



**Documentary:** [PBS Eons – The Other Explosion You Should Know About](#)

**Duration:** 7 minutes

### Overview of the Documentary

An introduction to the multicellular organisms of the Avalon Explosion and the Ediacaran. The Ediacaran is a geological period that spans 96 million years from the end of the Cryogenian Period to the beginning of the Cambrian Period. The Ediacaran Period is named after the Ediacara Hills of South Australia, where trace fossils of a diverse community of previously unrecognised lifeforms (later named the Ediacaran biota) were first discovered by geologist Reginald Sprigg in 1946. Its status as an official geological period was ratified in 2004 by the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), making it the first new geological period declared in 120 years. There are three late Ediacaran assemblages of biota, the Avalon, White Sea and Nama.

### Questions

1. **Explain** why the claim of fossils found by Reginald Spriggs in the Ediacara Hills in 1946 was not taken seriously at the time by fellow paleontologists.

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2. **Explain** what was strange and unique about the organisms of the Avalon Explosion.

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3. **List** some examples of organisms found in the Ediacaran period.

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4. **Describe** the features of rangeomorphs and give an example.

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5. **Define** the term metazoan.

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6. **Explain** what may have led to the evolution of the Ediacaran biota.

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7. **Explain** what may have led to the disappearance from the fossil record of the Ediacaran biota.

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