combination of rocks and fossils dating back almost 185 million years.

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Fact File

Name: Mary Anning

Year of Birth: 1799

Place of Birth: Lyme Regis, Dorset.

Famous For: Making many significant fossil discoveries along the Jurassic Coast, including the first ichthyosaur.



Mary's Curiosities

When Mary was a child, she would spend hours on the beach with her father hunting for fossils in the rocks. They collected these curiosities but did not call them 'fossils' since they did not know what they were or how they were made. They sold their curiosities to tourists for a penny each, which was welcome extra income for the poor family.

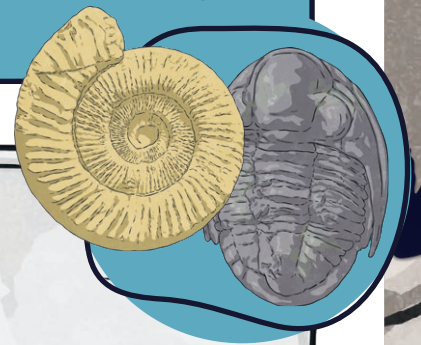
Mary befriended fellow fossil collector Elizabeth Philpot, who taught her more about her collection of curiosities.

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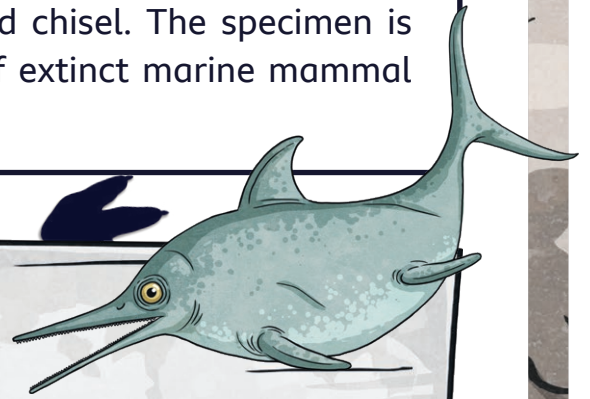
My new friend Elizabeth showed me some of her books and informed me that my curiosities are actually called 'fossils'. They are the remains of creatures that had lived on the Earth millions of years ago. Can you believe that our Earth is really that old?

There are so many fossils out there on the beach waiting to be discovered. All I want to do is be out there searching for them.



Mary's Ichthyosaur

When Mary was 12 years old, she and her brother discovered a mysterious creature poking out from a rock. With the help of some local quarry workers, they took the slab home where Mary began to slowly chip away at it using a hammer and chisel. The specimen is now known to be an ichthyosaur: a type of extinct marine mammal dating back around 195 million years.



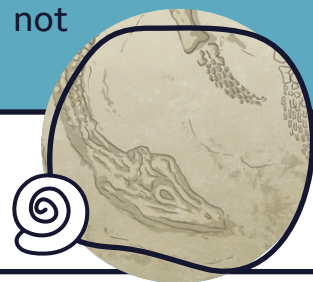
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Mary went on to make many more remarkable discoveries along the Jurassic Coast and these were put on display in London. Because she was a poor and uneducated woman, Mary was not given any credit for her discoveries at the time.



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Over recent years, there has been a growing interest in Mary's life and work. Many people believe that her fossils are some of the most remarkable scientific discoveries of all time. Today, Mary's ichthyosaur and other fossilised creatures are on display at the Natural History Museum in London.

About the Jurassic Coast

The Dorset and East Devon Coast (known as 'the Jurassic Coast') extends for 95 miles. In 2001, it was awarded UNESCO World Heritage status for its combination of rocks and fossils dating back almost 185 million years. Fossils are still being unearthed along its coastline.

