

# The Valley of the Planets-Libya's 8th Wonder of the World

By NEEL ROBERTS

The Earth is full of surprises and secrets we couldn't possibly cover in a lifetime.

One that I'd never heard of before is "The Valley of the Planets" located a few minutes SE of the village of Ghat, Libya in the Wan Tikofi valley via the Akakus (Acacus) Mountains of Sahara Desert co-ordinates 24.92526107 N,10.21912511 E. Its rock formations, called "Trovants", resemble solar system planets and have literally sparked imaginations for eons.

These geological formations are an enigma and radically differ from other rock shapes on Earth.

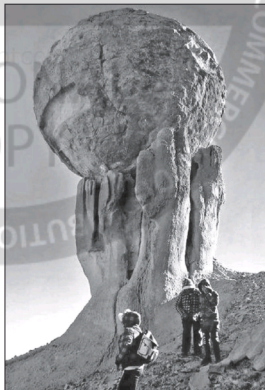
They not only naturally gradually grow but also move and reproduce like living organisms after their concentric circles like tree circles are observed. Thus, the nomenclature "living" or "moving" stones.

Check out Google Earth at [https://earth.google.com/web/@24.9248982,10.2192905,6.670,64.928221a,1291.41893759d,35y,1.73010975h,0t,0r?utm\\_source=earth7&utm\\_campaign=vine&hl=en](https://earth.google.com/web/@24.9248982,10.2192905,6.670,64.928221a,1291.41893759d,35y,1.73010975h,0t,0r?utm_source=earth7&utm_campaign=vine&hl=en) as there's little data as to the exact location.

It really is the wild, wild west of discoveries as there's no clearing house on its findings and little knowledge on its history, etc. The few websites like [https://travelog.com/articles/the-valley-of-the-planets\\_kKq.html](https://travelog.com/articles/the-valley-of-the-planets_kKq.html), <https://travelandlook.blogspot.com/2022/03/valley-of-planets-treasure-from.html> and <https://nl.pinterest.com/pin/565483296972356431/> have limited information but it's pictures are stunning. I tried reaching out to an English-speaking Libyan tour company that seemed to handle business from the West and never heard back.

The stone shapes resemble Jupiter, Saturn and even UFOs! The average diameter of each rock is about 10 meters, as the spherical rocks are stacked side by side for about 30 km.

Visiting the site would be no walk in

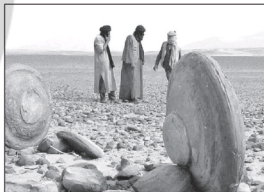


the park. Ghat is over 1,300 kms from the capital of Tripoli and while the town of over 22,000 people has a tourism industry, the average temperature passes 100F in the summer and is not an English-speaking destiny.

However, to those who get there, it would be a trip of a lifetime with photos and videos you could not get anywhere else. The hard access to the main world has probably preserved it in original shape and this 8th wonder of the world and needs to be protected not just for the residents but future generations.

If local governments do set up live cams or the new Star link satellites [www.starlink.com/satellites](http://www.starlink.com/satellites) allow close live views from space, we may have the best of both worlds.

**"THE BEST IS YET TO COME!"**  
**Sky watch for the next month:**



Download this month's sky free schedule at <https://in-the-sky.org/news-cal.php?year=2022&month=8&maxdiff=7> and charts <https://in-the-sky.org/skymap2.php>, <https://www.heavens-above.com/SkyChart.aspx>, <http://whatsouttonight.com/Resources/2022AugWOTSkyChart.pdf>.

- 1 Full Moon rises with Saturn**-Thursday, August 11th after sunset look SEE and watch this duo rise into the night after 21:00. [https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20220812\\_15\\_100](https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20220812_15_100).
- 2 Saturn "DAY" Observing**-Wednesday, August 31st before sunset look SEE if you have a good scope, you can see the rings of Saturn in daylight which is a treat after 19:42
- 3 Milky Way Brilliance**- This is an excellent month to view our home galaxy without freezing. Best time is after 11

pm until dawn <https://www.almanac.com/night-sky-map-august-perseid-meteors-milky-way>.

**4 Annual Perseids Meteor Shower**- Friday August 12th after dark will be the peak of the summer meteor shower with estimated rate of 144 meteors per hour however the Moon, in Aquarius, will be only two days past full phase at the shower's peak presenting significant interference throughout the night. Best view is starting at 11:00 pm facing the NNE in the constellation of Perseids until dawn. Check out this viewing guide for details [https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20220813\\_10\\_100](https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20220813_10_100).

**For This Month's Events Check the Calendar**- <https://calgary.rasc.ca/calendar2022.htm#Aug>

**Monthly Open House at Calgary's Rothney Observatory near Priddis**- Mark down Saturday, August 13th from 21:00 to Midnight for Saturnalia under an August Sky. There will be an array of scopes operated by University of Calgary astronomers and members of the RASC Calgary. In the RAO Interpretive Centre, we are presenting talks on Saturn and the Ancients and a retrospective of the mighty Cassini spacecraft and its 20-year mission. Tickets at \$10 per person available for purchase on Eventbrite link on RAO website and will be on sale one month prior to the event. For further information, contact Jennifer Howse at [jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca](mailto:jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca), (403) 931-2366. Their website <https://www.ucalgary.ca/rao/> is updated regularly.

**Happy meteor shower hunting and keep reaching for the Sky!**

Neel Roberts is a local astronomer in Southern Alberta and welcomes your comment at [Neel\\_Roberts@ptccanada.com](mailto:Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com), Tel: (403) 560-6574. Check out his work at [www.ptccanada.com](http://www.ptccanada.com).