

## Submerged Forests around British and Irish Coasts

### Summary:

The following article was originally published as an interactive web-page. The map below shows the principal locations where submerged forests are found around British and Irish coasts; giving hyperlinks to both popular and specialist reports; some of these will give further detail and maps together with photographs.



Radiocarbon dates are shown here in square brackets. The dates suggested in the various press reports should be treated only as an approximate guide to the precise era of submergence and so are enclosed in quotes. Trees may survive for hundreds of years and it is not always stated whether radiocarbon dated material has been taken from tree stumps in-situ or from fallen logs. Only dated wood from the final growth-rings of a stump would be indicative of the true date of submergence.

Older published studies may refer to a '*submerged forest period*' during the mid-Holocene, whereas more recent papers speak of the submerged forests as dating to various eras. This is in part, an artefact of random sampling of available wood; however it may be seen that samples from the North Sea coast tend to favour the conventional dating for the submergence of 'Doggerland', while those around western coasts tend to be from a later period.

The list is not intended to be exhaustive of either sites or of links and will need to be updated as and when new sites or relevant reports emerge. The intention here is merely to give an entry point for the general reader to the photographic evidence and relevant studies.

**Amble, Northumberland** [7000 BP]

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3593219/North-sea-reveals-7-000-year-old-human-footprints-ancient-forest-Woodland-stretched-Denmark-covered-ocean.html>

**Allonby, Cumbria** [?]

See Steers, p77, also see Silloth below

**Anglesey** [?]

Numerous sites around the island, see

<http://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk/lostlandscapes/submergedforests.htm>

This includes a map of all the known sites around Wales

**Benbecula, Western Isles** ['7000 BP']

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-46890793>

**Ballinskelligs** ['4000 BP']

<https://www.theringofkerry.com/blog/155-pre-historic-4-000-year-old-forest-in-ireland>

**Bray, Wicklow** [6180 BP]

<https://jasonbolton.wordpress.com/2015/04/28/the-submerged-forest-of-bray-co-wicklow/>

**Borth** [5500 BP] and **Ynyslas** [3500 BP]

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/storm-hannah-unearths-sunken-forest-16201397>

<https://www.coflein.gov.uk/en/site/421874/details/tanybwlch-submerged-forest>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/278409a0>

**Canning Town, London** [3940—3700 cal bc]

[www.lamas.org.uk/images/documents/.../Pg\\_001-016\\_Submerged\\_forest.pdf](http://www.lamas.org.uk/images/documents/.../Pg_001-016_Submerged_forest.pdf)

**Cleethorpes** ['Neolithic']

<https://citizan.org.uk/blog/2016/Aug/25/three-submerged-forests/>

**Clare, Galway, Mayo** [7400-5200 BP]

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/storms-reveal-7-500-year-old-drowned-forest-on-north-galway-coastline-1.1715303>

**Conwy** ['6000 BP']

<https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/5119512>

**Drigg, Cumbria** [?] See Steers p82-3

**Lancashire Coast** ['Neolithic']

<https://citizan.org.uk/blog/2016/Aug/25/three-submerged-forests/>

[https://www.arnsidesilverdaleaonb.org.uk/uploads/2016/05/lasca\\_chapter3a.pdf](https://www.arnsidesilverdaleaonb.org.uk/uploads/2016/05/lasca_chapter3a.pdf)

**Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire** ['6000 BP']

<https://www.lincolnshirelive.co.uk/news/local-news/crowds-descend-submerged-ancient-woodland-1897235>

**Morecambe Bay** ['7600-5200 BP']

see Isca report 3.11 under Lancashire

**Mounts Bay, Cornwall** ['4000-6000 BP']

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/ancient-submerged-forests-uncovered-by-storm-damage-to-coastlines-30030179.html>

See also the paper by French C.N. below

**Norfolk** ['10,000 BP']

discovered offshore by divers

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-30905267/ancient-underwater-forest-discovered-off-norfolk-coast>

**Orkney** [4410–4325 cal BC]

<https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle-2-15039/archaeologists-survey-scotland-s-forests-under-the-sea-1-4672611>

See also the detailed paper of Timpany et al, reference below.

