

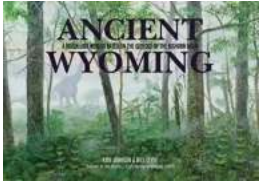
# Dozen Lost Worlds Based On The Geology Of The Bighorn Basin

The Bighorn Basin, located in northwestern Wyoming and southern Montana, holds secrets of past worlds that have long been lost to time. Through the study of its unique geology and fossils, scientists have uncovered a dozen lost worlds that existed millions of years ago. These lost worlds provide a window into the Earth's history and offer fascinating insights into ancient ecosystems and the evolution of life on our planet.

## 1. The Jurassic Forests of Bighorn



Millions of years ago, the Bighorn Basin was home to lush forests dominated by towering conifers and ancient cycads. The evidence of these Jurassic forests can be seen in the fossilized remains of dinosaur bones, leaves, and pollen found in the region.



## Ancient Wyoming: A Dozen Lost Worlds Based on the Geology of the Bighorn Basin

by Lin Waterhouse (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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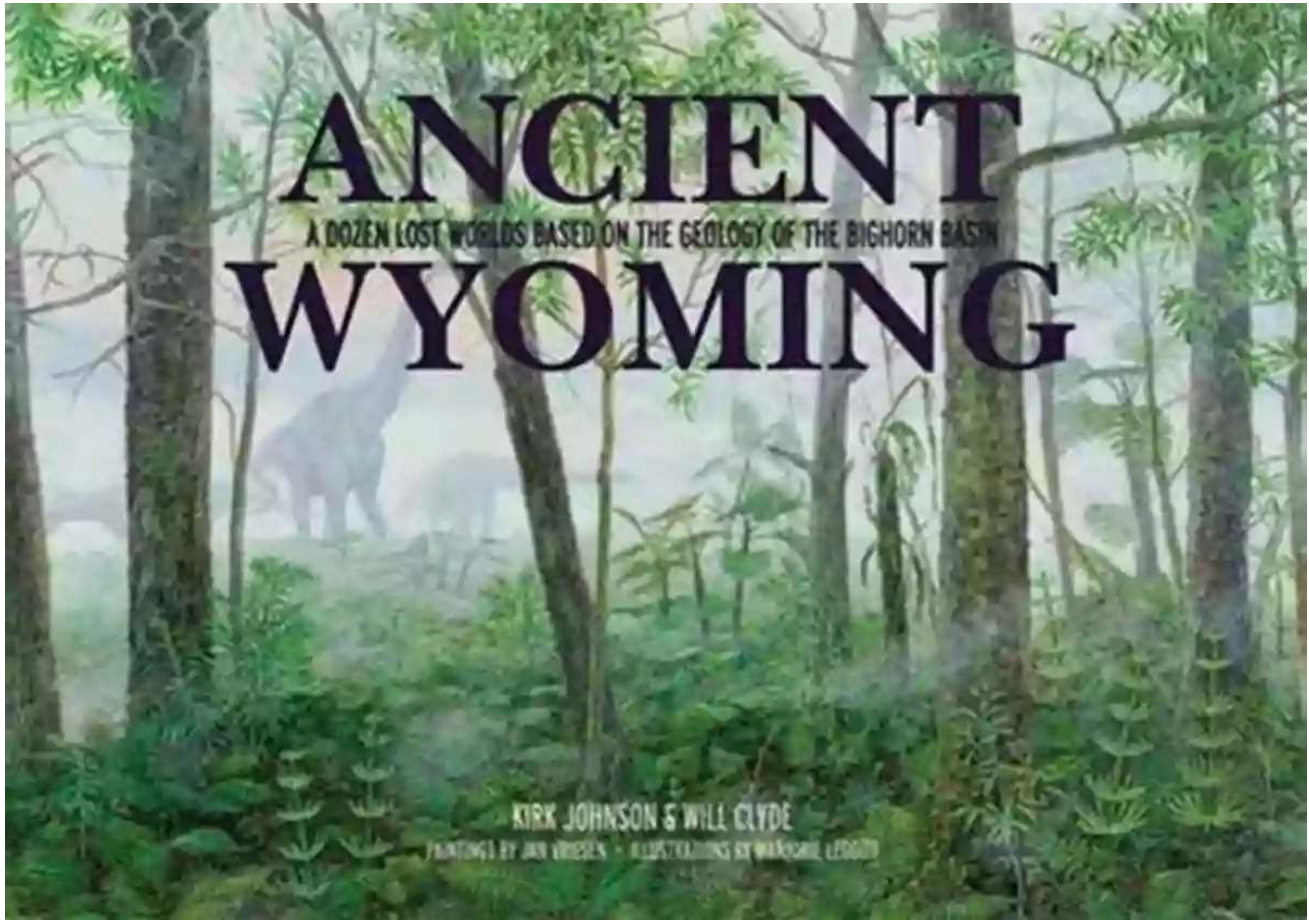


