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VANISHING ACT

Trelawny Parish, Jamaica

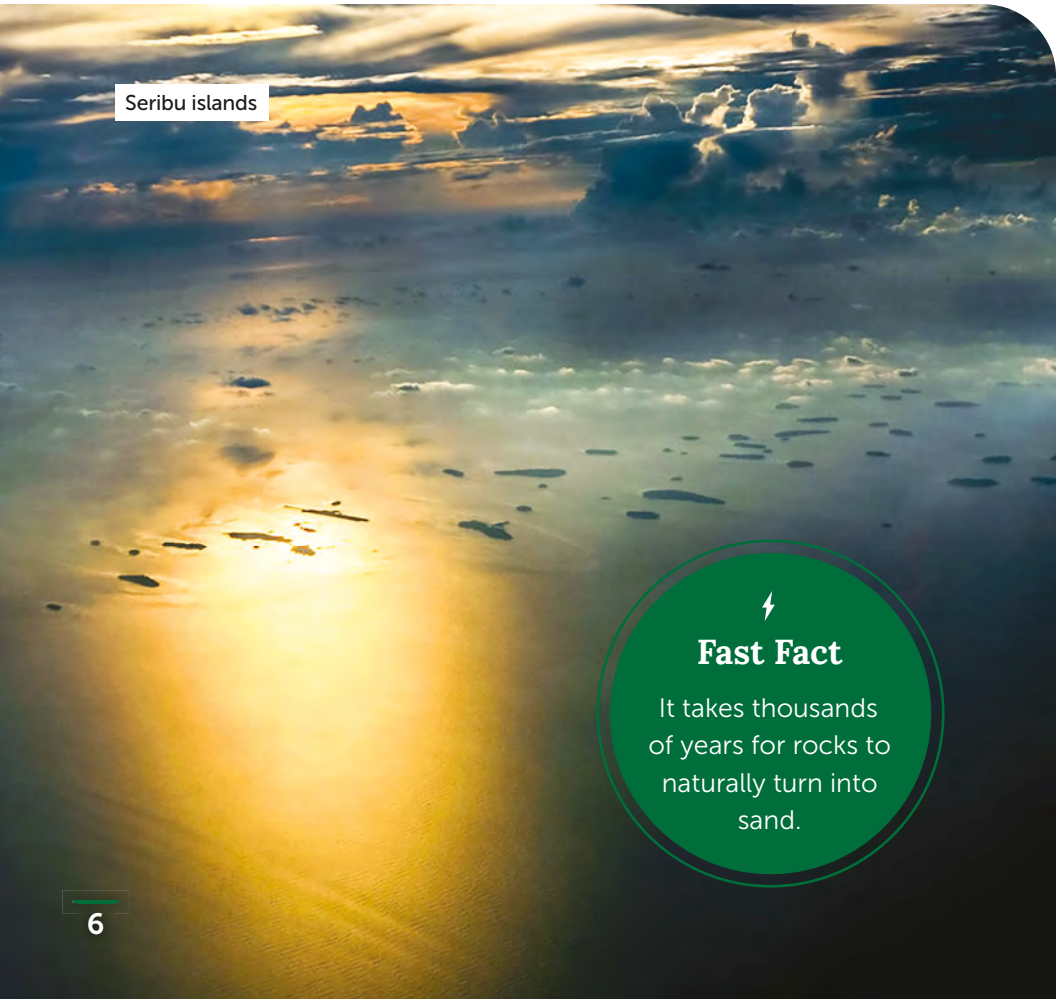
2008

It's the middle of the night. Trucks drive behind a resort. Workers fill the trucks with sand from the beach. About 500 truckloads are taken. The next morning, the town awakens. People discover the sand is gone. Someone stole the beach.

Jakarta Bay, Indonesia

2010

Officials are worried. It's about the Seribu islands. Seribu is an Indonesian word. It means thousand. But the number of islands is going down. Several have vanished. Large boats were seen in the area. Were they involved?



Seribu islands



Fast Fact

It takes thousands of years for rocks to naturally turn into sand.

Kenya



Kilome, Kenya
2011

A town has lost its river. Sand gangs caused it. They dug out the riverbanks. Only dry cliffs were left. Now the town has no drinking water. A policeman tried to stop the gangs. Then a mob attacked him. The officer was shot. Poison arrows were used. This was a message. The town understood. Harvesting sand wouldn't stop.



People in India grieving the death of a relative who reported on the sand mafia, 2018

Bhind, India 2018

A video was made. It showed an important official. The man was taking a **bribe**. He was being paid to allow digging. That's how it seemed. This was at a crocodile refuge. That was illegal. A reporter caught the deal on camera. The reporter planned to go public. But he got threats. Police wouldn't protect him. They took the video. Soon the reporter was run over by a truck.

Patna, India

2022

Four bodies were found. They were along the Son River. About 500 cartridges were there too. These were from guns. This was the scene of a gang battle. Two gangs had been fighting for months. Both wanted to control the river. There was a shoot-out. One gang drove the other away. It was part of an ongoing sand war.



Illegal sand mining in India