



Fig. 25. Two similar types of modern stromatolites on the coast of Shark Bay, in western Australia. These are being gradually built up by the growth of thin layers of blue-green algae. Each successive layer of algae traps a layer of calcareous sediment which washes up over it at high tide, thus forming these laminated mounds. The sizes can be estimated from the shovel which is leaning up against a large stromatolite in the lower figure. These structures have adequate resistance to wave action because the sediments of which they are composed become cemented by inorganically precipitated calcium carbonate crystals. Some of the stromatolites found in ancient beds of limestone are very similar to these. From D. M. Raup and S. M. Stanley, Principles of Paleontology, W. H. Freeman Co., 1971, 388 p. Figure 9-15. (By permission of the W. H. Freeman Co., and Dr. Paul Hoffman.)