## 2. The Cretaceous Oasis



During the Cretaceous period, the Bighorn Basin transformed into a tropical paradise. The landscape was characterized by vast floodplains, meandering rivers, and lush wetlands. Fossil discoveries from this period include the remains of dinosaurs, crocodiles, turtles, and plants that thrived in this oasis-like environment.

### **3. The Ancient Seaway**



The Bighorn Basin was once covered by a vast inland sea, known as the Western Interior Seaway. This seaway stretched from the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic Ocean and was teeming with diverse marine life. Fossils of ammonites, mosasaurs, and fish found in the region provide evidence of this lost world that existed approximately 80 million years ago.

#### **4. The Towering Volcanoes**



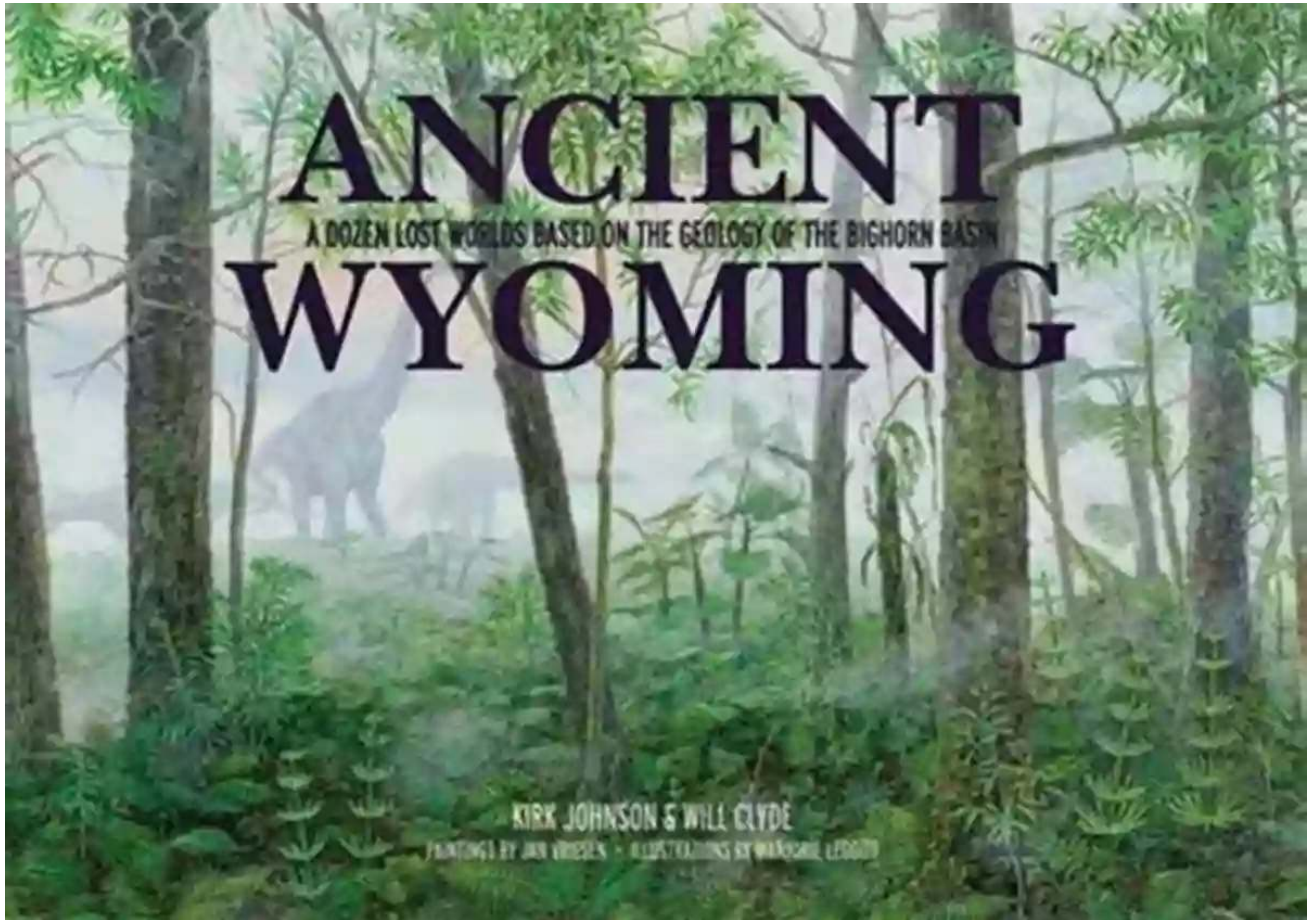
Volcanic activity shaped the Bighorn Basin during the Eocene epoch, creating a landscape dominated by towering volcanoes. The remnants of these ancient volcanoes can be seen in the form of volcanic ash beds and lava flows scattered throughout the region. These volcanic activities influenced the development of the basin's unique geology and left behind a wealth of fossils.

