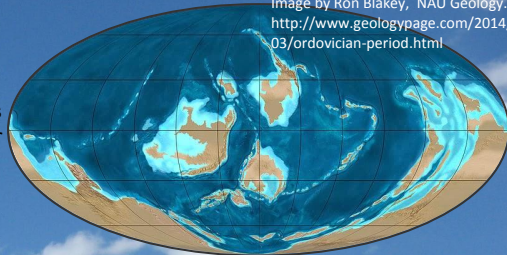


Pass the Old Bay, Would You?

During this time, bivalves (ancestors of modern mollusks, pictured upper left) exploded in diversity¹, and in comparing them to their ancestors from the Cambrian, paleontologists can find numerous advances³, detailed in the table below:



What World?

This was the world about 485.4 million years ago. It was primarily oceanic. The waters teemed with life following the Great Ordovician Biodiversification Event (GOBE)¹. The Fezouata formation is located in modern day Morocco¹, when the Sahara was part of the southern oceans. It is believed that this area is a rare Lagerstätten during the GOBE¹, and that present-day Morocco was very important for the diversification of bivalves².

Cambrian bivalves

- Very low diversity
- Used their foot for feeding and movement
- Simple gills

Ordovician bivalves

- Extremely diverse
- Representative of modern bivalves
- Filibranch gills used for feeding and breathing
- Byssus (bundle of filaments) to stick to surfaces



Fesser, an Arthropod species that was found in Fezouata.

Catch a Dune!

During the Ordovician, the Sahara Desert was an oceanic depositional environment. Storms frequently deposited sediment in the region, providing good preservation⁴. The organisms who died here were preserved well enough for us to inspect their internal structures and interpret their function².

Fezouata Formation

