

FROM LAND TO SEA : A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME AND GEOLOGY

Welcome to Mont de Couple in Audembert !

You're standing on Mont de Couple, part of a vast chalk foundation that shapes these rolling hills.

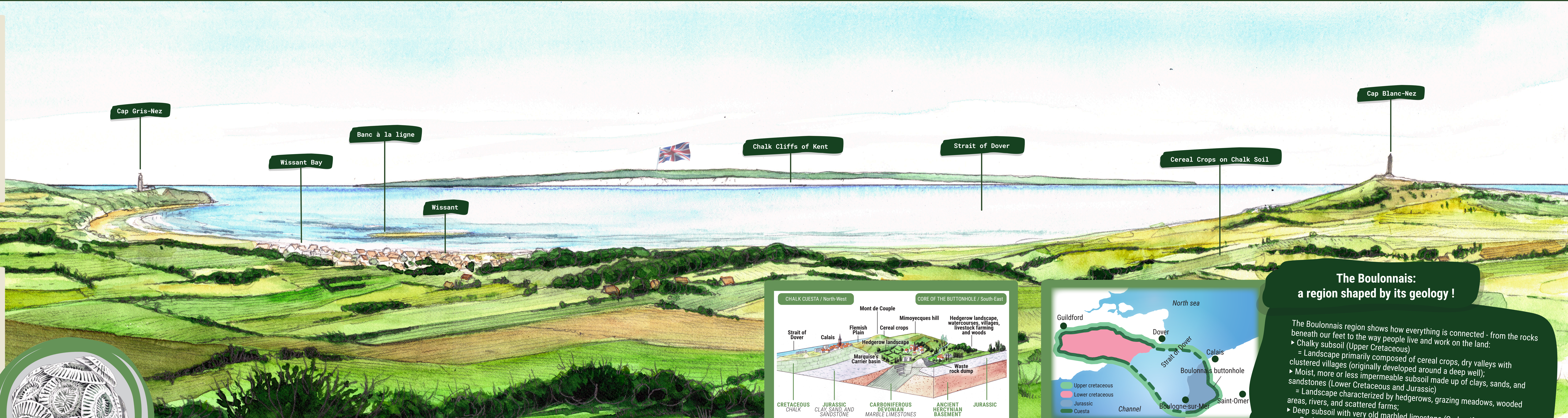
This distinct ridge called a **cuesta*** runs all the way around the edge of the Boulonnais Basin.

The Boulonnais Basin is what geologists call a **boutonnière*** (or button-hole structure). It doesn't stop at the Channel - it continues into England's Weald region, showing how these lands were once connected.

The **chalk*** underground doesn't hold much water, making these fields perfect for growing crops.

While farmers work the lower slopes, the top of Mont de Couple - scarred by World War II bombs - is now grazing land for cattle. Protected as both a Regional Nature Reserve and a Natura 2000 site, many different plants and animals thrive here.

Cap Blanc-Nez has the Dover Patrol Monument on top and shares its chalk structure with Mont de Couple - both were formed from the same layers of chalk during the Upper Cretaceous period.



The cliffs of Cap Gris-Nez were built up from sandstone, limestone, and clay during the Middle and Upper Jurassic period. The cape's distinctive outline comes from a tough sandstone layer that helps shield it from the sea's erosion.

Between Cap Gris-Nez and the Petit-Blanc-Nez cliff lies Wissant Bay, with its long stretch of sand dunes. Beneath the surface lie Early Quaternary deposits of sand, clay, and gravel, where researchers have unearthed ancient fossils, including mammoth bones.

When the tide rolls out, Banc à la Ligne appears - a wide stretch of sand where seals often gather to lounge in the sunlight.

On clear days, you can see massive ships move through the Strait of Dover's busy shipping lanes, while the White Cliffs of Dover rise across the water.

The matching cliff faces on either side tell the story of the Cross-Channel Geopark, connecting France and England's shared geological past. It's hard to believe that just 20,000 years ago, during the last ice age, you could walk between France and England - where the Strait flows today was simply a river valley cutting through a land bridge.



Chalk *

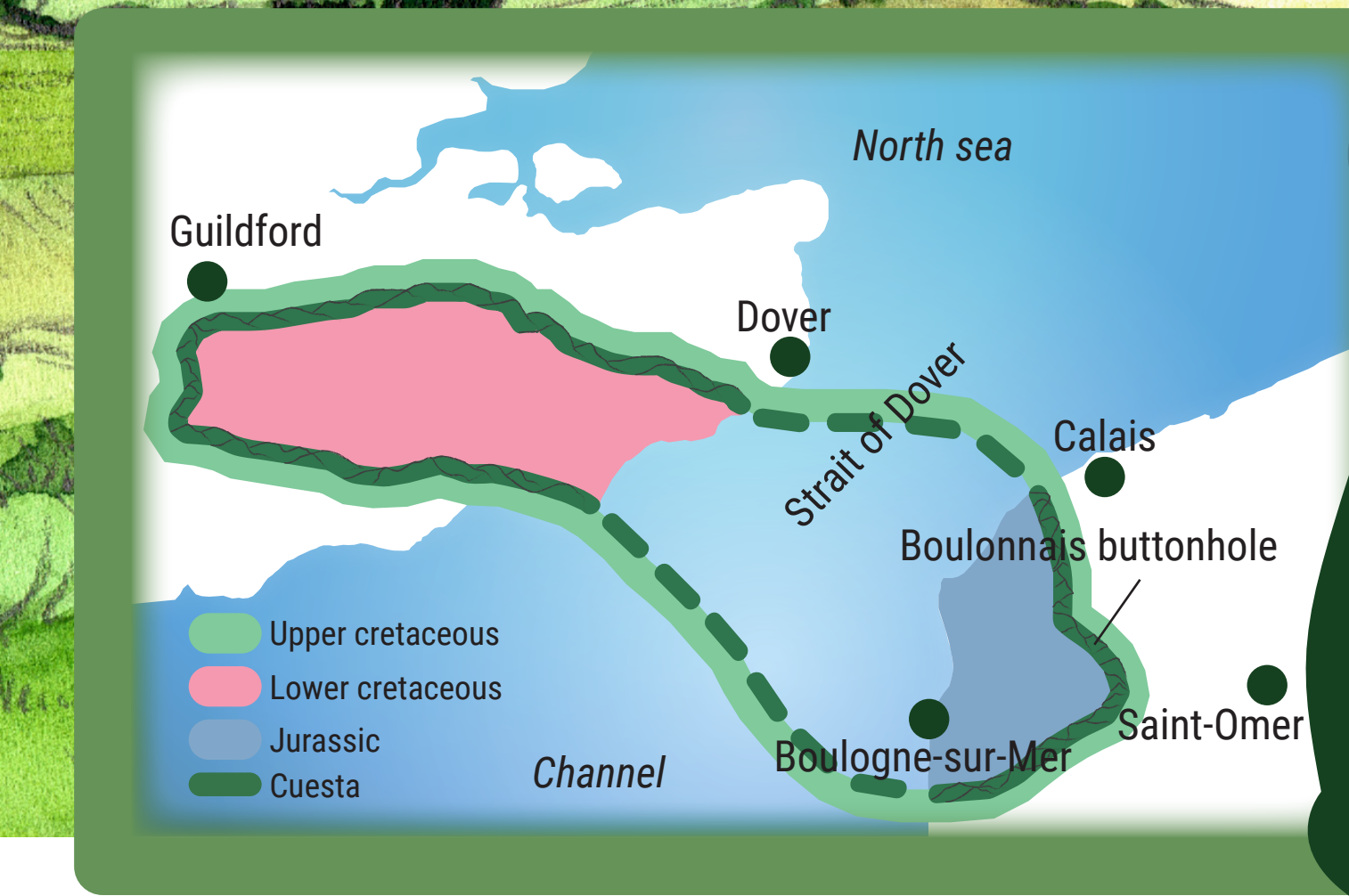
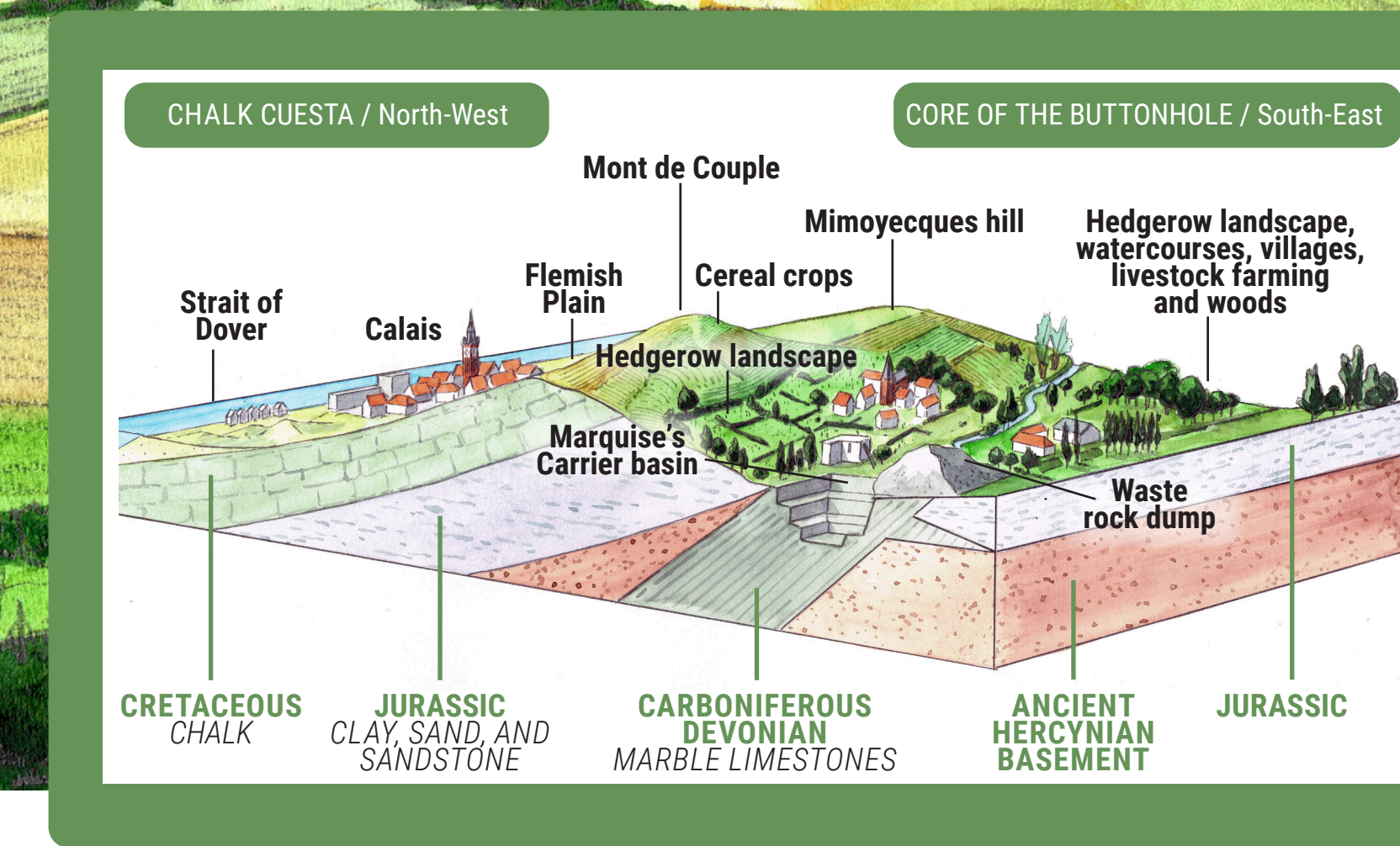
Is a soft, white limestone that water can seep through. It formed over millions of years from tiny shell pieces called coccoliths, left behind by microscopic sea creatures (coccolithophores). Look closely at chalk and you might find ancient treasures: fossils of ammonites, sea urchins, brachiopods, and other sea life.

