Curating and caring for your collection

University of Hull

Type Erratic Collection

YE 707

Good curating starts with good fieldwork.

Good fieldwork turns a pretty rock, mineral or fossil into a scientific specimen.

The provenance is more important than the identification.

- Fossil can re-named
- You mineral identification becomes more refined
- You can simply not be sure
- You can get it wrong
- But the PROVENANCE never changes

So record as much detail as you can
And link your notes to the specimen.


University of Hull, Department of Geography, Environment & Earth Sciences. SEDIMENTARY ROCK COLLECTION.
Name: RED CHALK
Horizon: Red Chalk, Cretaceous.
Locality: Hunstanton, Norfolk.
Catalogue No. S18.03
Location No. S18
Sciences. SEDIMENTARY ROCK COLLECTION
Name: HARD WHITE CHALK with sponge
Horizon: Cretaceous
Locality: Immediately above Triassic/Cretaceous unconformity, Ballintoy Bay, County Antrim, Northern Ireland
Catalogue No. S18.11
Location No. S18
Catalogue No.
S18.15

General care –

Don’t let specimens rub against each other – they will scratch

Keep the dust away from them

Don’t wrap in cotton wool

Some minerals are toxic – keep them away from children
and don’t lick them yourself!

Some rocks and minerals are radioactive


Specimens kept in boxes to protect them
Lewis Penny Collection, UoH.

Special care of some specimens –

Pyritised fossils – need to be kept dry
And heavy fossils you don’t know contain pyrite!

