

### 本集内容

The harpoon that clears space junk 清理太空垃圾的“鱼叉”捕捉器

### 学习要点

有关“space 太空”的英语词汇

### 边看边答

What is thought to have cracked the window on the International Space Station?

### 文字稿

This is the moment a harpoon was fired in space striking a target almost dead centre. It was filmed 400km above the Earth. It's the latest experiment from the RemoveDEBRIS spacecraft. Led by Surrey University, it's a **mission** that's testing out the technologies that could clean up space junk.

这是“鱼叉”捕捉器在太空中发射后几乎正中靶心的瞬间。这个片段是在地表上空 400 千米处拍摄的，展现了利用 RemoveDEBRIS 航天器进行的最新试验。由英国萨里大学带领开展的这项**任务**，测试这种可用于清除太空垃圾的技术。

Katie Bashford, Surrey Satellite Technology Limited

It was absolutely a success. And the goal of the experiment was to hit the target. And that's what we did. It's important because there's so much debris up in space – from spacecraft that are no longer operational to bits of rocket body. We really need to start clearing some of this debris out the way to make way for new spacecraft.

凯蒂·巴什福德 萨里卫星技术有限公司

“试验非常成功。实验的目的是击中目标，而且我们做到了。试验意义重大，因为太空中有太多碎片——从停运的航天器到火箭机身的碎片，不计其数。我们真得好好地清理一下这些碎片，为新的航天器腾出地方。”

Space is becoming increasingly cluttered. It's estimated that there are now nearly 8,000 tonnes of debris with 800,000 pieces the size of a marble or bigger. And each piece has the potential to do some serious damage.

太空变得越来越杂乱不堪。据估计，宇宙中现有近 8000 吨碎片，其中约有 80 万块碎片的大小相当于或大于玻璃弹球的体积。而每一个碎片都有可能造成严重的破坏。

In 2016, this crack in the window of the International **Space Station** was thought to have been caused when a tiny fleck of paint hit it. **Bigger** objects could do even more harm.

2016 年，国际空间站窗户上的这道裂痕被认为是由一个微小的油漆斑点击中而造成的。更大的物体可能会造成更严重的危害。

Scientists are particularly worried about a **European satellite** the size of a double-decker bus that stopped working in 2012. It's now threatening other satellites in its path and needs to be removed from its **orbit**.

科学家们尤其对一颗体积相当于一辆双层巴士的欧洲人造卫星而感到担忧，它在 2012 年停止运行。现在，它给飞行前方的其它人造卫星造成了威胁，所以需要被移出轨道。

Last year, the RemoveDEBRIS spacecraft also tested a net, proving it could catch a passing satellite. It's the first mission to try and address this problem. And it's also used its on-board cameras to track a tumbling target - essential for hunting down any rogue space litter.

去年，航天器 RemoveDEBRIS 还测试了一张太空“捕网”，并证明它能捕捉一个经过的人造卫星。这是第一个尝试解决太空垃圾问题的任务。此外，它还利用机载摄像机成功地跟踪了一个翻滚的目标，这对追捕任何离轨的太空垃圾来说至关重要。

Its final test will be in the coming weeks. It's set to burn up as it returns to Earth, preventing it from becoming a piece of space junk itself. The hope is now that future missions can be scaled up so the **celestial** deep clean can begin.

它的最终测试将在未来几周内进行。飞船已被设定好在返回地球的途中自燃，以避免自身也沦为太空垃圾。科学家们寄希望于扩大未来太空任务的规模，这样就可以开始做一次深层太空大扫除了。

## 词汇

**mission** 太空任务

**space station** 空间站

**satellite** 人造卫星

**orbit** 轨道

**celestial** 太空的

视频链接: <https://bbc.in/2T6U6AS>

## 问题答案

A tiny fleck of paint is thought to have cracked the window.