

The Petrified Forest

Several of the holes by the sea offer spectacular views of a submerged forest, the remains of tree trunks which appear at low tide, from the days when the shingle ridge was further out to sea. The stumps of the oak, pine, birch, willow and hazel trees have been stripped back further by the high tides and crashing waves that have hit the region in the past few years. The trees, which are thought to have died around 1500BC, have been preserved by the acid conditions in the peat of the land and have become the stuff of legends, folklore and songs.

Some say the forest is part of the mythical submerged kingdom of Cantre'r Gwaelod, which legend states lies under the Irish Sea in Cardigan Bay. The legend goes that the land was fortified against the sea by a dyke which was looked after by two princes. But one of them, called Seithenyn, got drunk and allowed the sea to enter the open floodgates, flooding the city. The church bells of Cantre'r Gwaelod are said to ring out in times of danger.

