



## Christmas & New Year 2020

Can some-one explain the cracker jokes to me??

## Between a Rock's Christmas cracker jokes

Q: Why didn't the geologist want his Christmas dinner?  
A: He lost his appetite.


Q: Who did Santa bring along to perform at the Earth Sciences Christmas party?  
A: Elf-is Presley!

Q: What is Father Christmas's favourite element?  
A: Holmium (Ho Ho Ho!)

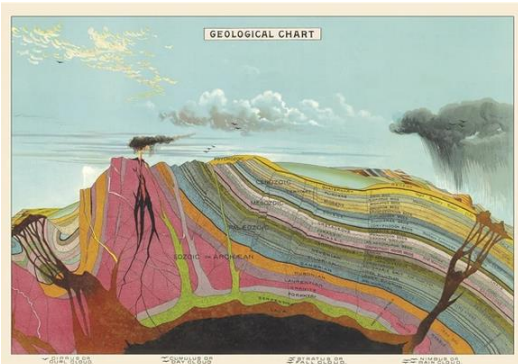
Q: What happened to Rudolph when he accidentally ate clay?  
A: He got illite.

Q: Why are advent calendars like the dinosaurs?  
A: Because their days were numbered!

Q: Why aren't there any single geologists at Christmas parties?  
A: They will date anything!

 **Cyprus rocky testing ground for Mars** - The *Cyprus Space Exploration Organisation* (Who knew??) and the *Geological Surveys Department* have been in discussion with international scientists to use the Troodos as a testing ground for equipment to be sent to Mars to accurately measure the age of the Martian rocks. Apparently the Troodos has geological similarities with the red planet. [Cyprus rocky testing ground for Mars](#)

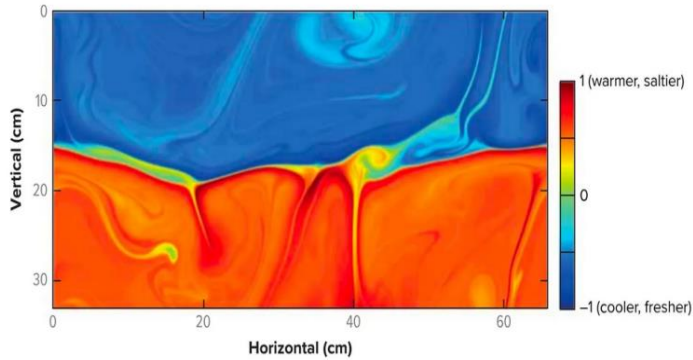
 **Stuck for presents** for some-one that already has everything?? How about Earth Science related presents?? Check out the 'The Britain and Ireland Explainer Tea towel' or the 'Geological Chart Wrapping Paper'. I know I'd be envious. [Earth Science Presents](#)





## The African lake with explosive power – Hot springs below Lake Kivu lead to an unusual situation, with potentially deadly consequences. A number of processes result in large quantities of methane being trapped at the bottom of the deep lake. These gases would ordinarily bubble out of the water, but Kivu’s great depth – more than 460 metres – creates so much pressure that they remain dissolved. “There is a danger of a major, catastrophic [limnic eruption](#) where many cubic miles of gas would be released”, say [Limnologists](#) (yes that is a job). In a 1986 incident at Lake Nyos (Cameroon), where the dissolved gas was CO<sub>2</sub>, a large amount of water was suddenly displaced, possibly by a landslide. This caused the dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> to mix rapidly with upper layers of the lake and release into the air. A large, deadly cloud of the gas asphyxiated an estimated 1,800 people in nearby villages. There is the potential at Lake Kivu that the large quantities of released gas could ignite. [The African lake with explosive power](#)

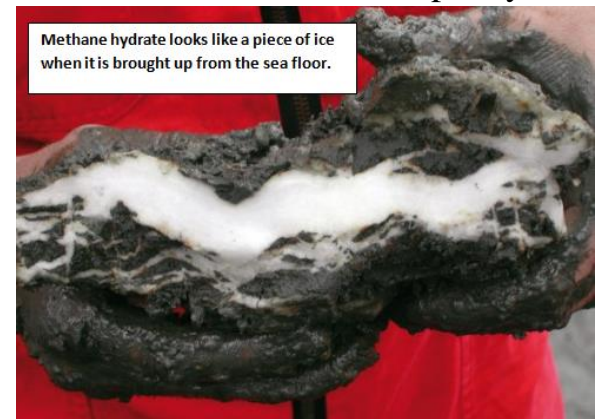
Lake Kivu, Rwanda: February 2, 2011



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**Arctic methane deposits starting to release** - Following on from the above article. Evidence has been found that frozen methane deposits in the Arctic Ocean have started to be released. This has prompted concern that a new climate feedback loop may have been triggered that could accelerate the pace of global heating. The slope sediments in the Arctic contain a huge quantity of frozen methane and other gases – known as hydrates. Methane has a warming effect 80 times stronger than carbon dioxide over 20 years. In some locations along Russia’s northern coast, methane rising from the sea floor to the surface has caused the sea to foam. The United States Geological Survey has previously listed Arctic hydrate destabilisation as one of four most serious scenarios for abrupt climate change. ['Sleeping giant' Arctic methane deposits](#)