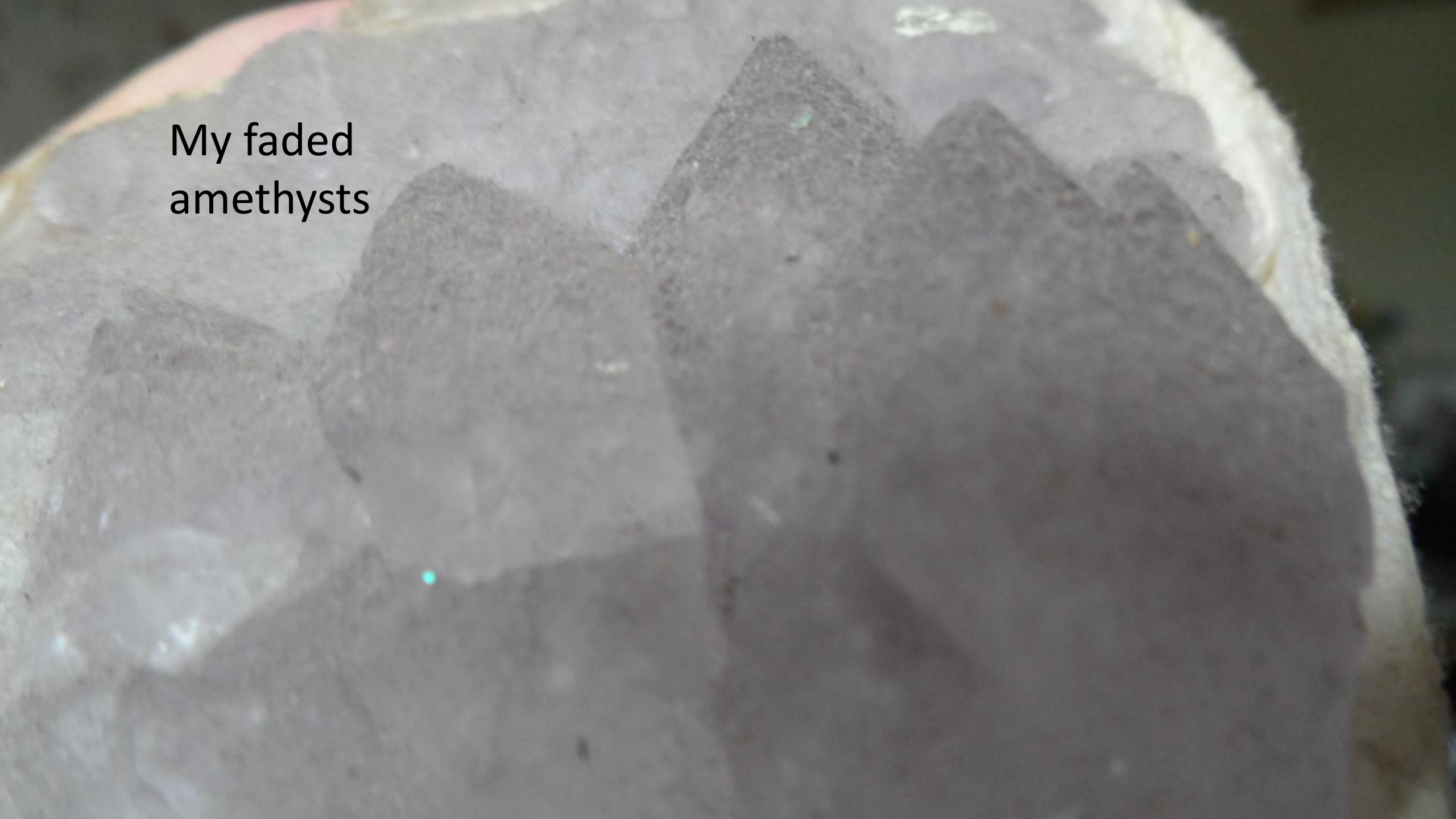
Clays dry out and crack

Sub-fossil ivory – will crack in dry conditions

Halides are hygroscopic – keep them dry in a sealed container

Some minerals fade in sunlight – amethyst and feldspars

Don’t clean fossil plants – the leaves wash off!


My faded
amethysts

Numbering systems

RULE NUMBER 1 NEVER CHANGE A NUMBER

Each number should be unique

Examples -
A23 (simply letter and number)
MH020 (Mike Horne Collection, number 20)
HG020 (Hull Geological Society Chalk Collection, number 20)
M1020.3 (mineralogy collection, number 1020, specimen 3 [where there is more than 1 example]
UoH2002.020 (University of Hull, year, number 020)
HUPC002B (Hull University, Penny Collection, number 002, specimen B [where there is more than 1 example])
HUYE208 (Hull University, Yorkshire Tyke Erratic Collection, number 208)
MAP (Mappleton - original location code written on to an erratic in the field)
SF220-12 (Microfossil sample - location code, month, year, sample number. This code is kept for remaining part of sample not processed, the processed 'residue' and 'picked microfossils)
R22.12 (cabinet letter R, drawer number 22, specimen number 12) [I don't like using a system based on location codes because there may be a need to rearrange or move specimens later]

Labelling specimens

- Indian Ink on white paint (my preference)
- “indelible” marker on Tippex or white nail varnish
- “indelible” marker on specimen
- Paper label glued on
- Clear varnish on top?

