

★ Topic - Fossil

Introduction

∴ The term fossil is derived from Latin word "Fossilium = Something dug up".

- They are the remains or traces of living organisms preserved in any natural formation.
- Formerly only dug up remains of living beings were called fossils, but according to present concept any such material providing evidence of existence of some living organism in a particular era or period is referred as fossil.
- According to Lamarck the term fossil includes the remains or traces of plants and animals preserved in any natural formation whether hard rock or superficial deposit, not only petrified structures of organism but whatever was directly connected with or produced by these organism.

The important methods of Fossilization

(1) Preservation of harder parts of the body

- In many cases bony parts of skeleton of vertebrates or hard.
- Exoskeleton of invertebrates have

frozen in ice or preserved in the oil impregnated soil without any morphological change.

- Bones and teeth of vertebrates and shells of molluscs are preserved in this way.
- In a continuous dry or cold region, all organic remains, even the softer part, remain embedded in the ice.
- They remain embedded in the ice and frozen earth since pleistocene times.

(2.) Preservation of smaller forms in amber

- Many soft bodied small insects, crustaceans and spider have been preserved unaltered in amber or in oil soil.
- Amber is a fossil resin exuded from pine trees.
- These resins, when first exuded are sufficiently soft to engulf a fragile insect or other invertebrates.
- Many Tertiary insects have been preserved as fossil by this method.