**Mary Anning** – A film has been made (*Ammonite*) of the life and work of the self-taught palaeontologist [Mary Anning](#). It is not a biopic but may be of interest. At the age of 12yrs, she discovered a 5.2m (17ft) Ichthyosaur skeleton. Twelve years later, she found the first complete skeleton of a plesiosaur, a marine reptile so bizarre that scientists thought it was a fake. Although she made some astounding discoveries, due to her gender and social status she never received the recognition she deserved.



Mary Anning was disadvantaged by being "female, working class and poor"

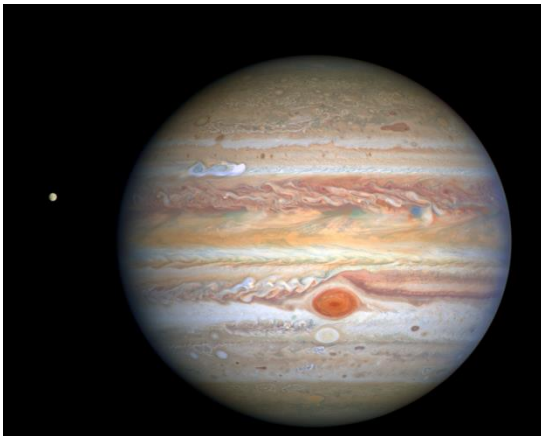
[Ammonite - film](#)



[Earth – A video crash course](#) – 10 minutes



**Hubble Captures Crisp New Portrait of Jupiter's Storms** - on Aug. 25, 2020, the Hubble Space Telescope captured another stunning view of Jupiter. Hubble's snapshot shows at mid-northern latitudes a bright, white, stretched-out storm traveling around the planet at 350 mph. Hubble shows that the Great Red Spot, rolling counterclockwise in the planet's southern hemisphere, is plowing into the clouds ahead of it, forming a cascade of white and beige ribbons. Jupiter's icy moon Europa, thought to hold potential ingredients for life, is visible to the left of the gas giant. [New portrait of Jupiter](#).



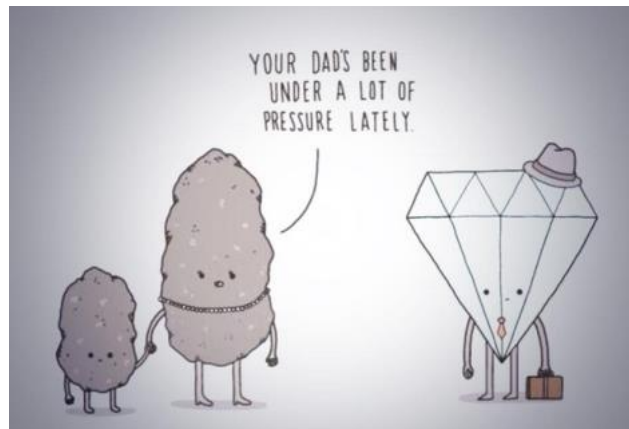
**Ice-covered Grímsvötn volcano about to erupt?** - There are clear signs that the Grímsvötn volcano is getting ready to erupt again. The ice-covered Grímsvötn volcano on Iceland, produced an unusually large and powerful eruption in 2011, sending ash 20 kilometres into the atmosphere. Grímsvötn is a peculiar volcano, as it lies almost wholly beneath ice. Another peculiarity is that the heat output from the volcano is extraordinarily high (2000-4000 MW), and this melts the overlying ice and produces a hidden sub-glacial lake of melt water. This is up to 100 metres (328 feet) deep and has ice up to about 260 metres (850 feet) thick



floating on it. This melt water can escape suddenly, and after travelling southwards beneath the ice for about 45 kilometres it emerges at the ice margin as a flood, which in the past has washed away roads and bridges. [Iceland's Most Active Volcano Ready to Erupt Again?](#)



### Quiz! - How good is your world geography?



Acknowledgements:

