When the overlying rock materials are stripped by abrasion or other erosion processes, it gives rise to cracking, fractures and expansion of the underlying rocks to release the pressure in them. Overtime, sheets of rock separate from the stripped rocks and break into smaller pieces along the fractures through a process termed as exfoliation.

4. Salt Crystal Growth/ Salt Weathering

Salt crystal growth is also referred to as salt weathering or haloclasty. It occurs when saline solutions enter the rock pores or cracks and evaporates, leaving behind salt crystals.

The accumulated salt crystals are heated up when environmental temperatures are high and they expand thus releasing pressure on the rock, causing the rocks to disintegrate.

Salt Crystallization may also happen when rocks such as limestone form salt solutions like sodium carbonate or sodium sulfate. The salt solutions form salt crystals when the moisture in them evaporates.

These salts can expand three-fold or even more and this phenomenon mainly takes place in dries an high temperature areas.

A prime example of salt-crystal growth in honey combed stones in the sea wall.

5. Plant Growth and Animal Action

Trees and other plants can wear away rocks when their roots penetrate into the cracks in the rocks. As the roots get bigger, they exert pressure on rocks and make the cracks widen and deeper eventually braking the rocks apart.

6. Abrasion

The wearing down of rock particles by friction due to water, wind or ice. The continued vulnerability to these elements gradually breaks down the exposed surfaces of the rocks. It is the action on the rocks by wind, ice rain, and waves combined.

ORGANIC OR BIOLOGICAL WEATHERING

Refers to the same thing. It is disintegration of rocks as a result of the action by living organisms. Trees and other plants can wear away rocks since as they penetrate into the soil and as their roots get bigger, they exert pressure on rocks and makes the cracks wider and deeper.

Microscopic organisms like algae, moss, lichens and bacteria can grown on the surface of the rocks and produce chemicals that have the potential of braking down the outer layer of the rock. They eat away the surface of the rocks.

This microscopic organisms also bring about moist chemical micro-environments which encourage the chemical and physical breakdown of the rock surfaces.

The amount of biological activity depends upon how much life is in that area. Burrowing animals such as moles, squirrels and rabbits can speed up the development of fissures.