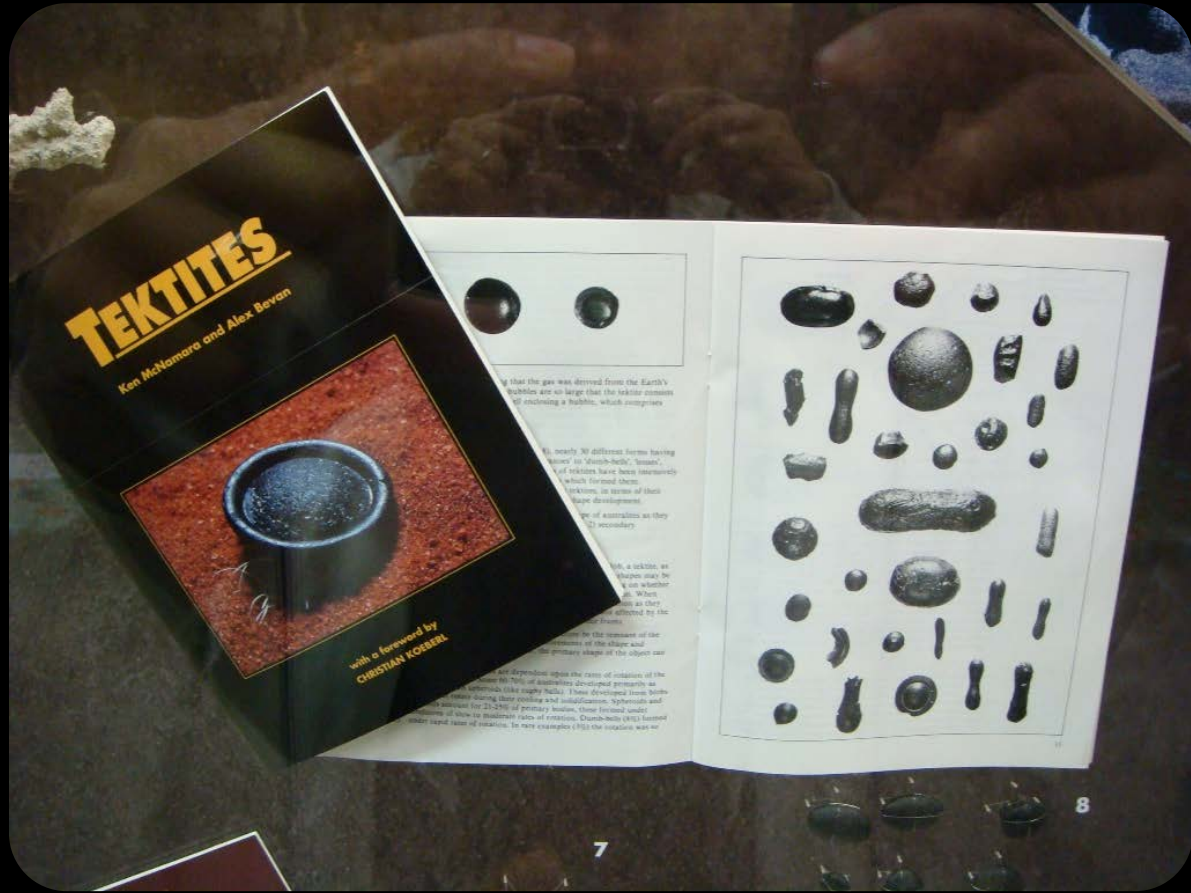


Western Australian Museum Tektite Collection

by Aubrey Whymark

Images from 2008, prepared 2017.





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THE DAY IT RAINED GLASS ON AUSTRALASIA

Around 780 000 years ago after an asteroid or comet impact somewhere in Indochina, tektites fell over south-east Asia and Australia. Collectively known as the Australasian tektite strewn field, secondary melting of some of these tektites during high speed flight produced symmetrical shapes. Australian tektites exhibit these shapes to perfection and sometimes have flanges. The only other flanged tektites, other than australites, have been found in Java. Many thousands of tektites have been found on the eastern margin of Lake Torrens and Lake Eyre, South Australia; on the Nullarbor Plain and in the Kalgoorlie district, Western Australia; and at Port Campbell, Victoria.





