

Paranormal "U"**Crop Circles**

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In 1966, a farmer near Tully, Australia named George Pedley heard a hissing sound and reportedly saw a flying saucer rise from the nearby swamp in Horseshoe Lagoon. When he went to look at the site, he saw that reeds and swamp grass were flattened out and formed a circular pattern. This is one of the earliest modern sightings of a crop circle.

A crop circle is a pattern created by flattening a crop like wheat or hay. These patterns can range from a simple circle, to intricate geometric patterns, to one crop formation in the pattern of the Olympic symbol or a logo of the Swedish Railways.

The majority of reports of crop circles have appeared in and spread since the late 1970s as many circles began appearing throughout the English countryside. This phenomenon became widely known in the late 1980s, after the media started to report crop circles in Hampshire and Wiltshire.

In 1991, Doug Bower and Dave Chorley made headlines claiming it was they who started the phenomenon in 1978 with the use of simple tools consisting of a plank of wood, rope, and a baseball cap fitted with a loop of wire to help them walk in a straight line. They cited the Tully Swamp Circles as the inspiration for their first crop circle.

After Bower's and Chorley's 1991 statement that they were responsible for many of them, circles started appearing all over the world. To date, approximately 10,000 crop circles have been reported internationally, from locations such as the former Soviet Union, the UK, Japan, the U.S., and Canada. Many will say the prevalence of crop circles can be seen with a correlation between crop circles, recent media coverage, and the absence of fencing and/or anti-trespassing legislation. Essentially, one person had a fun idea; it gets you famous and the copy cats come in and try to capitalize.

Many different explanations for the formation of crop circles have popped up over the years. From unexplained weather phenomena in whirlwinds or vortexes to the paranormal such as UFO's and Earth Spirits, have all been touted as possible causes. One case was caused by wallabies in Tasmania running in circles after eating opium poppies. These poppies are grown legally in Tasmania for medicinal uses.

Most often in modern times, the causes for crop formations or circles are hoaxers. These people go out in fields and carefully bend over the crops in predesigned patterns. Recently even some farmers have gotten into crop formations and have put such patterns in their fields for fun, or have allowed others to do it for a small fee.

Whether the cause is natural, man-made, or paranormal, crop formations and circles have us fascinated by the detailed patterns they can exhibit. This is often akin to artwork on the land itself. From incredible geometric patterns, to a marijuana leaf, these patterns keep us wondering who did it, why, and how.