



SILURIAN 444 MILLION YEARS AGO

Michigan was south of the equator and covered once again by the sea. Warmer water temperatures and rising sea levels helped sea life recuperate after the Ordovician extinction. During the Silurian Period a bowl-shaped structure, called the Michigan basin, was formed as a result of mountain building events that were occurring along the eastern edge of Laurentia. The water became trapped in the basin and evaporation in the tropical climate caused the water to become hyper-salinated. Over time layers of salt, gypsum, and limestone formed. During the Silurian Period, plants and insects successfully colonized the land for the first time.