



## Arizona Rocks 69

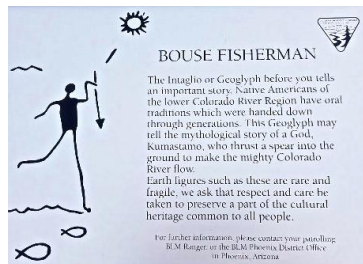
Text and photos by Ray Grant

Another feature of deserts is desert pavement. It is a surface layer of closely packed interlocking rock fragments over fine sand and silt. It is very common on alluvial fans in Arizona.

There are several ways possible for the pavement to form. The fine material on the surface may be removed by deflation (wind blowing it away) and/or sheet flow (water washes away the finer material). Some researchers also suggest that a heaving process by salt or ice may lift the bigger pieces to the surface. The pavement is usually coated with desert varnish.

The pavement seals off the ground surface and slows erosion of the finer material that is covered. When driving tracks or other disturbances remove the pavement, the fine material will start to blow away in strong wind and this adds to the dust storms in Arizona.

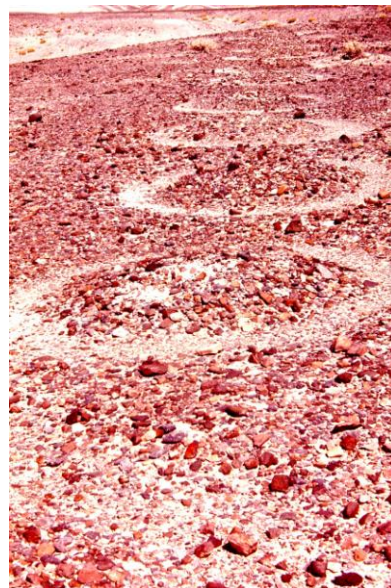
The removal of desert pavement has been used to form geoglyphs. Geoglyphs are large designs on the ground made by piling material up or in the case of desert pavement exposing the finer lighter colored material underneath it. When working on this column I came across a geoglyph near Bouse called the Fisherman that I am interested in visiting. You can find information about it on the internet.



BLM sign for the Fisherman geoglyph near Bouse



Desert pavement exposing the finer material underneath, taken in western Arizona



A geoglyph in desert pavement, I took this picture in Southern California almost 50 years ago and cannot remember the exact location.



The fisherman geoglyph drawn in desert pavement Google Maps