Tektite (australite)

Notting,
Western Australia

At 437 grams this is the largest known australite. The two smallest known complete australites, from Princetown, in the Port Campbell region of Victoria, weigh 0.026 and 0.0132 grams, respectively.

Presented by P. Repacholi.



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**Flanged button
tektite (cast)**

Found between the
Murray and Darling
Rivers, New South Wales.

Found by Sir Thomas Mitchell in 1839
this tektite was given to Charles Darwin
who figured it in his "Voyage of HMS
Beagle" in 1844. This was the first
published record of an australite.



Philippinite tektites

Philippines



Tektites formed by melting Earth's crust during the geological past. Tektites were first discovered in Czechoslovakia. Known as meteorites, other tektites are found in the Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Indonesia (javanites from Java), Australia (australites), Texas (beccite), USA, and the Ivory Coast, West Africa. Tektite fragments from the Caribbean Islands are the oldest tektites known.

Rizalite tektite

Rizal, Philippines



Indochinite tektites

North-east Thailand

Presented by D. R. Chapman.





Malaysianite tektite
Kuantan, Gambang
Malaysia



Chinese tektites

Near Zhanjiang, China
Presented by G. J. H. McCall.



Australian
Ravenshoe
Western Australia
Presented by A

Chinese tektites
Near Zhanjiang, China
Presented by G. J. H. McCall.



Indochinite tektites
Dalat Region,
Vietnam



Bediasite tektite
Texas, USA





Libyan Desert Glass

Libyan Desert, Egypt

A naturally formed glass that may have formed by melting of sand due to giant meteorite impact.



Wolf Creek meteorite

Wolf Creek Crater,
Western Australia

Group IIIAB iron

Deeply weathered pieces of the projectile that excavated the crater, now altered to iron-shale. Many so called 'shale-balls' have been found on the rim of the crater.



Dalgarno meteorite
Dalgarno Crater,
Western Australia



S FROM THE PAST

Impactites
(impact melt glass)
Wolfe Creek Crater,
Western Australia



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Impactites
(impact melt glass)
Henbury Craters,
Northern Territory



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Impactites
(impact melt glass)
Mount Darwin Crater,
Tasmania



