

U3A GEOLOGY REPORT Meetings on February 12th and 26th Bob Tuddenham

In February we had two very interesting meetings on Zoom.

At the start of the Feb 12th meeting, Trevor Morse outlined a couple of developments in geology that had been in the news. The fossil of the largest pterosaur reptile ever found has been discovered on Skye. Named Dearc, it has a 2.5m wingspan and lived in the Jurassic period some 170 million years ago. Trevor also mentioned a further source of hydrogen that could play an important role in decarbonising our energy. This is 'gold' hydrogen which is native molecular hydrogen that does arise in some geological situations.

In the second half of the meeting we looked at an excellent Geological Society Lecture by Professor Sandy Hetherington about how roots on plants have evolved over the last 400 million years. The study into ancient flora seems to have taken second place to ancient fauna and this video showed that by systematic research, it is possible to explain the evolution of roots in plants and their vital role in the development of biological systems over last 400 million years.

In the meeting on February 26th, we looked at a fascinating Magellan video about plate tectonics which particularly focused on the Earth's ancient continents. As well as covering the essential features of plate tectonics, the video showed that the idea of moving continents had been suggested by a number of scientists in the 19th century prior to Alfred Wegener's theory of continental drift in 1912.

From March onwards we return to face to face meetings at The Witham. On Monday April 22nd, we have a field trip in Teesdale led by Trevor Morse. All are welcome to join us; please contact the convenor for details.