A Cuesta *

(Spanish for 'slope') is where layers of rock tilt gently upward, creating a natural ridge. Here, this ridge stands above older rock layers that form the heart of the Boulonnais boutonnière.

A Boutonnière *

is like a bowl carved by erosion in the middle of a dome-shaped fold in the Earth's crust. As erosion digs deeper, it reveals ancient rock layers that were hidden below. Around its edges, you'll typically find a cuesta - just like we see here in the Boulonnais.

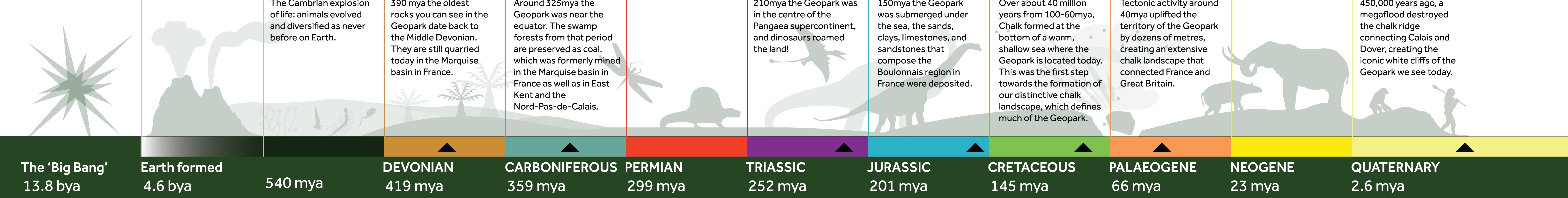


The Boulonnais: a region shaped by its geology !

The Boulonnais region shows how everything is connected - from the rocks beneath our feet to the way people live and work on the land:

- Chalky subsoil (Upper Cretaceous)
- = Landscape primarily composed of cereal crops, dry valleys with clustered villages (originally developed around a deep well);
- Moist, more or less impermeable subsoil made up of clays, sands, and sandstones (Lower Cretaceous and Jurassic)
- = Landscape characterized by hedgerows, grazing meadows, wooded areas, rivers, and scattered farms;
- Deep subsoil with very old marbled limestone (Carboniferous)
- = Rock extraction activity in the Marquise quarry basin.

This is a Cross-Channel Geopark Geosite



Mont de Couple is a remarkable geological site, designated as a «geosite» within the Transmanche Geopark. This initiative is led by the Parc naturel régional des Caps et Marais d'Opale (France) and the Kent Downs National Landscape (England), as part of the effort to promote and recognize the region's geological heritage with UNESCO.



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