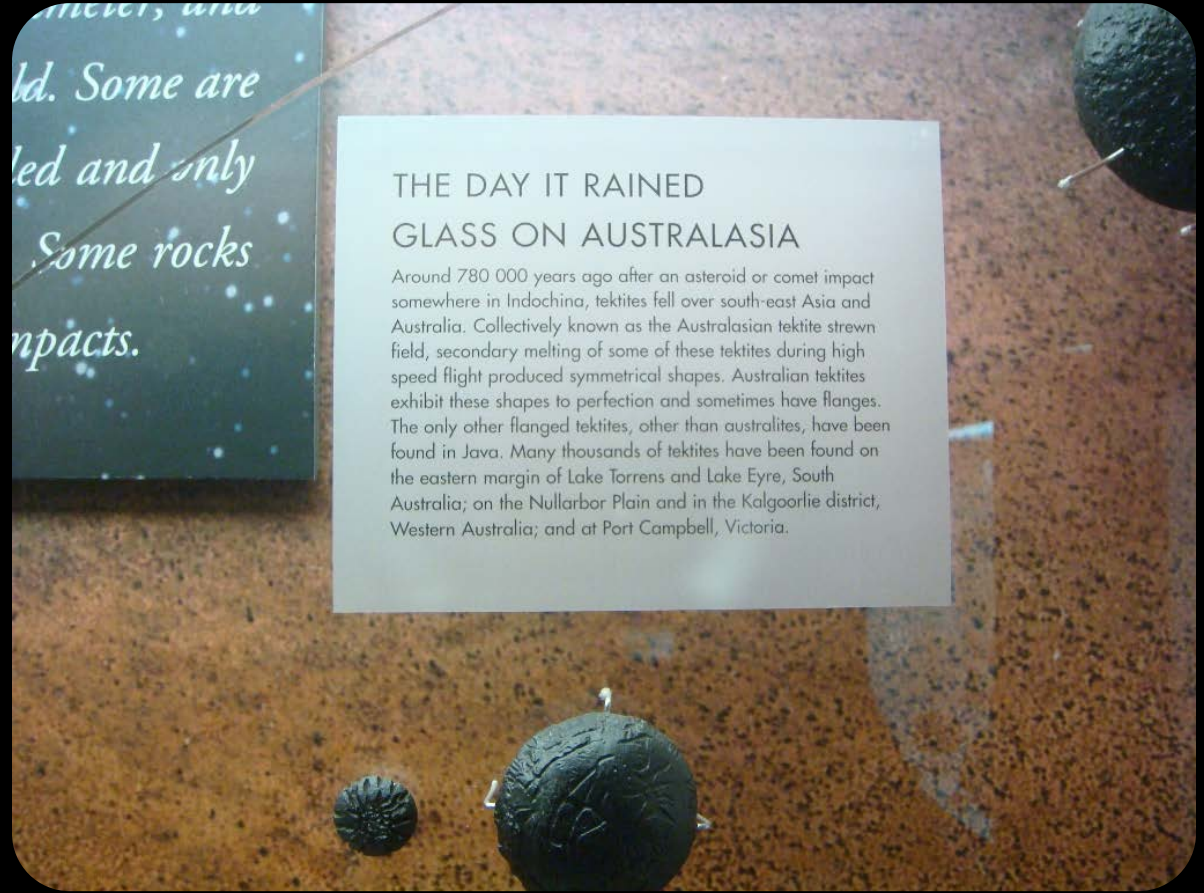
Impact breccia
(suevite)
Nördlinger Ries,
Germany
This impact structure is the
source of the moldavite tektite glass found
in Czechoslovakia and Austria.