## **5. The Ice Age Tundra**



During the last Ice Age, the Bighorn Basin was covered by vast sheets of ice and experienced a tundra-like climate. Fossilized remains of mammoths, bison, and other ice age mammals have been found in the region, providing valuable insights into the fauna that inhabited this frozen landscape.

## **6. The Prehistoric Rainforest**



The Bighorn Basin was once home to a prehistoric rainforest that thrived during the Paleocene epoch. Fossils of ancient palm trees, ferns, and diverse plant species have been discovered, painting a picture of a lush and humid environment not unlike the rainforests of today.

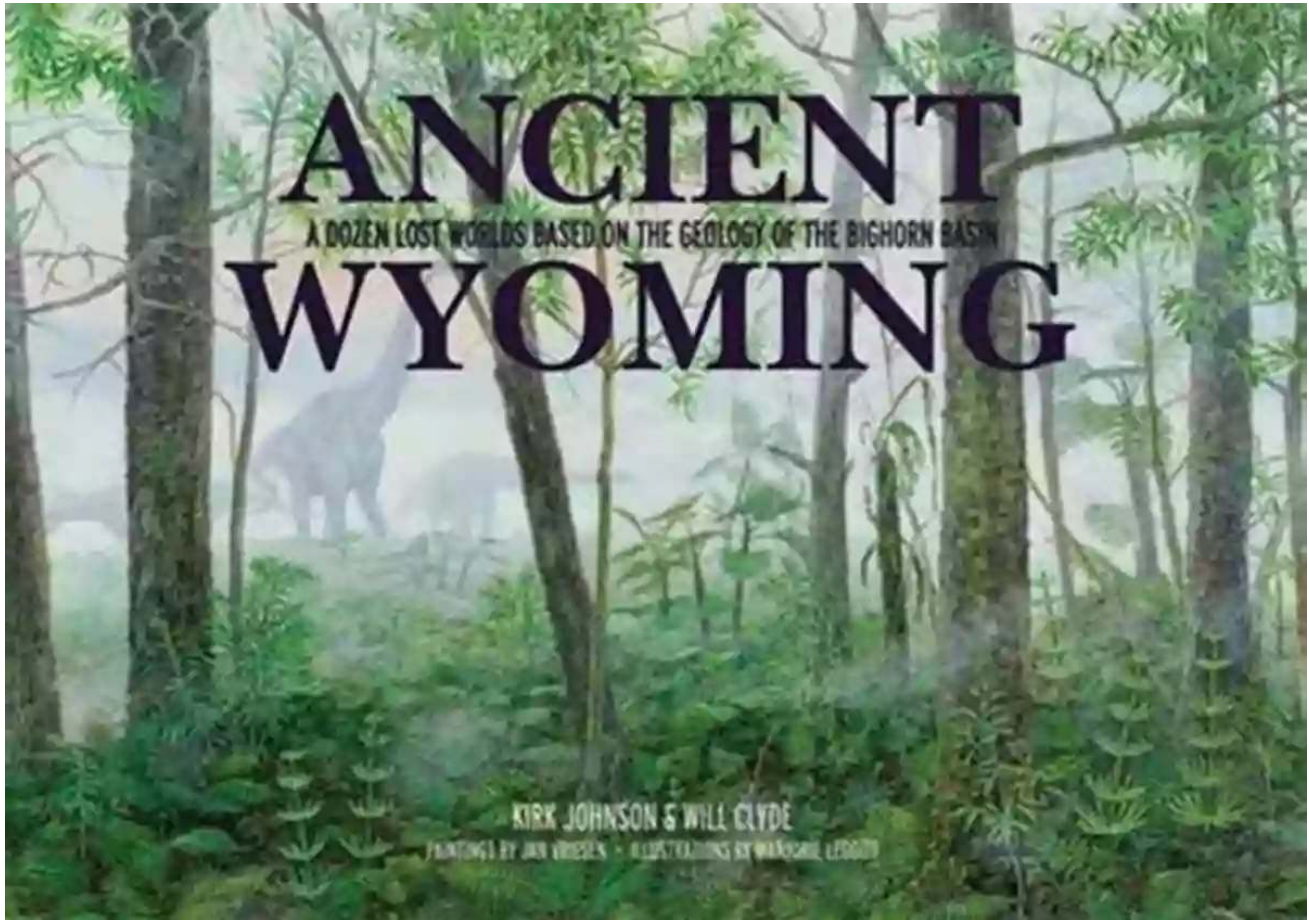
## **7. The Deserts of the Paleozoic**



Long before the dinosaurs roamed the Earth, the Bighorn Basin was a desert landscape during the Paleozoic era. Fossils of early plants, including ferns and horsetails, provide evidence of the harsh conditions that prevailed in this ancient desert environment.

