



Honeycomb weathering in siltstone on Gabriola (*pencil for scale*).

I am grateful for the following two emails from geologists at Western Washington University who also provided me with evidence that tafoni can form in igneous rock:

...I have also seen photos taken in Antarctica of salt weathering in basaltic rocks... [Dave Tucker]

and:

...I've seen tafoni on Miocene plateau *basalt* at Starvation Rock, State Park, in central Idaho, and I have a few photos of coastal honeycomb weathering in basalts on the Kitsap Peninsula along the eastern side of the Olympic Peninsula in Washington. There is wonderful honeycomb weathering in coastal *basalt* in Hawaii. I think *basalt* can be susceptible, because some flows are fairly porous because of microvesicles. I've learned the hard way making thin sections that *basalt* and *andesite* can soak up a lot of epoxy during the curing process because of their porosity. [George Mustoe]

And let's not forget, *tafoni* is a Coriscan word, and refers to weathering features in rocks there that are not sandstone.



US Geological Survey picture of possible honeycomb weathering on Mars (*partial view*).

There's little doubt in my mind that the weathering seen on Mars is honeycomb weathering—notice how they face the sun as all good honeycombing does. Sulphate-rich grains of *kieserite* have been found in fluvial deposits on Mars, and magnesium sulphate is a very effective eroder of sandstone.³

These honeycombs must be billions of years old—which I suppose must mean that if ancient Martians created petroglyphs, they will still be there too. ◇

³ [Salt-weathering of upper Nanaimo Group sandstone](#), *SHALE* 23, pp.35–56, March 2010.