

International Corner

The Joys of a “Global” Ph.D.

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When people ask about the delights of doing a Ph.D., I usually tell them that I've had an unexpected number of opportunities to travel and to work overseas. Obviously, for many geologists, international travel is an essential component of their working lives and many of you will be nodding in agreement at this point. The answer to the question “Would you like to go to ...?” is never “NO.”

I've spent the first two and a half years of my Ph.D. splitting my time between Imperial College in London (United Kingdom), Penn State (USA) and a field area in northern Montana. Most recently, though, I've had the opportunity to spend two months at the Hans Ramberg Tectonic Laboratory of Uppsala University (HRTL) in Sweden. I was there to use the HRTL sandbox and deformation rig, testing some of my ideas in preparation for concluding my Ph.D. research.

I've been working on deformation front structures, principally their geometry and genesis, using a number of different techniques. So Uppsala provided the perfect opportunity to test some of the ideas generated in the field, to expand my group of colleagues, to learn a new technique...and to travel somewhere new!

Another question to which the answer is rarely “no” is “Do you want to come into the field with us?” By answering correctly, I was able to spend a few days in the Stockholm Archipelago with my supervisor from HRTL and some of his students. This was my first real encounter with the metamorphic units of

Scandinavia and the impressive superposed folding within some of the gneiss units exposed along the coast. Additional highlights were lightly metamorphosed sediments, with sedimentary structures still preserved and frequent exposures of small-scale and intra-bed thrust faults. The two days I was able to spend on Utö ended far too soon, but at least I had a feel for the geology of the islands.

My next major move (having successfully defended my Ph.D. this fall) is out of the United Kingdom entirely and back to my beloved USA. This time, it's not back to Penn State, but a move to the Energy and Geoscience Institute at the University of Utah.

Certainly, the slogan of my Ph.D. really could have been.... “Geology—you never know WHERE it will take you!”



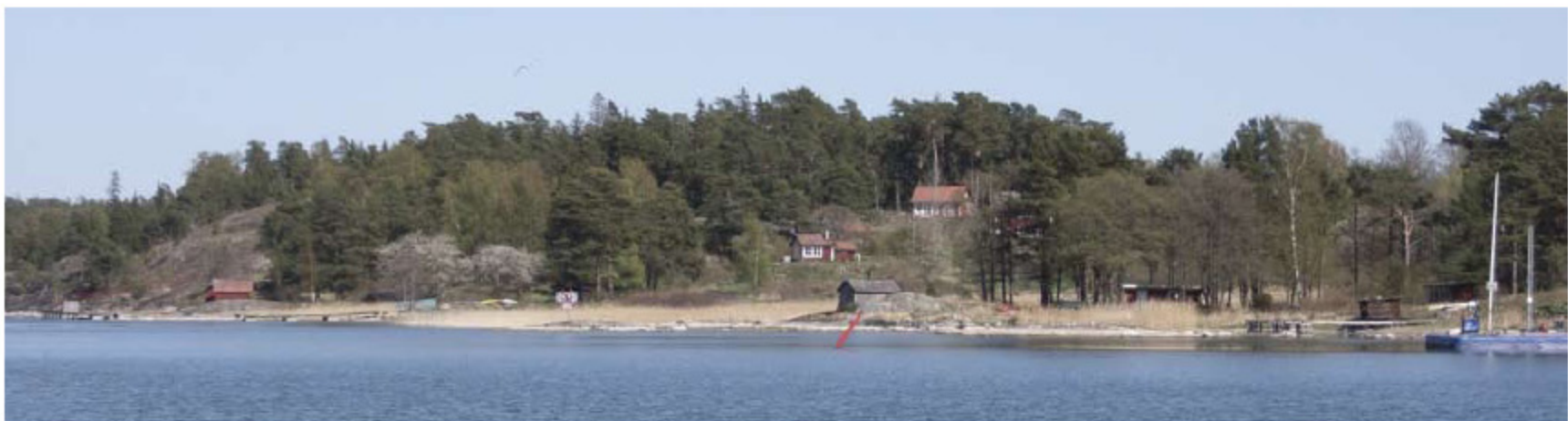
A brittle fault in metamorphosed sediments, from the southeastern coast of the northern part of Utö, Stockholm Archipelago.



Refolded fold in gneiss from the northwestern coastline of the island Utö in Sweden.



Folds in marble from the interior of the island Utö in Sweden.



View of the one of the bays on the northwestern coastline of Utö in the Stockholm Archipelago of Sweden. Southwest is to the left.