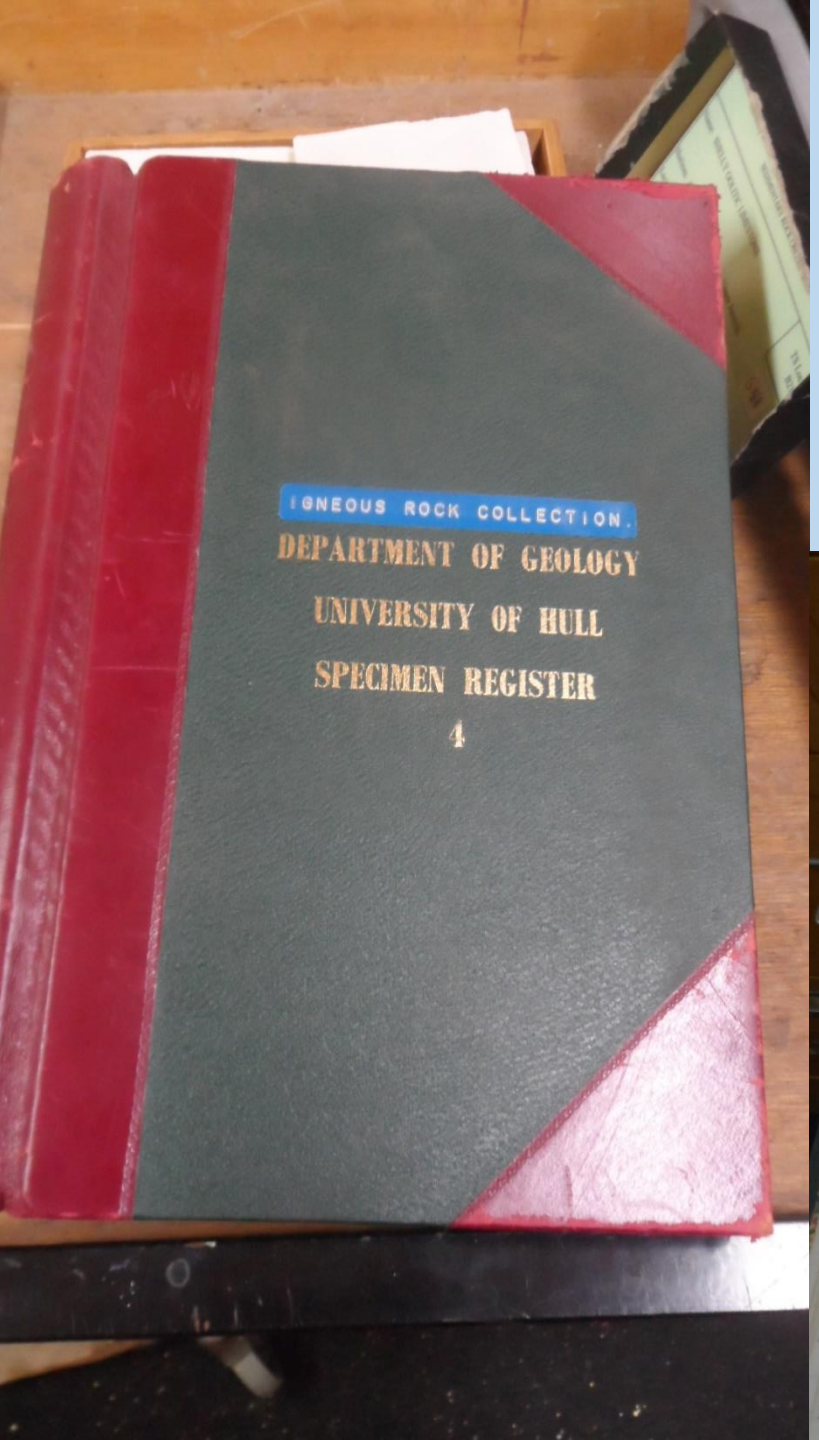
Cataloguing –

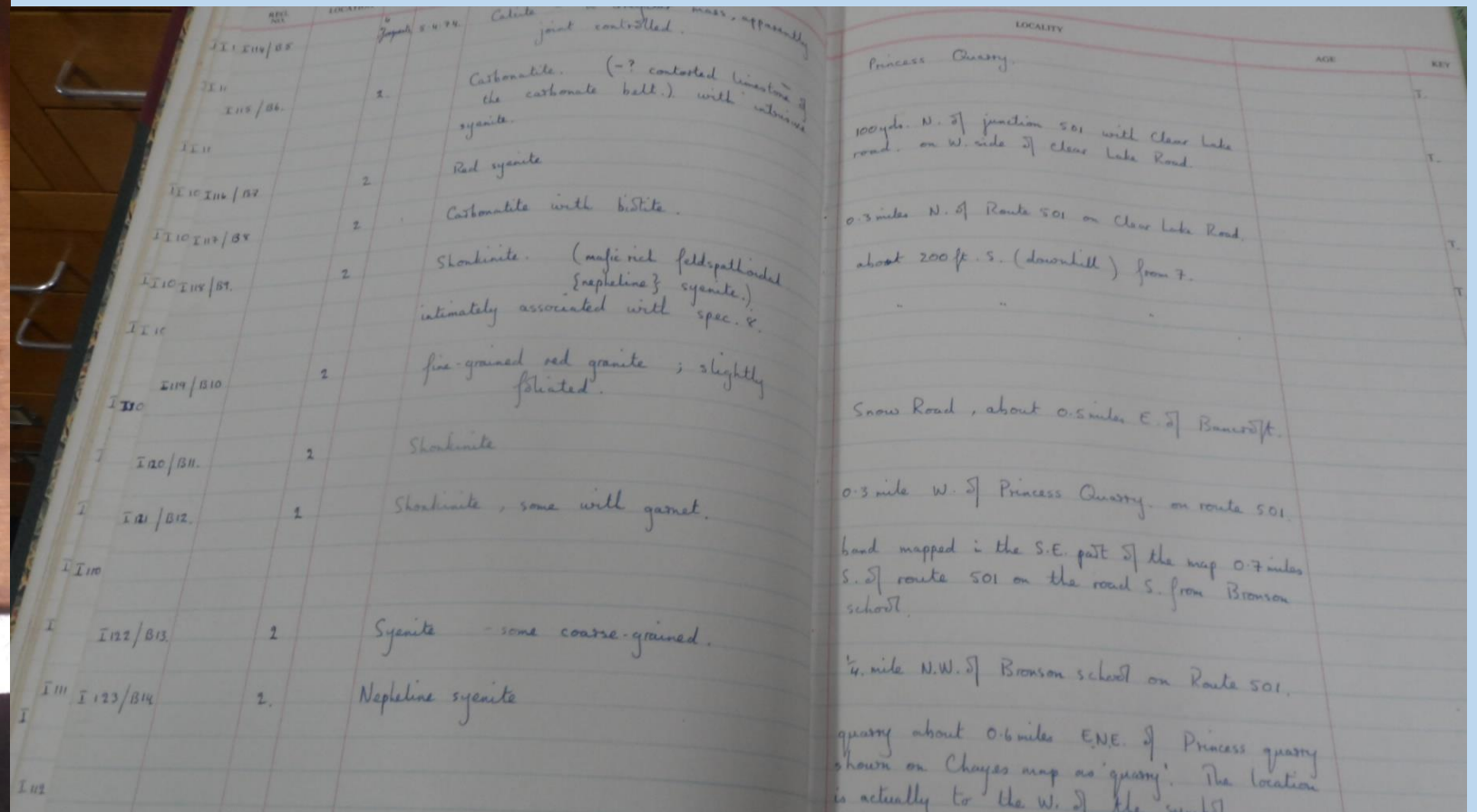
