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Earliest evidence of wildfire discovered

科学家在英威尔士发现最早野火证据

考古学家在英国威尔士发现了有记录以来最早的野火证据。这个证据以烧焦残余物的形式存在于极为古老的泥岩中。

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.

回到志留纪，那时的地球看起来与如今大不相同。现在的英国当时应位于赤道以南。一些先锋植物已经开始进化，但没有一种植物含有木头，也没有树木和灌木。

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，据这个从威尔士拉姆尼地底泥岩中钻取出的新证据显示，那个时期仍有大量燃料可能会引发野火，作燃料的是一种被称作原杉藻的巨型蘑菇。现在，这些奇怪的生物体只剩下了炭碎片了。

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.

美国科尔比学院的古植物学家伊恩·格拉斯普尔说，这些在威尔士发现的距今 4.3 亿年的炭碎片将已知最早的野火证据提早了 1000 万年。

1. 词汇表

the Silurian Period	志留纪
the Equator	赤道
mudstones	泥岩
fuel	燃料
wildfire	野火
organisms	生物体，有机体
charcoal	炭

2. 阅读理解：请在读完上文后，回答下列问题。（答案见下页）

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.