## **8. The Triassic Swamps**





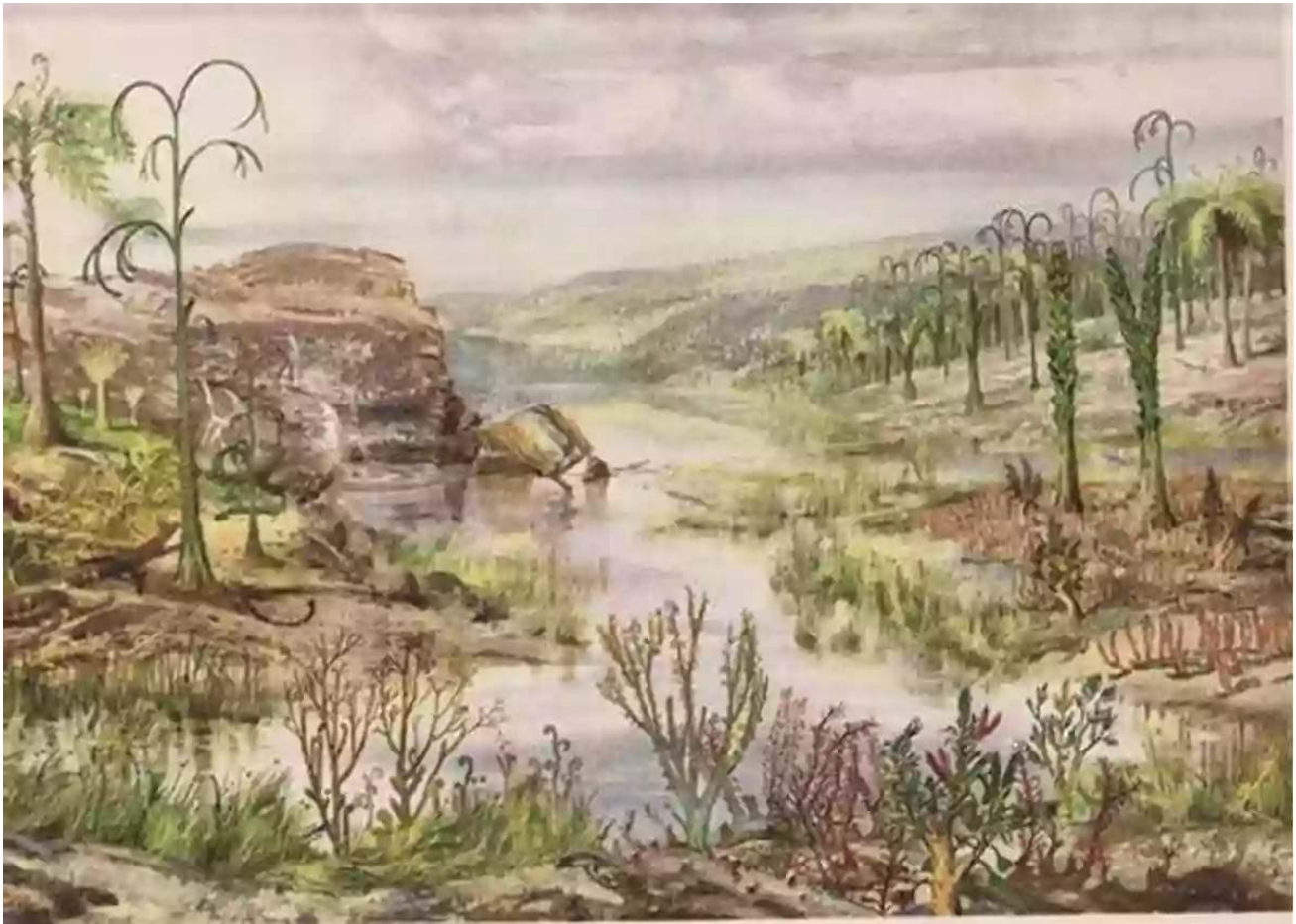
During the Triassic period, the Bighorn Basin was a swampy region populated by crocodile-like reptiles and other ancient amphibians. Fossil evidence suggests that these swamps were teeming with life, with a variety of plants and animals adapted to this unique aquatic ecosystem.

