

LESSON 13: OPENING ACTIVITY



Sailing Stones of Death Valley - The *sailing stones* of Death Valley are rocks that mysteriously glide across the cracked mud. For decades, scientists, prospectors and visitors were baffled by how rocks—some weighing up to 700 pounds—moved without human or animal intervention. Scientists discovered this phenomenon is driven by *ice shove*. Which is when rare winter weather creates a shallow pond that freezes overnight, and subsequent melting ice panels are pushed by light winds, sliding the rocks across the slippery, waterlogged mud.



The **red handfish** is a tiny, critically endangered fish found only in southeastern Tasmania, Australia. Instead of swimming like most fish, it "walks" along the sea.



Volcanic Lightning: Also known as "dirty thunderstorms," this happens when lightning strikes continuously inside the ash plume of a volcanic eruption. The static electricity created by clashing ash and rock looks like something straight out of a fantasy movie.