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# Determining the Relative “Value” and Sustainability of the UK’s in-situ Dinosaur Track Sites

Kirsty Edgar

(Associate Professor in Micropalaeontology, University of Birmingham)

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 | Mott MacDonald, 10 Livery St, Birmingham B3 3NU / Zoom Video Conference | 6:30pm start

## **Abstract:**

Dinosaurs were a hugely successful group of vertebrates with a wide array of morphologies and ecologies that dominated terrestrial ecosystems globally during much of the Mesozoic (~228-66 million years ago). Dinosaur tracks (footprints) are a key means of determining the palaeoecology and distribution of dinosaurs through time and highly complementary to the skeletal record. There is a long history of dinosaur tracks being reported and studied in the UK, from the mid-19th century to the present day, reflecting the excellent exposure of Mesozoic rocks through many parts of the UK and a long history of public and scientific interest in fossils.

Dinosaur tracks are also amongst the most popular and recognisable trace fossils encountered in the natural world by the public and are a major draw to some areas of England, Scotland and Wales. Thus, beyond their scientific value, they provide key aesthetic and pedagogic opportunities in the tourism and education sectors. However, the protection, monitoring, communication, and our scientific knowledge of the sites varies considerably.

This talk will review the UK dinosaur track record, assess the scientific and cultural value of existing in-situ dinosaur track sites in the UK and place them in a global context, and identify threats and opportunities at UK sites where future conservation and public engagement actions should be focussed.



*Palaeoenvironmental reconstruction of Spyway Quarry, Dorset (earliest Cretaceous) showing large sauropod dinosaurs walking along a shelly beach next to a lagoon. Image by Mark Witton.*

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**About the Speaker:**

Kirsty is an Associate Professor of Micropalaeontology in the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Birmingham, UK. The bulk of her research focusses on the timing, nature and interaction between global climate, biogeochemical cycling and marine life in the Mesozoic and Cenozoic. However, more recently, prompted by the pandemic, she has become more involved with geoconservation, particularly how to monitor, communicate and protect the UK's palaeontological heritage.



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Date	Title	Speaker	Venue
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