



Self guided **ROCK** walk  
on Salisbury **LEGENDS**  
Craggs in **TOUR** ALLOW 1 HOUR  
Holyrood Park



**FREE walk guide**

Discover the evidence that helped, Edinburgh born geologist, James Hutton pioneer the idea of 'deep time' and enjoy incredible views of Edinburgh.



Rock Legends route



The Mother Earth of all adventures [www.dynamicearth.co.uk](http://www.dynamicearth.co.uk)

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# ROCK LEGENDS TOUR

One of the most important things to think about when studying our planet and its rocks is just how old it is. The scientific community now believes that the Earth is around 4,500 million years old!

**The phrase that was coined for this was “deep time”. This idea was pioneered by James Hutton, an Edinburgh-born man who lived during the 18th century and became known as the Father of Modern Geology.**

Hutton discovered evidence that the Earth was immeasurably older than the 6000 years that was the accepted view in his day. He made his main discovery at Siccar Point just south of Dunbar in East Lothian. Here he found evidence of rocks formed on the seafloor being folded and uplifted to form mountains and then eroded before further sandstones were deposited on top. This could not have happened in 6000 years, nor in millions of years! Hutton also made famous observations about volcanic processes at ‘Hutton’s Section’ on Salisbury Crags in Holyrood Park.

Here, 350 million years ago, magma forced its way up to the surface of the Earth. Arthur’s Seat was actually a volcano! 25 million years later, 325 million years ago, similar magma was squeezed in between layers of sedimentary rocks beneath the old volcano. As it did so, the magma at about 1000°C came into contact with the water in the pore spaces of the sandstone. The power of expanding steam folded back parts of the adjacent layers of sediment as the molten magma flowed in. At Hutton’s Section you can actually see where the sedimentary rocks were folded back as the dolerite was intruded.

Of course this magma eventually cooled down and in time became Edinburgh’s well known Salisbury Crags, a ‘sill’ made from volcanic dolerite. But here is captured a freeze-frame image of subterranean processes that took place 325 million years ago!

The rocks at Siccar Point and beneath Salisbury Crags helped Hutton to prove that the Earth had an extremely long history and that rocks that we now know as igneous rocks had at one time been molten.

## Allow 1 hour

Full map on back page

Leaving Our Dynamic Earth, head for the northern end of Salisbury Crags and join the path, the “Radical Road” which skirts the base of the Crags.



Part of Hutton’s Section

From here you can gain a stunning view across Edinburgh’s skyline and beyond, including most of the city’s other volcanic sites, the Castle Rock, Carlton Hill, Blackford Hill and even some of the islands in the Firth of Forth.



James Hutton, 18th century Edinburgh born geologist

Hutton’s section lies at the south end of the Crags a little way off the path. Look out for a plaque which will show you exactly where you are and tell you about the significance of the section. Continuing past Hutton’s section take the path northwards between Arthur’s Seat and Salisbury Crags.



Stunning views over Edinburgh

Descending by the path, you will find yourself in Hunters Bog. This is part of the park that is particularly rich in plants as the original wetland is restored. But for everyone it is a place where you can feel completely away from the hustle and bustle of the city.



A quiet escape in the heart of the city

As you descend towards St Margaret’s Loch and if you feel particularly energetic you can extend your walk by visiting St Anthony’s Chapel and ascending Arthur’s Seat by the Dry Dam. Alternatively you could return to Dynamic Earth for a well deserved coffee.

