



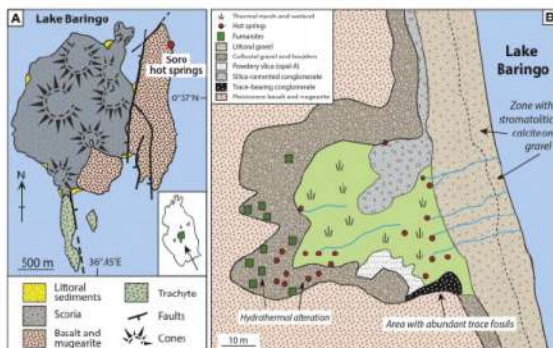
BARINGO GREAT RIFT VALLEY - ASPIRING GEOPARK KENYA

OL KOKWA ISLAND: LIFE IN A RIFT LAKE

An Island Born of Fire

Ol Kokwa Island is the summit of a submerged shield volcano, built by repeated lava flows. Its position is controlled by deep north-south fractures in the Earth's crust, formed as the Rift Valley pulls apart.

These fractures built the volcano by allowing magma to rise, and remain active today, channeling heat and mineral-rich fluids to the surface as hot springs and fumaroles on the northern part of the island.



Map of Lake Bogoria showing Olkokwa Island, hot springs, the cracks in the Earth that shaped the island and the hot springs, and where ancient traces of life are found

Life Frozen in Stone

Hot, silica-rich waters flow through shoreline sediments. As they cool, they deposit silica — forming hard, pale crusts along the shore and beneath the lake.

Within these layers are preserved trace fossils called *Vagorichnus* — tiny burrows and tracks made by organisms living in warm, mineral-rich mud. The silica hardened rapidly, preserving these delicate traces in remarkable detail.

Ol Kokwa's trace fossils are globally important because they show how life can survive and thrive in hot, extreme environments.

Ol Kokwa is a rare natural laboratory where heat, water, and life meet.

