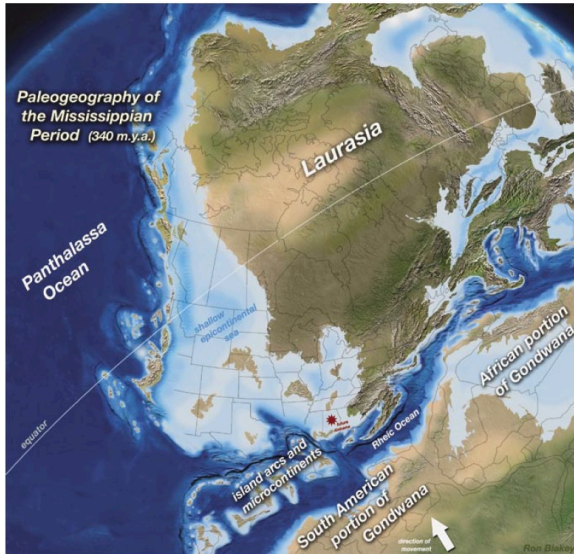
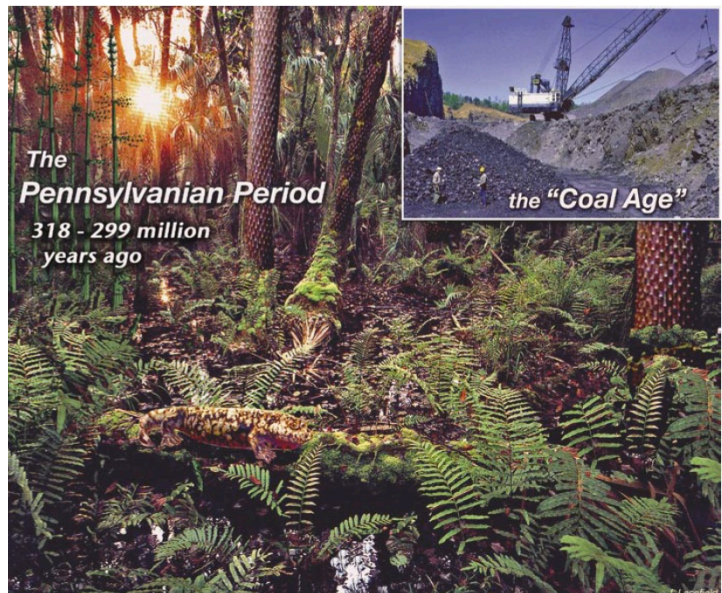
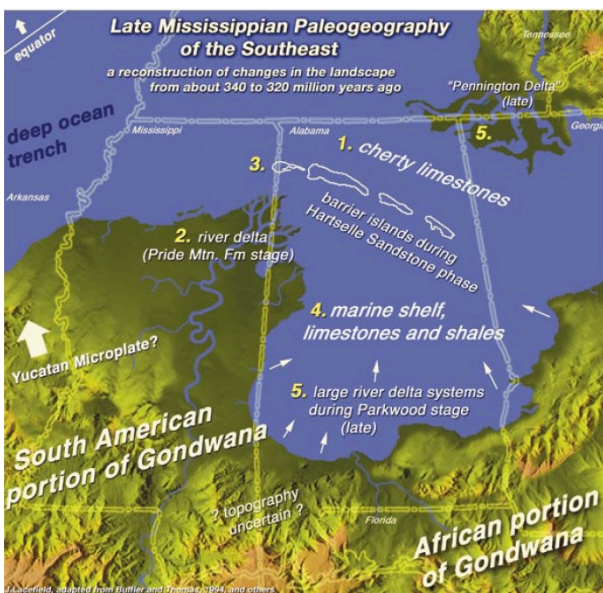