## **9. The Permian Coral Reefs**



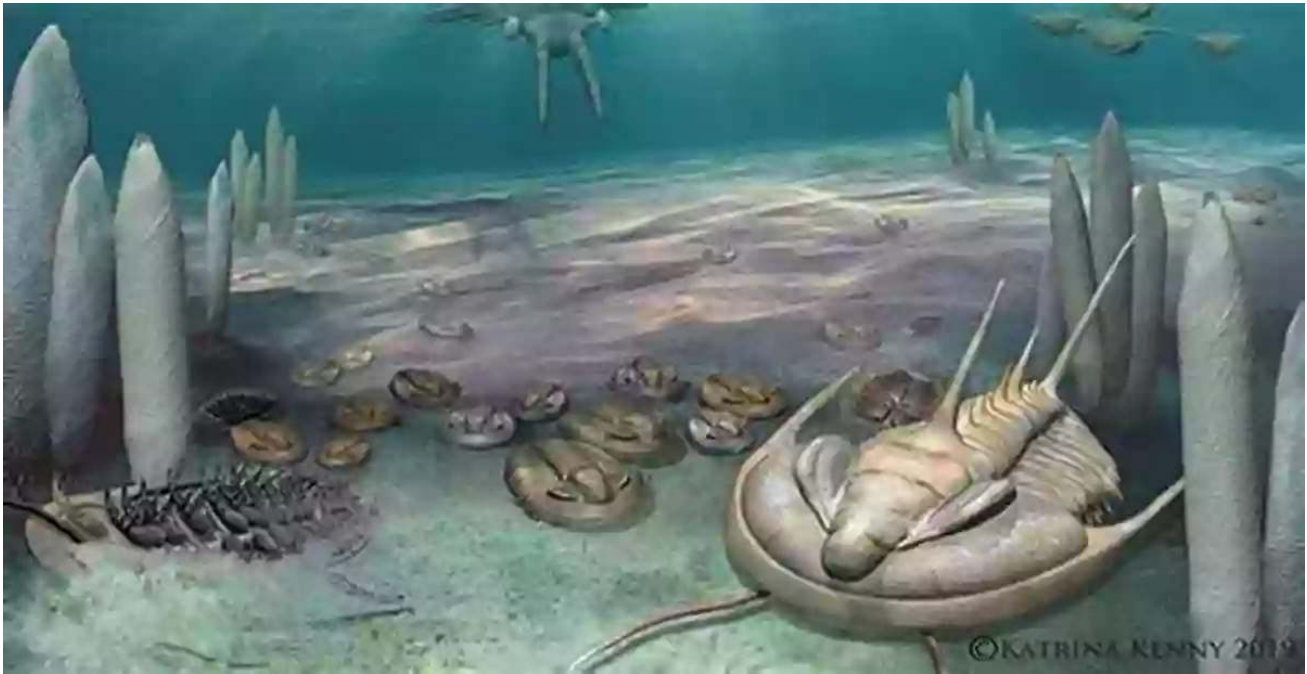
Approximately 300 million years ago, the Bighorn Basin was underwater, with vast coral reefs dominating the landscape. Fossilized remains of corals, sponges, and other marine organisms offer a glimpse into the thriving coral reef ecosystem that once existed in this ancient lost world.

