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Tracing the Footprints of Carbon Discovery

With all the talk about caring about the environment and reducing everyone's carbon footprint, you have to wonder who discovered carbon. It is actually one of the most common elements in the periodic table. It is also one of the most abundant elements on earth and perhaps in the entire universe.

From what we presently know and can determine, only the elements oxygen, helium, and hydrogen are more abundant than carbon. Another important tidbit is the fact that carbon also exists outside of our planet. For instance, we know that there is carbon in the sun. Other than that, we also know that some comets, stars, and most planets in our solar system have carbon. In fact, some meteorites also have some form of carbon on them.

Come to think of it, carbon is also present in the very air that surrounds our planet. Remember that the air we exhale, which is also used by plants in the photosynthetic process, is made up of the combination of carbon and oxygen. We also know today that carbon is in a dissolved form in all sorts of bodies of water. Natural gas, petroleum, and coal also contain carbon.

Tracing Its Discovery

The fact of the matter is that carbon is everywhere and that carbon has been discovered even before man had the habit of writing down his history. Although we at this point can no longer discover who it was that discovered this very important element, several other bright minds came along to help us understand and learn more about this element.

Some of the brilliant minds that came along the way include one scientist by the name of Antoine Lavoisier. He discovered that diamonds were actually a type of carbon and he even made a clear demonstration to prove his discovery. Well, his demonstration was rather simple. All he did was burn both carbon and diamond samples.

The results of the fiery demo included the fact that both the samples from carbon and diamonds never produced any water. One particular metric that Antoine Lavoisier wanted everyone to pay attention to was the fact that all of the samples that he burned produced the same amount of carbon dioxide up to the last gram.

Of course, other scientists and researchers have brought significant pieces of information that helped mankind understand and ultimately take advantage of this element. People like Gay-Lussac, Claude Louis Berthollet, C. A. Vandermonde, and René A. F. de Reaumur. We may never really be able to trace who discovered carbon but we can be sure that we're using the info we now have to the best of our ability.

References

<http://www.whodiscoveredit.com/who-discovered-carbon.html>
<http://www.everythingmade.com/who-discovered-carbon/>

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