**Pentewen, Cornwall** [?]

See Steers, p 258

**Pett, Sussex** ['Mesolithic']

<https://citizan.org.uk/blog/2016/Aug/25/three-submerged-forests/>

**Rhyll** [?]

This article includes a map of all the known sites around the Welsh coastline

<http://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk/lostlandscapes/submergedforests.html>

**Siloth** ['8000 BP']

<http://www.solwayshorestories.co.uk/shore-stories/the-submerged-forest/>

**Solent** [6300 BP]

Ancient logs discovered near a (recent) shipwreck site

<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/~imw/ship.htm>

**Stolford** [5398-5020 BP]

Campbell & Baxter (see Borth & Ynyslas above)

**St Mary's (Scilly)** [5310-5050 cal BC]

Source: *The Lyonesse Project*

**Westward Ho! Devon** [6500 BP]

<http://www.westwardhohistory.co.uk/submerged-forest/>

See also the pdf of Bell, Manning and Nayling, suggesting an earlier and a later period of submergence:

<https://dendro.cornell.edu/articles/Bell2009.pdf>

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## References

Campbell, J.A.; Baxter M.S. (1979). "[Radiocarbon measurements on submerged forest floating chronologies](#)". *Nature*. 278 (5703): 409–413. doi:[10.1038/278409a0](#).

French, C. N., The 'Submerged Forest' palaeosols of Cornwall, *Geoscience in south-west England*, 9, 365-369. [www.ussher.org.uk/journal/90s/1999/documents/French\\_1999.pdf](http://www.ussher.org.uk/journal/90s/1999/documents/French_1999.pdf)

Reid, C, (1913) *Submerged Forests*. The Cambridge Manuals of Science and Literature, Cambridge University Press. The full text is available here:

<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=OQ89AAAAIAAJ&pg=PA38&lpg=PA38&dq=Submerged+forests+Scotland&source=bl&ots=MAiHTxWlKP&sig=ACfU3U3RhYfX3g6IG4PwMNA6jNwEyRPEFA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewijlOfgg8jjAhUSWvAKHWa4A6U4ChDoATAOegOICRAB#v=onepage&q=Submerged%20forests%20Scotland&f=false>

Steers, J.A. (1964) *The Coastline of England and Wales*, Cambridge Univ. Press.

Timpany, S., Crone, A., Hamilton, D., and Sharpe, M. (2017) Revealed by Waves: A Stratigraphic, Palaeoecological, and Dendrochronological investigation of a Prehistoric Oak Timber and Intertidal Peats, Bay of Ireland, West Mainland, Orkney, *The Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology*, 0:1–25 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15564894.2017.1284960>

Bell, M., Manning, S.W. & Nayling, N. 2009. Dating the Coastal Mesolithic of Western Britain: A Test of some Evolutionary Assumptions. In P. Combé, M. Van Strydonck, J. Sergeant, M. Boudin & M. Bats (eds.), *Chronology and Evolution within the Mesolithic of North-West Europe*: 615-634. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

A PowerPoint presentation by Scott Timpany with various pictures of submerged forest deposits is available here:

[https://www.academia.edu/10389858/Looking\\_for\\_lost\\_lands\\_-\\_submerged\\_forests\\_in\\_the\\_UK?email\\_work\\_card=title](https://www.academia.edu/10389858/Looking_for_lost_lands_-_submerged_forests_in_the_UK?email_work_card=title)

## Doggerland

Related to the study of submerged forests in Britain is the study of the North Sea land-bridge, for which an entry point may be found in the project of Professor Bryony Coles:

[https://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/title\\_89282\\_en.html](https://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/title_89282_en.html)

The foregoing is a format adapted version as of July 2020 on the author's website at:

<https://www.third-millennium.co.uk/submerged-forests-britain-ireland>

**Tags:** sea level change, submerged forest, catastrophism, sea-levels, ancient climate, ice ages, Irish Sea, Lancashire, Wales, pole shift

**Citation:** Dunbavin, Paul (2020) *Submerged Forests around British and Irish Coasts*, in *Prehistory Papers*, pp 112-117, Third Millennium Publishing, Beverley, ISBN: 978-0-9525029-4-4