## 10. The Devonian Rivers



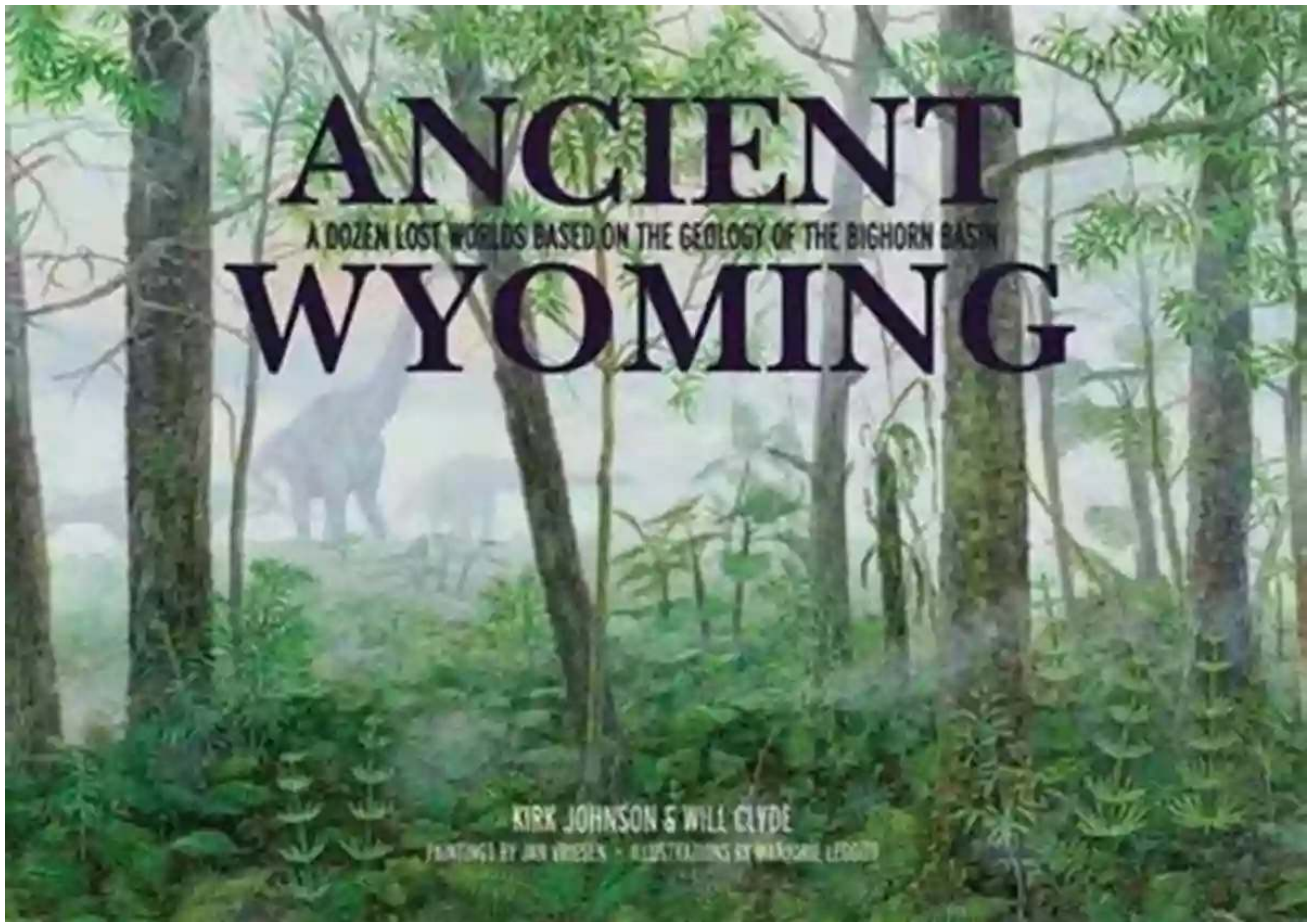
During the Devonian period, the Bighorn Basin was crisscrossed by meandering rivers and home to a diverse array of fish and amphibians. Fossilized fish fossils and tracks of ancient river-dwelling creatures provide valuable insights into the ecosystems that thrived along these ancient waterways.