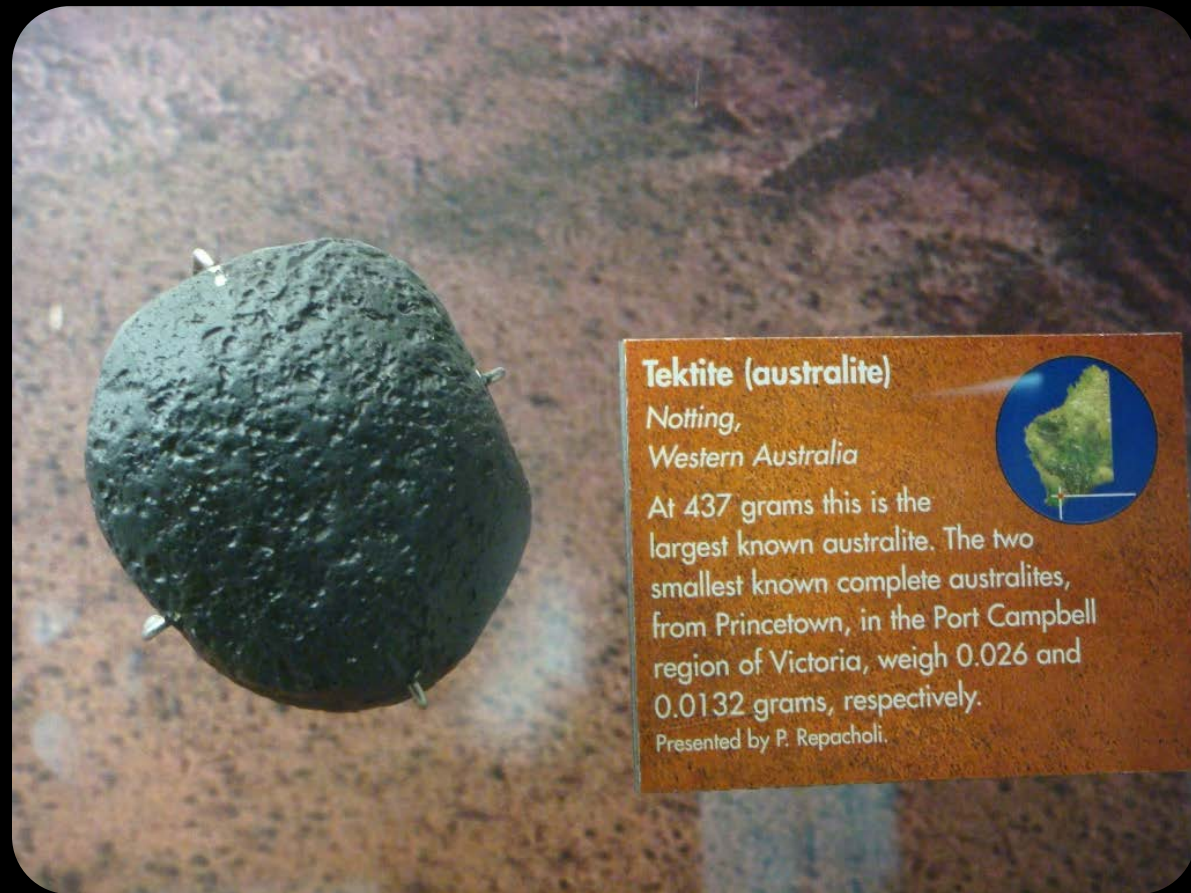


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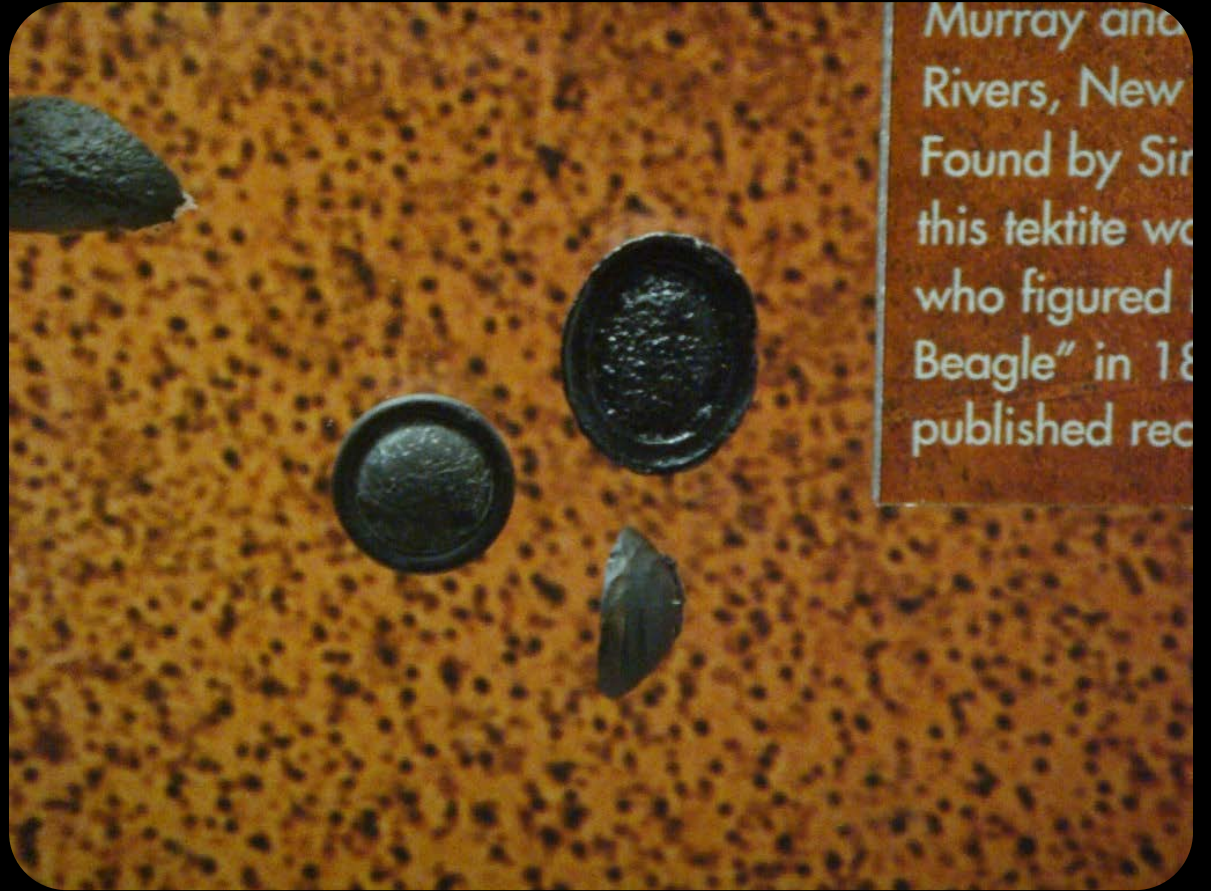
TEKTITES

