

Highland Boundary Fault zone, Balmaha



"View along Highland Boundary Fault zone from Conic Hill" by Mike Norton (Wikipedia) used under CC BY-SA 3.0 - cropped from original

Where is this?

This fault zone lies across Scotland from Bute to Stonehaven separating the Highlands from the Lowlands. For a view along it at **Balmaha** (postcode G63 0JQ) on Loch Lomond, walk Conic Hill (<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/lochlomond/conic-hill.shtml>).

What will you see there?

The Highland Boundary Fault zone, a fracture in the Earth's crust, is seen in the alignment of Conic Hill, islands in Loch Lomond and Ben Bowie beyond. The contrasting landscapes of the Highlands and the Lowlands on either side of the zone are underlain by different rock types, with older metamorphic (changed by heat and pressure) rocks such as schist giving typical Highland landscapes to the north while the Lowlands have younger sedimentary rocks with often gentler landscapes.

The fault zone has a special group of rocks, different from those found on either side. The Highland Border Complex includes rocks like those found in oceanic crust eg serpentinite. The complex was thrust up and deformed by enormous crustal forces. Look out for the 'puddingstone' conglomerate rock, a tough sandstone with cobbles, near Balmaha Pier.

Find out more: call into the National Park visitor centre in Balmaha
www.geologyglasgow.org.uk www.scottishgeology.com