## **11. The Cambrian Ocean**



More than 500 million years ago, the Bighorn Basin was submerged under a vast ocean teeming with early marine life. Fossils of trilobites, brachiopods, and other ancient sea creatures found in the region offer a glimpse into the biodiversity of this ancient marine world.

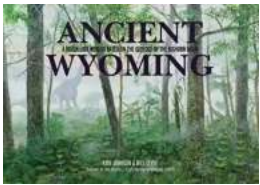
## **12. The Precambrian Mystery**



The earliest history of the Bighorn Basin, dating back billions of years, is shrouded in mystery. The lack of detailed fossil records from this time makes it challenging to reconstruct the lost world that existed during the Precambrian era. However, geological features such as ancient rocks and formations offer some clues to the early history of this enigmatic land.

### **Uncovering the Lost Worlds**

The geology of the Bighorn Basin continues to captivate scientists and paleontologists, providing a treasure trove of information about Earth's past. Through ongoing research and exploration, more lost worlds are waiting to be discovered, revealing valuable insights into the evolution of life, changes in climate, and the dynamic nature of our planet.



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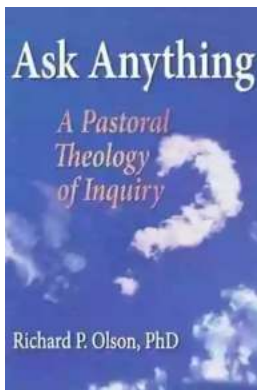
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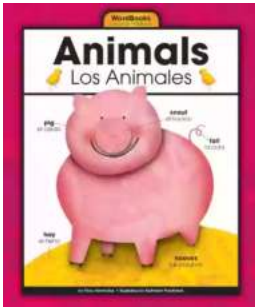


Sponsored by a grant from the National Science Foundation to the Denver Museum of Natural History. Ever wondered what the ground below you was like millions of years ago? Merging paleontology, geology, and artistry, *Ancient Wyoming* illustrates scenes from the distant past and provides fascinating details on the flora and fauna of the past 300 million years. The book provides a unique look at Wyoming, both as it is today and as it was throughout ancient history—at times a vast ocean, a lush rain forest, and a mountain prairie.



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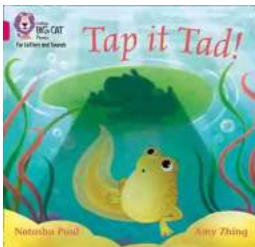
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