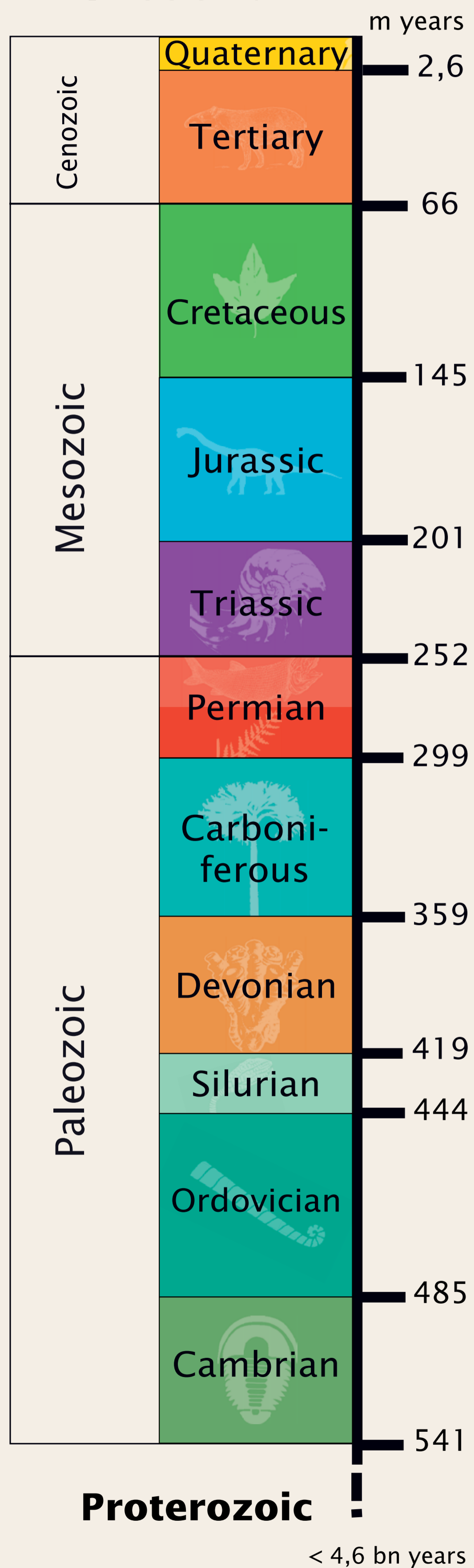


Schneckenberg Quarry

Present



How Schneckenberg Hill got its name is not known for certain. In its limestone can be found the remains of extinct animals like trilobites (arthropods) and brachiopods. These lived long ago in a sea which covered large parts of central Europe during the **Devonian Period** (ca. 400 MYA).

