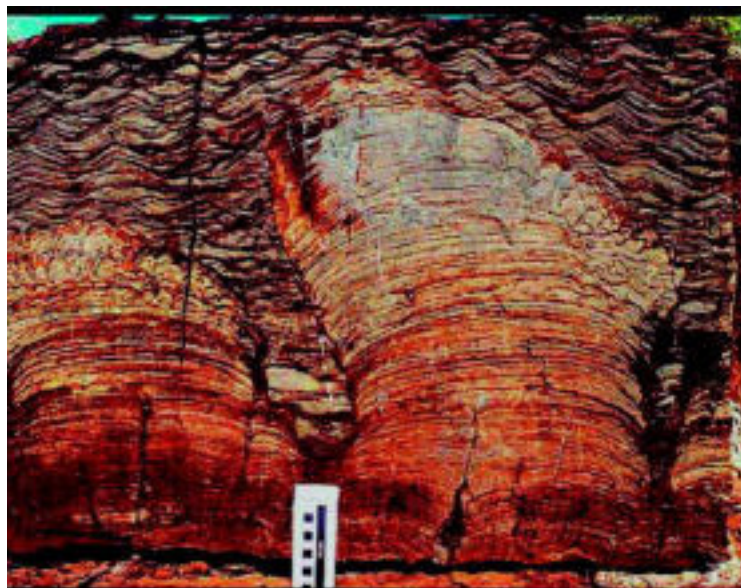
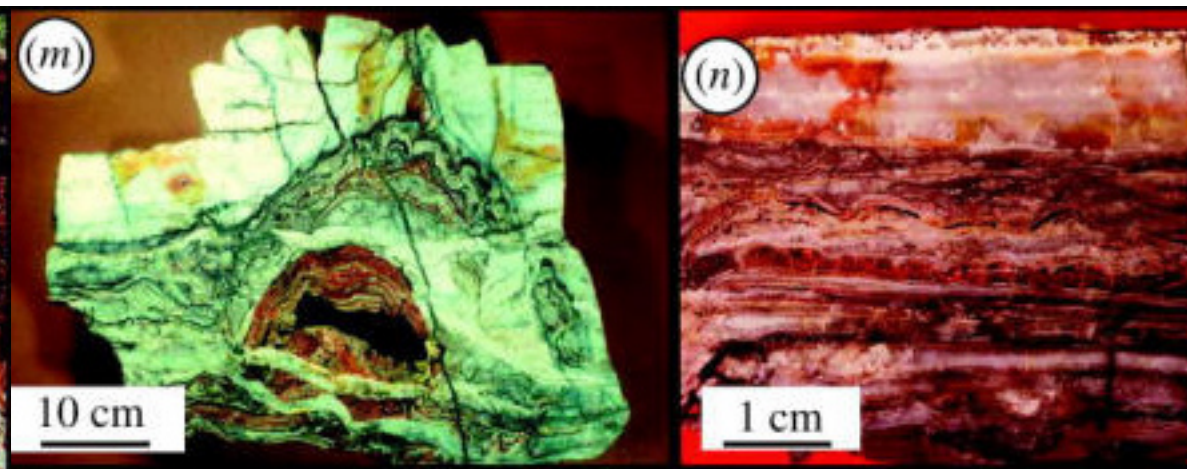


GREEN 3.5 BILLION YEARS AGO

The *Green Planet* panel contains an ERROR. Photosynthesis and **chlorophyll** (a green pigment) existed 3.5 billion years ago, as evidenced by stromatolite mounds. These mounds are made by photosynthesizing bacteria that contain *chlorophyll a* and several accessory pigments that impart a rainbow of possible colors.



Ancient stromatolite (microbial mat) fossils from the 2.723-billion-year-old Tumbiana Formation, Western Australia; scale bar 10 cm.
Photo by I. R. Williams ©



Ancient stromatolite (microbial mat) fossils from the 3.496-billion-year-old Dresser Formation, Western Australia. Photos from Schopf, 2006 ©

Header image of cyanobacterial filaments of the genus *Oscillatoria* form a cyanobacterial mat in the salt marsh at Heron's Head Park, San Francisco. Photo by William Lorenz ©