

Earliest evidence of wildfire discovered 科學家在英威爾士發現最早野火證據

考古學家在英國威爾士發現了有記錄以來最早的野火證據，這個證據以燒焦殘餘物的形式存在於極為古老的泥岩中。

Go back to what's known as **the Silurian Period** and Earth looked very different from today. What is now the UK, would've been south of **the Equator**. A few pioneering plants had begun to evolve, but nothing containing wood; no trees, no shrubs.

回到志留紀，那時的地球看起來與今日大不相同，現在的英國當時應位於赤道以南。一些先鋒植物已經開始進化，但沒有一種植物含有木頭，也沒有樹木和灌木。

However, according to this new evidence, pulled up in **mudstones** from under Rumney (in Wales), there was still plenty of **fuel**, which could have started a **wildfire**, in the form of giant mushrooms, called Prototaxites. All that remains of these strange **organisms** now, is fragments of **charcoal**.

然而，據這個從威爾士拉姆尼地底泥岩中鑽取出的新證據顯示，那個時期仍有大量燃料可能會引發野火，做燃料的是一種被稱作原杉藻的巨型蘑菇，現在，這些奇怪的生物體只剩下了炭碎片了。

Ian Glasspool, a palaeobotanist from Colby College in the US, says the 430-million-year-old Welsh charcoal, pushes back the earliest known evidence of a wildfire by 10 million years.

美國科爾比學院的古植物學家伊恩·格拉斯普爾說，這些在威爾士發現的距今 4.3 億年的炭碎片將已知最早的野火證據提早了 1000 萬年。

1. 詞彙表

the Silurian Period	志留紀
the Equator	赤道
mudstones	泥岩
fuel	燃料
wildfire	野火
organisms	生物體，有機體
charcoal	炭

2. 閱讀理解：請在讀完上文後，回答下列問題。（答案見下頁）

1. What plants containing wood evolved during the Silurian Period?
2. According to new evidence, which organisms could have fuelled wildfires during that period?
3. What evidence is there today of the organisms that once fuelled wildfires?
4. How much earlier does this new evidence show that wildfires existed than previously thought?

3. 答案

1. What plants containing wood evolved during the Silurian Period?

A few pioneering plants had begun to evolve, but nothing containing wood.

2. According to new evidence, which organisms could have fuelled wildfires during

that period?

During that period, there was still plenty of fuel, which could have started a wildfire, in the form of giant mushrooms, called Prototaxites.

3. What evidence is there today of the organisms that once fuelled wildfires?

All that remains of these strange organisms now, is fragments of charcoal.

4. How much earlier does this new evidence show that wildfires existed than previously thought?

Ian Glasspool says the 430-million-year-old Welsh charcoal, pushes back the earliest known evidence of a wildfire by 10 million years.