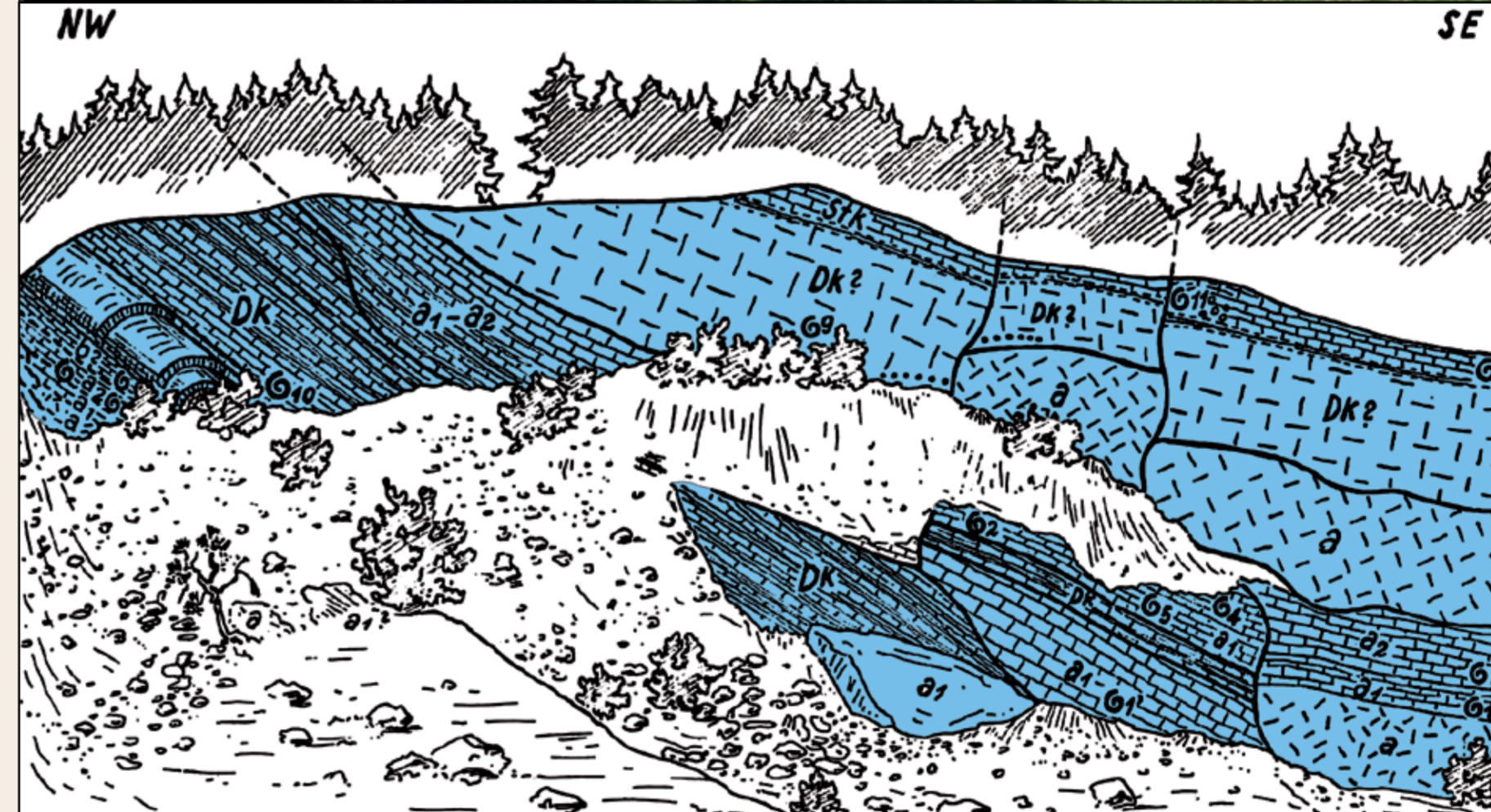
Four different types of limestone from this period are exposed in the former Schneckenberg Quarry.