My advice – belt and braces

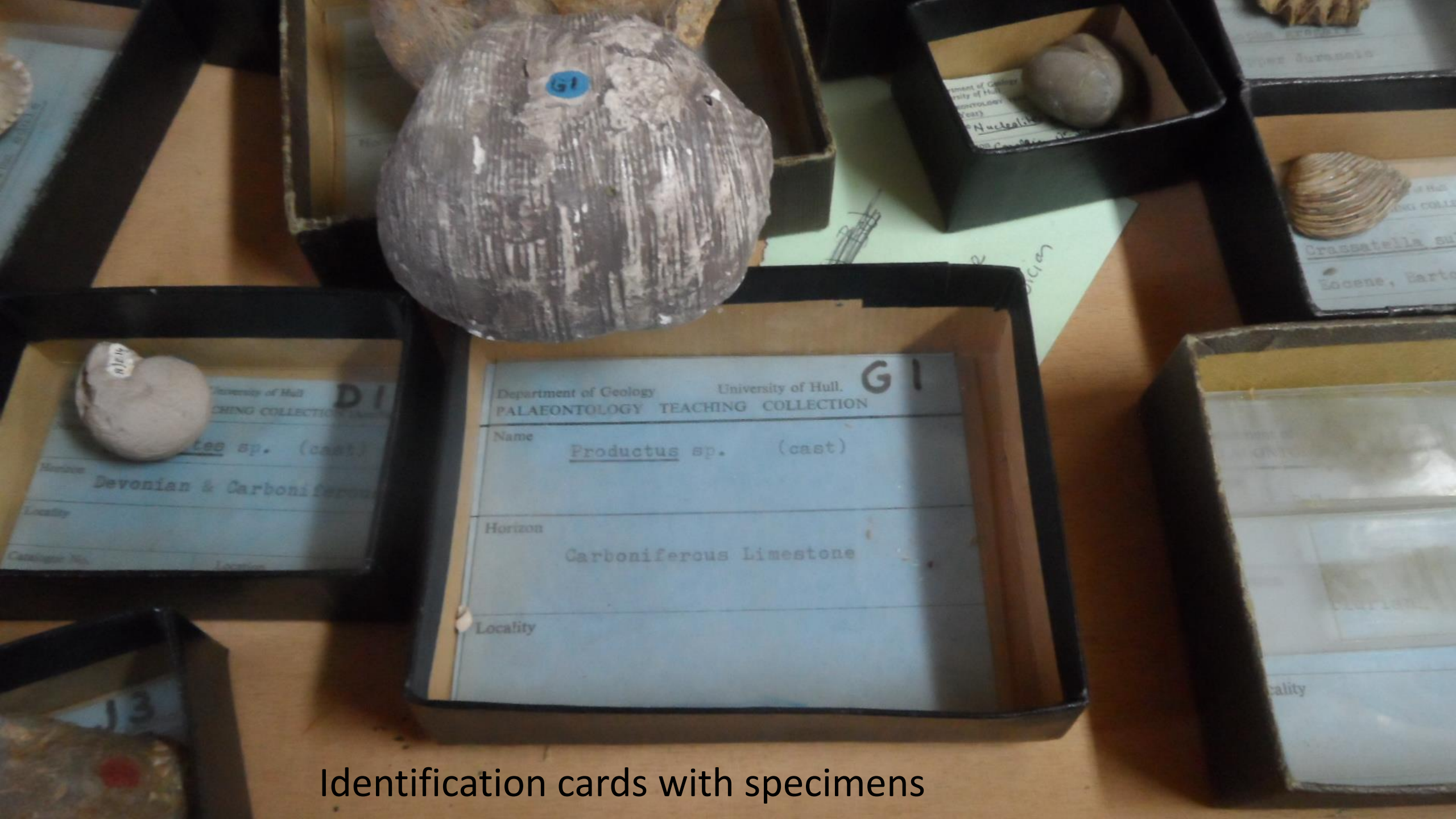
Paper catalogue book
Card index
Computer index
Specimen card kept with the specimen
Cross referenced to field notebook

