

# William Morris Davis Encyclopedia Article

## William Morris Davis

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# William Morris Davis

**1850-1934**

American geoscientist whose career and scientific contributions spanned the disciplines of meteorology, geology, and physical geography. In the latter field Davis's interest in geology, landform processes, and rain effects led to his defining the science of geomorphology, based on his theory of a continuing, progressive cycle of terrestrial erosion. His meteorological teaching and study at Harvard (1876-1912) produced *Elementary Meteorology* (1894), a standard college text for over 30 years. Davis's research included comprehensive field work and publications on the origins of limestone caverns and coral reefs and islands.