

Harmless or dangerous ?



What looks dangerous here seems to be only a random assemblage of silicified objects. Dangerous in this sample of Devonian chert (about 400 Mill. y.) is the fang of a predatory spider-like creature, probably the trigonotarbid *Palaeocharinus rhyniensis*.

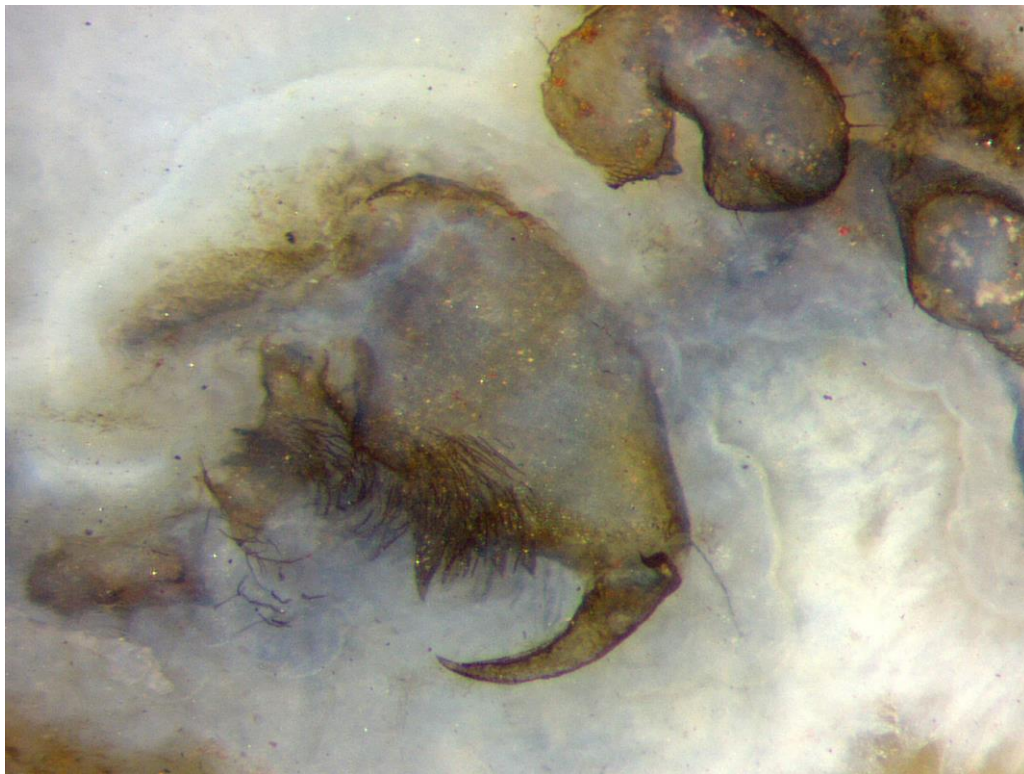


Image width 1.2mm

Sample Rh9/58.1, 0.21kg

found in 2004

This tooth is possibly the best-preserved specimen of its kind, since its acute tip seems less worn than those pictured at www.abdn.ac.uk and elsewhere. It was discovered in 2015 in a Rhynie Chert sample (Rh9/58.1, 0.21kg) found in 2004. By lucky incidence, the arbitrarily chosen cut plane of another sample (Rh7/10.2, 0.23kg, found in 2003) has turned out to be quite closely placed to the symmetry plane of the creature so that its full length of about 10mm is seen, which exceeds that of *P. rhyniensis*. (See Rhynie Chert News 9: http://chertnews.de/trigonotarbids_G.html.) Apparently, symmetry plane and cut plane are placed here such that two of the four "book lungs" are seen but the fang is not. The presence of this arachnid shows that, in addition to several aquatic crustaceans living at those times, there were small terrestrial creatures and their prey crawling over dry land.