And never change a catalogue number

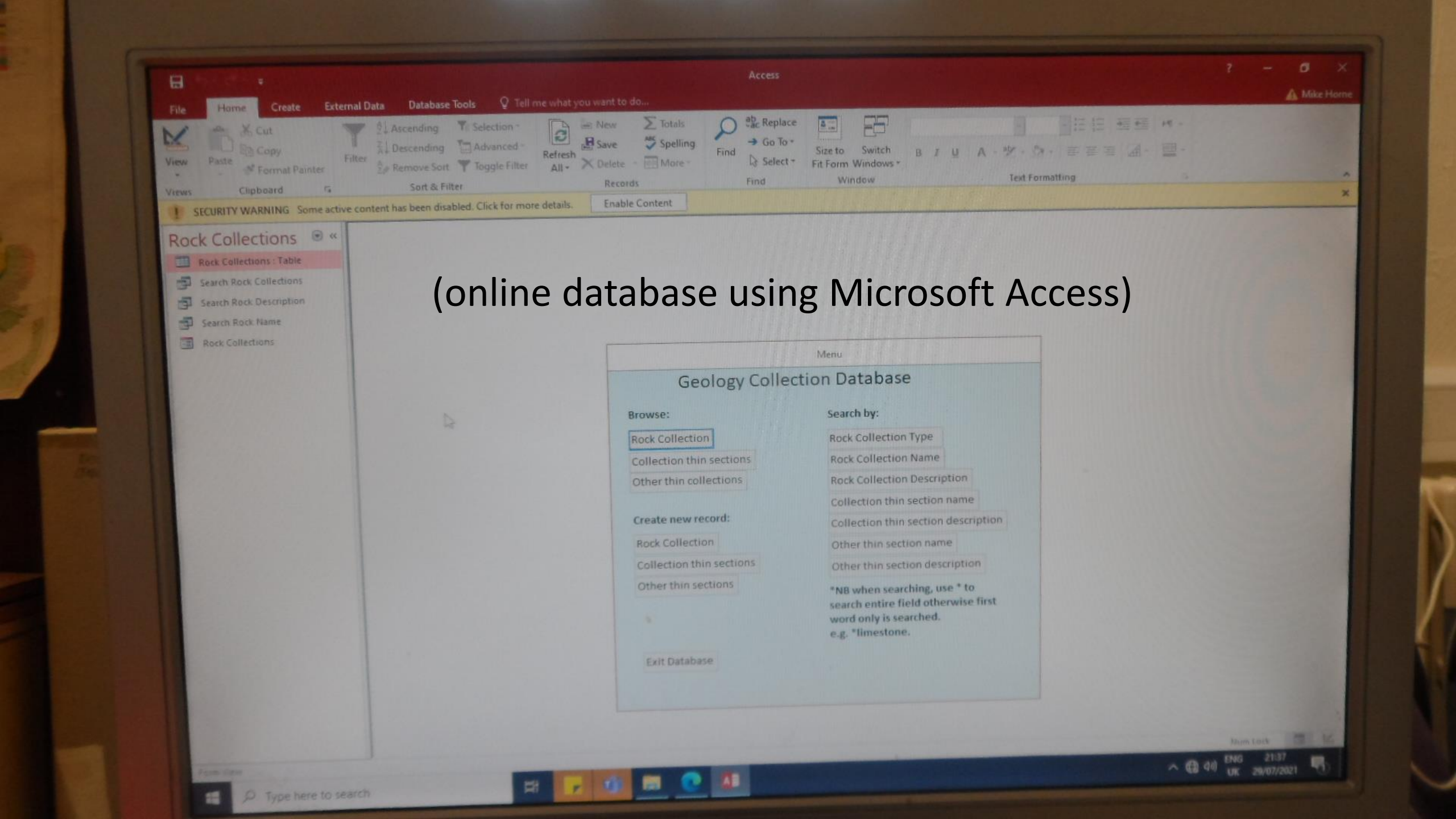
One of the University of Hull Specimen Registers