SPAWN OF GIANT METEORITE IMPACTS

Tektites are not meteorites but are fragments of natural silica glass found in a few well-defined areas of the world called strewn fields. Tektites formed by melting Earth rocks during giant meteorite impact in the geological past. Tektites were first found in the late 18th century in Czechoslovakia. Known as moldavites, they are 14.7 million years old. Other tektites are found in the far south-eastern region of China, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand (indochinites), Philippines (philippinites, or rizalites when from Rizal), Malaya (malaysianites), Indonesia (javanites from Java, billitonites from Billiton Island), Borneo, Australia (australites), Texas (bediasites) and Georgia (georgiites), USA, and the Ivory Coast, West Africa. 64.5 million year old glass fragments from the Caribbean Island of Haiti are the oldest tektites known.







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Moldavite tektites
Czechoslovakia



THE BOMBARDED EARTH

BLASTS FROM THE PAST

Throughout the Earth's history its surface has been bombarded by large asteroids and comets. Over 150 impact structures are known world-wide, ranging from craters of metres to more than 100 kilometres in diameter, and from a few thousand years to more than 2,000 million years old. Some are easily recognized as bowl-shaped craters, whereas others are deeply eroded and only appear as glacially circular outflows in the Earth's igneous rocks. Some craters and outflow plains, like Valles, remain a reminder of great impacts.

TEXTILES

RECORDS BY THE ROCKS



Wolf Creek meteorite

Wolf Creek Crater,
Western Australia
Group IAB iron



Deeply weathered pieces of the projectile that excavated the crater, now altered to iron-shale. Many so called 'shale balls' have been found on the rim of the crater.



Dalgaranga meteorite

Dalgaranga Crater,
Western Australia
Hawkesbury Group iron



Dark, metallic clays and clay aggregates have been found scattered

Wolf Creek meteorite

Wolfe Creek Crater,
Western Australia
Group IIIAB iron



Deeply weathered pieces
of the projectile that excavated the crater,
now altered to iron-shale. Many so called
'shale-balls' have been found on the rim
of the crater.



Dalgaranga meteorite

Dalgaranga Crater,
Western Australia
Mesosiderite stony-iron



Small metallic slugs and stony
fragments have been found scattered
around the crater.



Hanbury meteorite

Hanbury Crater,
Western Australia
Iron meteorite



Small metallic slugs and stony
fragments have been found scattered
around the crater.



Shatter-cone in quartzite

*Spider Structure, Kimberley
Western Australia*



M THE PAST

**Impactites
(impact melt glass)**

*Wolfe Creek Crater,
Western Australia*





Impactites
(impact melt glass)
*Henbury Craters,
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Impact breccia
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