Footprints

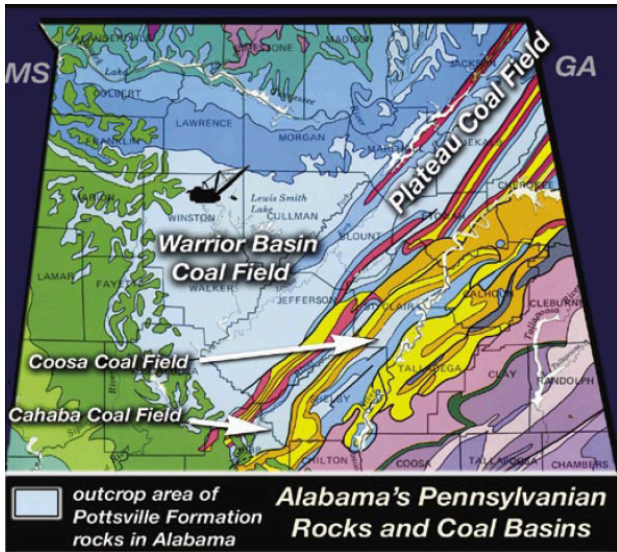
On the muddy shorelines 50 miles northwest of Birmingham, one can find abundant tracks where huge amphibians, giant salamanders, have walked along in the swampy shallows. Of course, these beasts are nowhere to be seen now - the mud flats have been compressed and turned to shale ... and the forests in which they lived were buried and smashed into coal long ago.



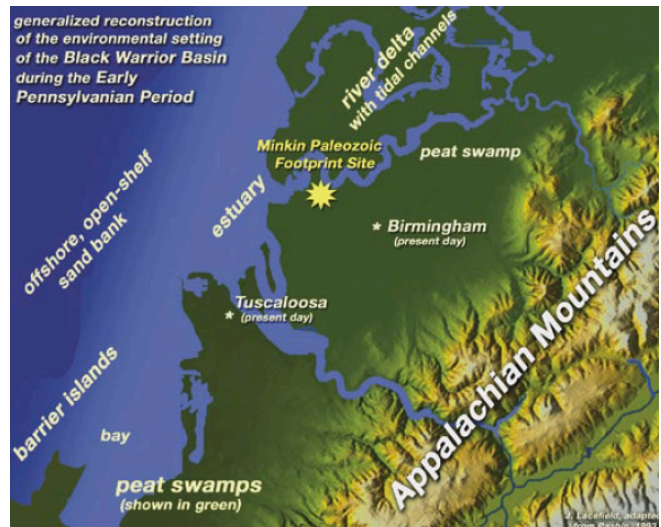
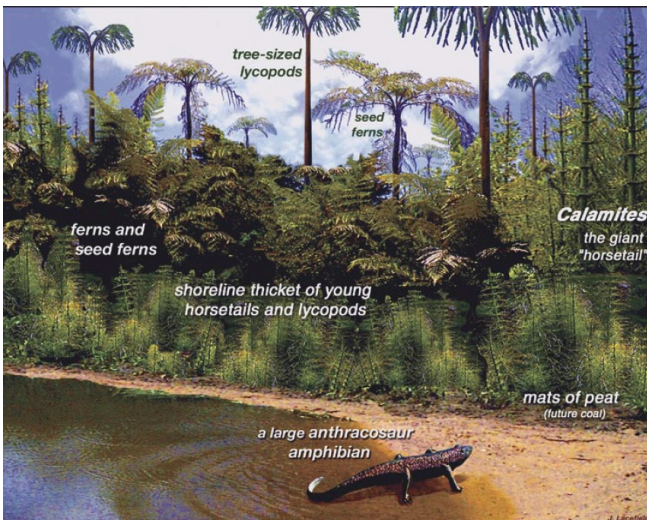
In fact, the Walker County area where they lived was a lot further south at the time - below the equator. It's crept its way up to the present location at a pace of about 1" per year. Persistence has been the key in this marathon ... even a slow pace will get a lot of distance covered after 320,000,000 years.



Strange world back then ... not a pine tree or oak on the planet - their time was yet to be. Plenty of green all around, but not a flower of any color to be seen ... all of that beauty lay another 120,000,000 years into an uncertain future.



This story is written in layer after layer of rock, as such stories often are, just waiting to be found and read by anyone who can understand the language in which they were written.



illustrations from *Lost Worlds in Alabama Rocks* – 2013
 – revised and expanded 2nd edition – Jim Lacefield