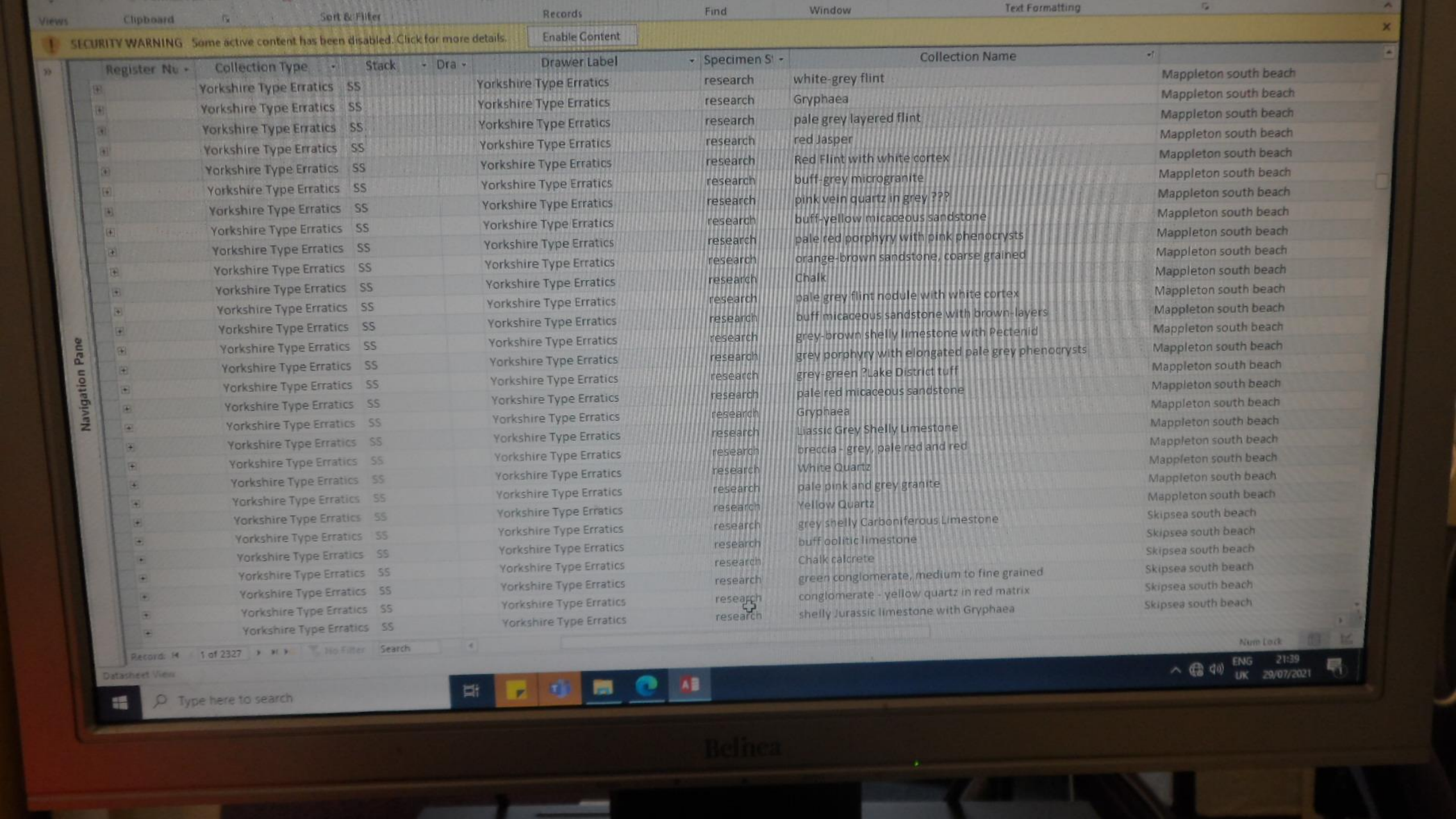






Identification cards with specimens


Access
File
Home
Create
External Data
Database Tools
Tell me what you want to do...
Mike Horne
View
Paste
Cut
Copy
Format Painter
Filter
Ascending
Descending
Remove Sort
Selection
Advanced
Toggle Filter
Refresh All
New
Save
Delete
Totals
Spelling
More
Find
Replace
Go To
Select
Size to Fit Form
Switch Windows
Views
Clipboard
Sort & Filter
Records
Find
Window
Text Formatting
SECURITY WARNING Some active content has been disabled. Click for more details.
Enable Content
Rock Collections
Rock Collections : Table
Search Rock Collections
Search Rock Description
Search Rock Name
Rock Collections
(online database using Microsoft Access)
Menu
Geology Collection Database
Browse:
Rock Collection
Collection thin sections
Other thin collections
Create new record:
Rock Collection
Collection thin sections
Other thin sections
Exit Database
Search by:
Rock Collection Type
Rock Collection Name
Rock Collection Description
Collection thin section name
Collection thin section description
Other thin section name
Other thin section description
*NB when searching, use * to search entire field otherwise first word only is searched.
e.g. *limestone.
Type here to search
ENG
UK
21:37
29/07/2021


