

# Chalk Group Lithostratigraphy: Marlborough Downs/Berkshire Downs/Chilterns - Top Rock

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The Top Rock, first described at Goring, Berks, by Chatwin & Withers (1908), comprises a group of hardgrounds a short distance (c. 4m in the Chilterns; Wood, 1996) above the Chalk Rock, which fade laterally into nodular chalk (Bromley & Gale, 1982). It has been described at various localities between Dorset and Norfolk (Bromley & Gale, 1982). Near Hitchin, it consists of hard, fine grained chalkstone, without glauconite (Hopson *et al.*, 1996), but Shephard-Thorn *et al.* (1994) recorded that it comprised 0.3-0.5 m of chalkstone capped by a glauconitised hardground strewn with glauconitised pebbles. Bromley & Gale (1982) defined the Top Rock as a lithified unit that terminates the nodular chalk interval overlying the Chalk Rock, and Mortimore (1983) showed that previous records of the Top Rock in southern England equated with Navigation and or overlying hardgrounds in the higher part part of the Lewes Nodular Chalk Member. Wood (in Murray, 1986) reported that the Top Rock in a borehole at Thundridge [TL 3810 1751], Hertfordshire, probably represented a condensation of the greater part of the *M. cortestudinarium* Zone. Fossils are less common in the Top Rock compared to the Chalk Rock, but locally include the inoceramid bivalves *Cremnoceramus waltersdorfensis* and *C. rotundatus* and the echinoid *Micraster cortestudinarium* (Wood, 1996).

**Macrofossil Biozonation:** lower *M. cortestudinarium* Zone

**Correlation:** see Correlation with other parts of the UK

## References

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See: hardground, nodular chalk, Lewes Nodular Chalk Member (Southern Region), Navigation Hardground, Chalk Rock

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