







## Some Beaches in Japan Have Star-Shaped Sand Found Nowhere Else in the World

Comparing the stars in the sky to sand grains is a common way of visualizing the enormity of the universe. But at some unique beaches in Japan's Okinawa prefecture, the sand grains really are stars.



Take a stroll along Hoshizuna no Hama (Star Sand Beach), located on Iriomote Island, enjoying your feet submerge in the sand. Look closely, and you'll see that the sand on this beach is very special. Very special.

The tiny star-shaped grains of sand you'll see on your feet are actually the pointy husks of millions of tiny Foraminifera, which are part of the same protist as amoeba. When Foraminifera die, the tide brings them ashore from coral reefs in the Western Pacific Ocean.



