ORDOVICIAN PERIOD (488.3-443.7 Ma)

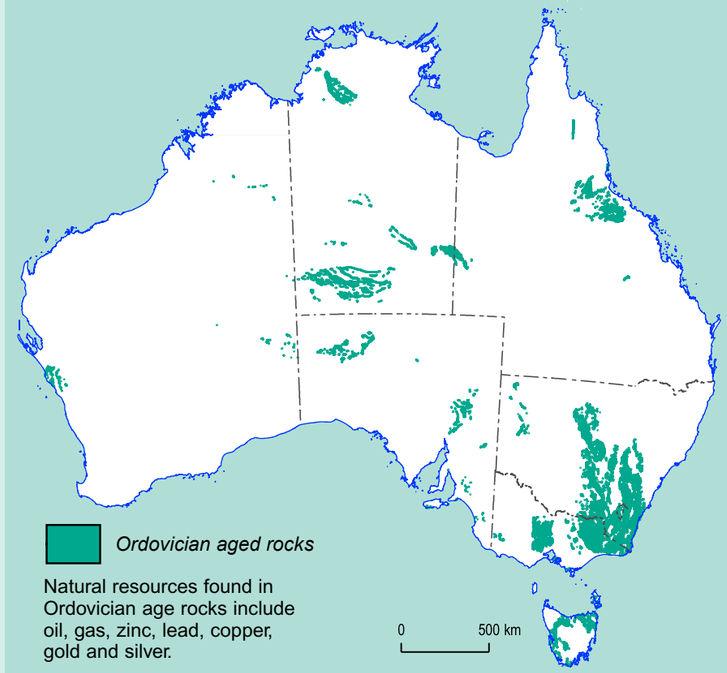
Geological TimeWalk

Early in the Ordovician Period, life on Earth took another dramatic turn: there was a rapid increase in the diversity and abundance of marine animals and plants. This rapid diversification is known as the 'Ordovician Radiation'. The first **vascular land plants** (plants with tissue that transports water and nutrients) also evolved and lived adjacent to bodies of water.

Large parts of the supercontinent Gondwana were submerged due to high sea levels. Australia was near its northern tip, just north of the Equator.

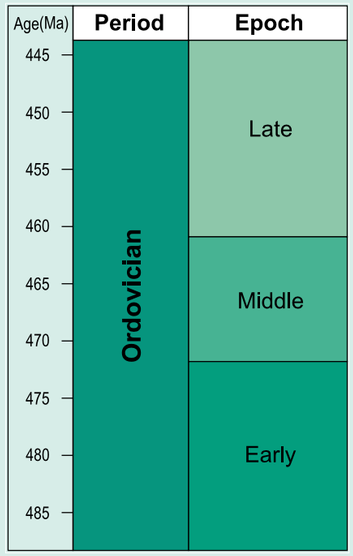
Later, global temperatures and sea levels dropped as the Earth entered another ice age. This caused the extinction of over 85% of all species on Earth. This is the **1st of the Earth's Big 5 mass extinction events.**

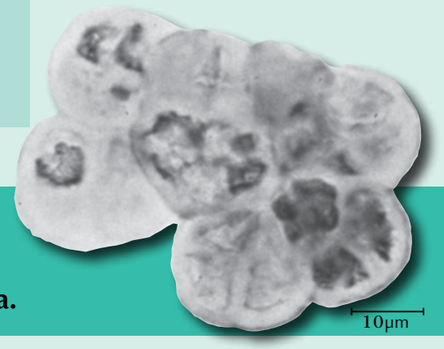
Ordovician rocks and resources in Australia



Natural resources found in Ordovician age rocks include oil, gas, zinc, lead, copper, gold and silver.

Ordovician Timescale





Gloeocapsomorpha prisca **is a common alga from Ordovician rocks of Western Australia. Much of the world's Ordovician oil is sourced from this alga.**

The Amadeus Basin in central Australia has commercial oil and gas accumulations derived from Ordovician-aged source rocks.

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