

Rocking and Rolling Across Death Valley 石头会走路？！

From an early age, we are taught certain undeniable truths about life. But **every now and then**, scientists uncover something that makes us reexamine our understanding of reality. Since prehistoric times, it has been considered common knowledge that rocks are **stationary** objects that **stay put** for thousands of years, **barring** some natural disaster or human **intervention**. But perhaps that's not completely accurate.

我们从小就学习到许多生活中不可否认的定理。但每隔一阵子，科学家总会有些新发现，让我们必须重新检视人类对于真实世界的认知。自古以来，除非有天然灾害或是人力介入，否则石头永远是静止不动，数千年都待在原地是基本常识。不过或许这句话并不完全正确。

Sailing stones are a geological phenomenon that occurs in [Death Valley](#), California. Here, a group of large rocks has **inexplicably** moved across the desert on its own. The first sailing stones were discovered in 1948, when researchers noticed the tracks of several large rocks across the valley floor. Later, in 1972, two **geologists** created a special program to monitor the movement of 30 stones. In the first winter, ten of these stones changed position – one even moved 212 feet! **Over the course of** the next six years, all but two **shifted** their positions.

美国加州的死亡谷国家公园里有种名为「航行的石头」的地质现象。这里有许多大块石头会自己在沙漠中移动，相当令人难以理解。人们在 1948 年首度发现到这些自己移动的石头。当时，研究人员注意到死亡谷的地面上有石头移动的轨迹。不久之后，两名地质学家于 1972 年展开了一项特别计划，追踪 30 块石头的移动情形。第一年冬天，有 10 块石头改变位置，其中一块甚至移动了 212 英尺！接下来的六年中，除了两块石头外，其他石头的位置都有所移动。

To this day, no one has witnessed sailing stones in motion, so researchers are still unsure **as to** what forces move them and how fast they travel. Yet there are several theories about what causes their journeys across the desert. Some people believe it is due to **extraterrestrial** visits or **supernatural** forces. Many scientists believe the rocks' movements are caused by a combination of typhoon-like winds, heavy **rainfall**, and sheets of ice that float across the desert floor. But until one of these sailing stones is caught on video or observed firsthand, we can't know for sure.

直到今日，没有人曾亲眼目睹石头移动，所以研究人员至今仍无法确定是什么力量使它们移动，或是它们移动的速度有多快。不过已经有几个理论企图解释这些石头为何会自己横跨沙漠。有些人相信此现象是外星人造访或是超自然的力量所造成。许多科学认为台风般的强风、滂沱大雨和浮在沙漠地表的冰层三者共同而作用使石头移动。但除非有影片拍到，或有人亲自观察到石头在移动，否则目前我们仍无法得到明确的答案。

— by *Jamie Blackler*

Vocabulary

stationary [ˈsteɪʃən, ɛrɪ] adj. 不动的

barring [ˈbærɪŋ] prep. 除.....以外 unless (something) occurs; except for

intervention [ˌɪntəˈvenʃən] n. 介入; 干扰

inexplicably [ɪnˈɛksplɪkəblɪ] adv. 无法说明地; 难以理解地

geologist [dʒɪˈɒlədʒɪst] n. 地质学家

shift [ʃɪft] v. 移动, 搬移

extraterrestrial [ˌɛkstrətəˈrestriəl] adj. 地球外的; 宇宙的

supernatural [ˌsupəˈnætʃərəl] adj. 超自然的

rainfall [ˈren,fɔl] n. 降雨, 下雨

More Information

every now and then: 偶尔, 有时 occasionally

stay put: 【口】呆在原处; 留在原地; 固定不动 to remain in a fixed or established position

over (or in) the course of 在...过程中

as to 至于; 关于