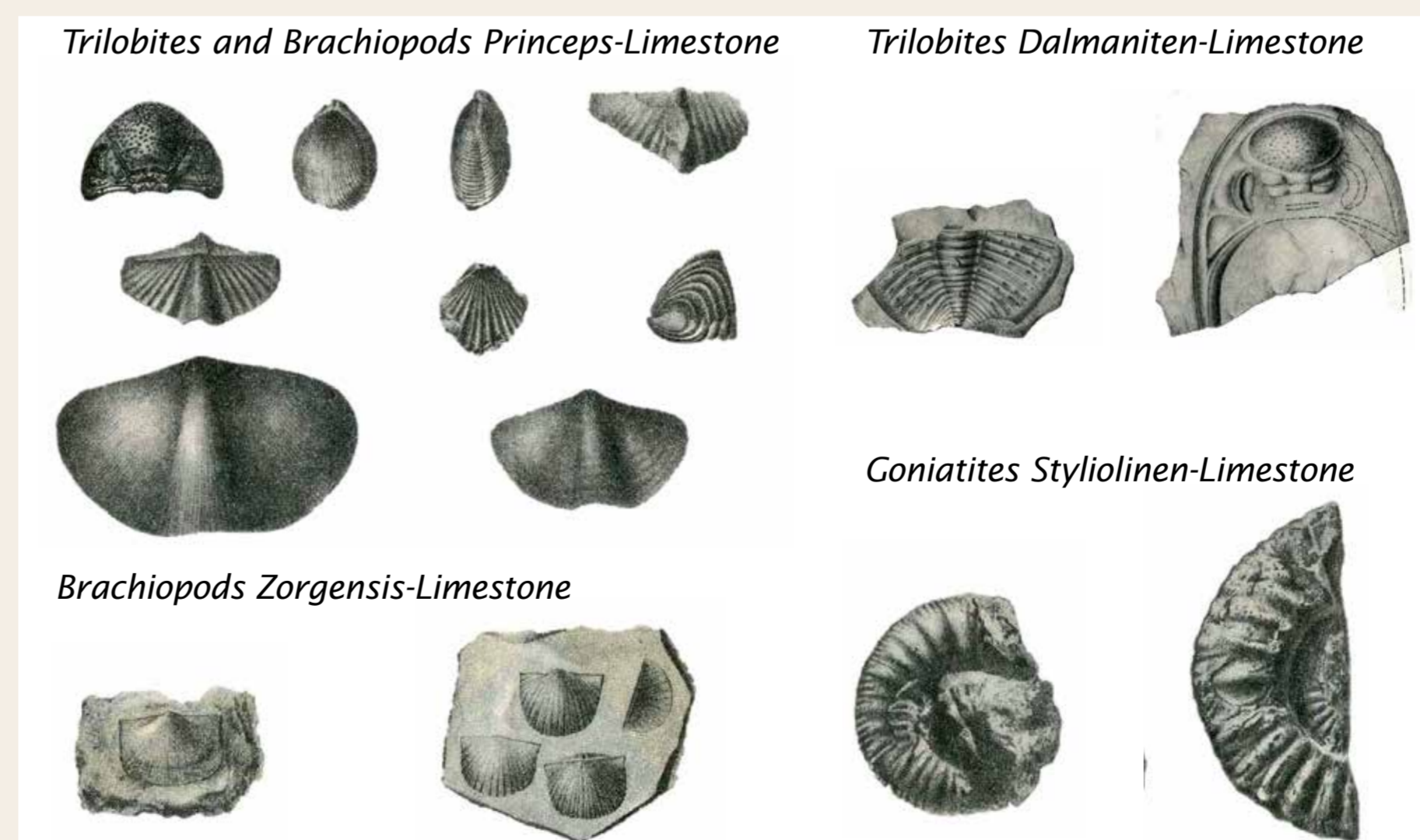
The wealth of fossils within them fascinated the former Master of the Ducal Ironworks at Maegdesprung, CARL ANDREAS BISCHOF (1812–1884), who worked there from 1844. From the Schneckenberg Quarry and other limestone quarries around Maegdesprung he collected more than 310 fossils, at least eight of which were named after him. His private geological collection is housed in the Museum of Natural History and Prehistory in Dessau. Bischof was also a founding member of the Association of German Engineers (VDI). The Association was founded on Bischof's initiative in 1856 in Alexisbad.

Iron production in past centuries at the Ducal Ironworks in Maegdesprung relied upon local sources of workable limestone. Limestone purifies iron ore in the blast furnace by binding with unwanted impurities to form more easily-melted slag. In this way the impurities are more simply separated from the iron ore. Here, in Langes Tal (Long Valley), not far from Maegdesprung, Schneckenberg Quarry provided workable limestone. The quarry remained in operation until the 1960s.

The limestones take the form of large blocks – the remnants of Hercynian limestone plates – which form part of the Harzgerode olistostrome. An olistostrome is a deposit formed by the flow of unconsolidated sediment. The flow was set in motion millions of years ago as the result of submarine slumping. In this process, blocks of limestone (olistoliths) were swept along and embedded in the deposit.



The four types of the Schneckenberg-limestone: a, a1, a2 = Princes-Limestone; b = Zоргensis-Limestone; Dk = Dalmaniten-Limestone; Stk = Styliolinen-Limestone; Ⓞ fossil fund point



The Regionalverband Harz, based in Quedlinburg, coordinates Geopark operations in the southern part of the UNESCO-Geopark. In order to make the geological diversity of the Harz region between the Grosses Bruch Valley in the north and the Hainleite Hills in the south comprehensible, the Regionalverband has developed a network of Landmarks and Geopoints. Landmarks, like Auerberg Mountain, are widely-visible or particularly well-known locations within the Geopark. Geopoints are windows into geological history. Schneckenberg Quarry is Geopoint **5** in the area encompassing Landmark **10** – Auerberg Mountain. For further information: www.harzregion.de