Views
Clipboard
Sort & Filter
Records
Find
Window
Text Formatting
SECURITY WARNING Some active content has been disabled. Click for more details.
Enable Content
Navigation Pane
Register Nu
Collection Type
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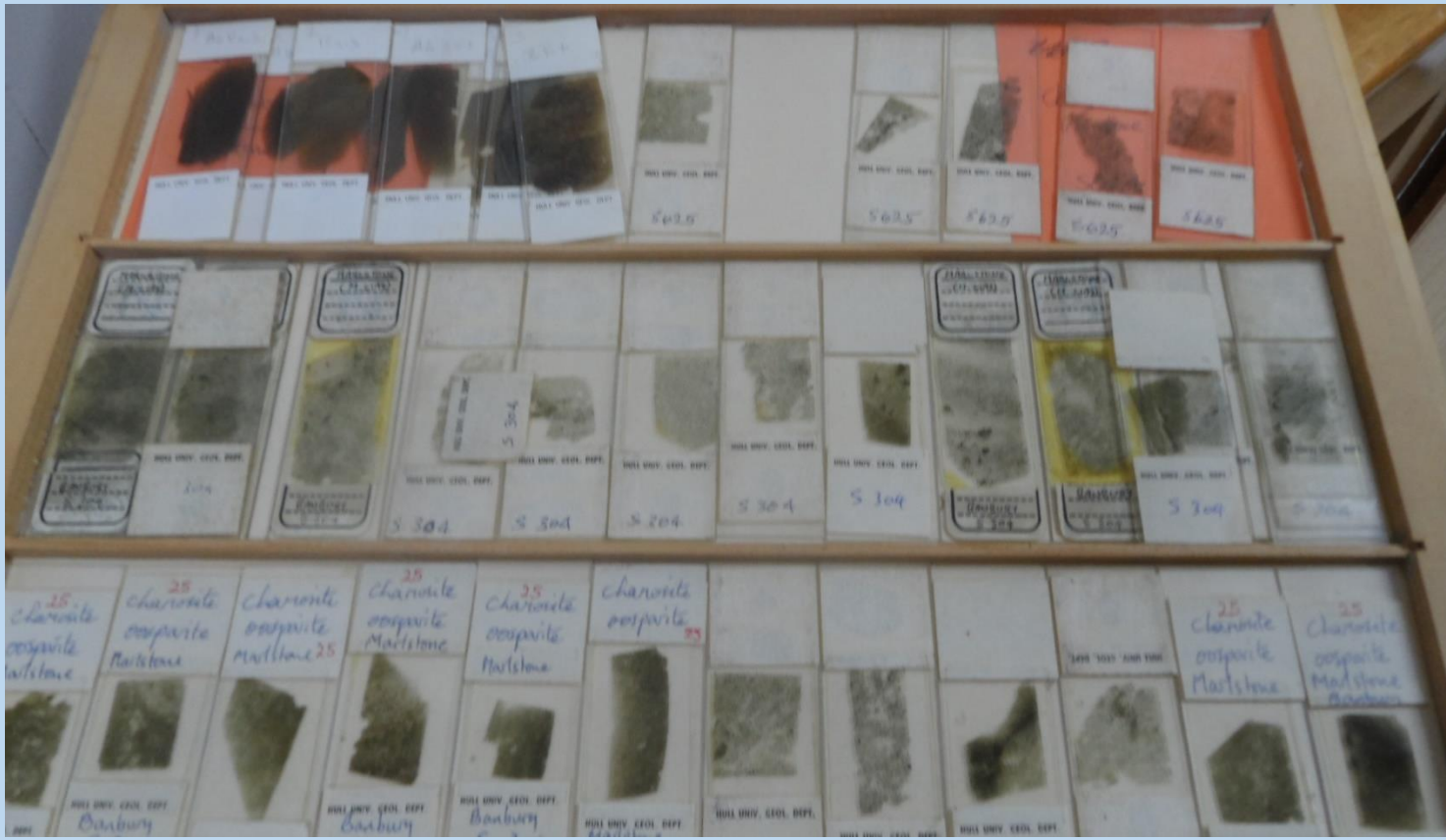
Dra
Drawer Label
Specimen S
Collection Name
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research white-grey flint Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research Gryphaea Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research pale grey layered flint Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research red Jasper Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research Red Flint with white cortex Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research buff-grey microgranite Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research pink vein quartz in grey ??? Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research buff-yellow micaceous sandstone Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research pale red porphyry with pink phenocrysts Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research orange-brown sandstone, coarse grained Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research Chalk Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research pale grey flint nodule with white cortex Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research buff micaceous sandstone with brown layers Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research grey-brown shelly limestone with Pectenid Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research grey porphyry with elongated pale grey phenocrysts Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research grey-green ?Lake District tuff Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research pale red micaceous sandstone Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research Gryphaea Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research Liassic Grey Shelly Limestone Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research breccia - grey, pale red and red Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research White Quartz Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research pale pink and grey granite Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research Yellow Quartz Mappleton south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research grey shelly Carboniferous Limestone Skipsea south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research buff oolitic limestone Skipsea south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research Chalk calcrete Skipsea south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research green conglomerate, medium to fine grained Skipsea south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research conglomerate - yellow quartz in red matrix Skipsea south beach
Yorkshire Type Erratics SS Yorkshire Type Erratics research shelly Jurassic limestone with Gryphaea
Record: 1 of 2327
No Filter
Search
Num Lock
Datasheet View
Type here to search
ENG UK
21:39 29/07/2021
Belinea

Data recorded includes –

Catalogue number and any former catalogue numbers
Location – stack, drawer number and drawer label
Collection type – e.g. Palaeontology
Specimen status – teaching or research; cited or type
Specimen name – e.g. Ostrea edulis ; Shap Granite
Specimen location – location and horizon
Rock formation and age – e.g. Flamborough Formation, Santonian, Cretaceous
Collector or donor
Notes – e.g. relevant publications
Links – e.g. photograph number; field notebook date and page
Associated thin sections or microfossils

Special collections include –

- Thin sections
- Microfossils
- Mesofossils
- micromounts



Micromounts

(Image from Nelson Rock and Mineral Club webpage)

Specimen status –
perhaps have a scoring system
(as suggested for the Treasure House in Beverley)

Something like -

5 – cited or type – never throw away, ensure access
(note – these specimens are often marked with a red or green dot on their specimen number label)
Long term – you really should donate them to a Museum or University
4 – well provenanced from restricted or lost site
3 – good specimen, well provenanced
2a – good specimen (display quality)
2b -- grotty specimen but well provenanced
1 – reasonable specimen with poor provenance (can be used for education purposes)
0 – grotty specimen with poor provenance (can be disposed of if necessary)

Visit my night class notes web page for more information

http://www.hullgeolsoc.co.uk/geococur.htm

And/or download the Geological Curators Group manual from their website
https://www.geocurator.org/resources/20-advice

(Note - Most images used in this talk are of the University of Hull collection)