

Fire, Wind, and Water

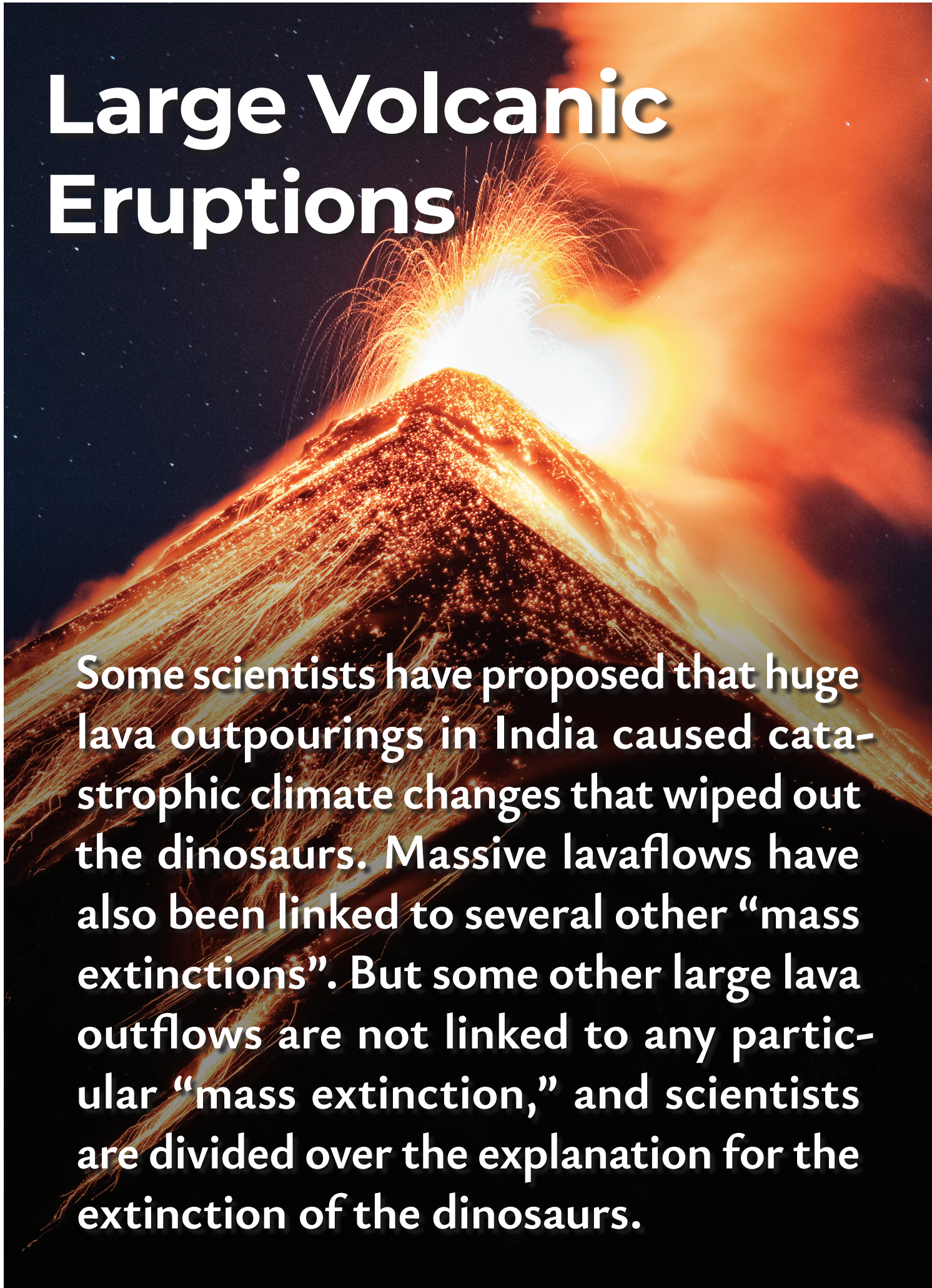
Abrupt changes in the fossil record occur globally at several levels of the geologic column such as the bases of the Silurian, Triassic, and Paleogene strata. These global patterns imply global processes.

Three different causes have been proposed to explain these patterns: volcanic activity, extraterrestrial impacts, and flooding. None of these hypotheses rules out the others, and there can be no doubt that the earth has experienced catastrophic processes on a global scale.

The global evidence of water laid deposits, the existence of multiple large volcanic flows, and the evidence of numerous asteroid impacts combine to provide a compelling record of Earth's catastrophic past history, as briefly summarized in the biblical description of a global Flood.

CATASTROPHE!

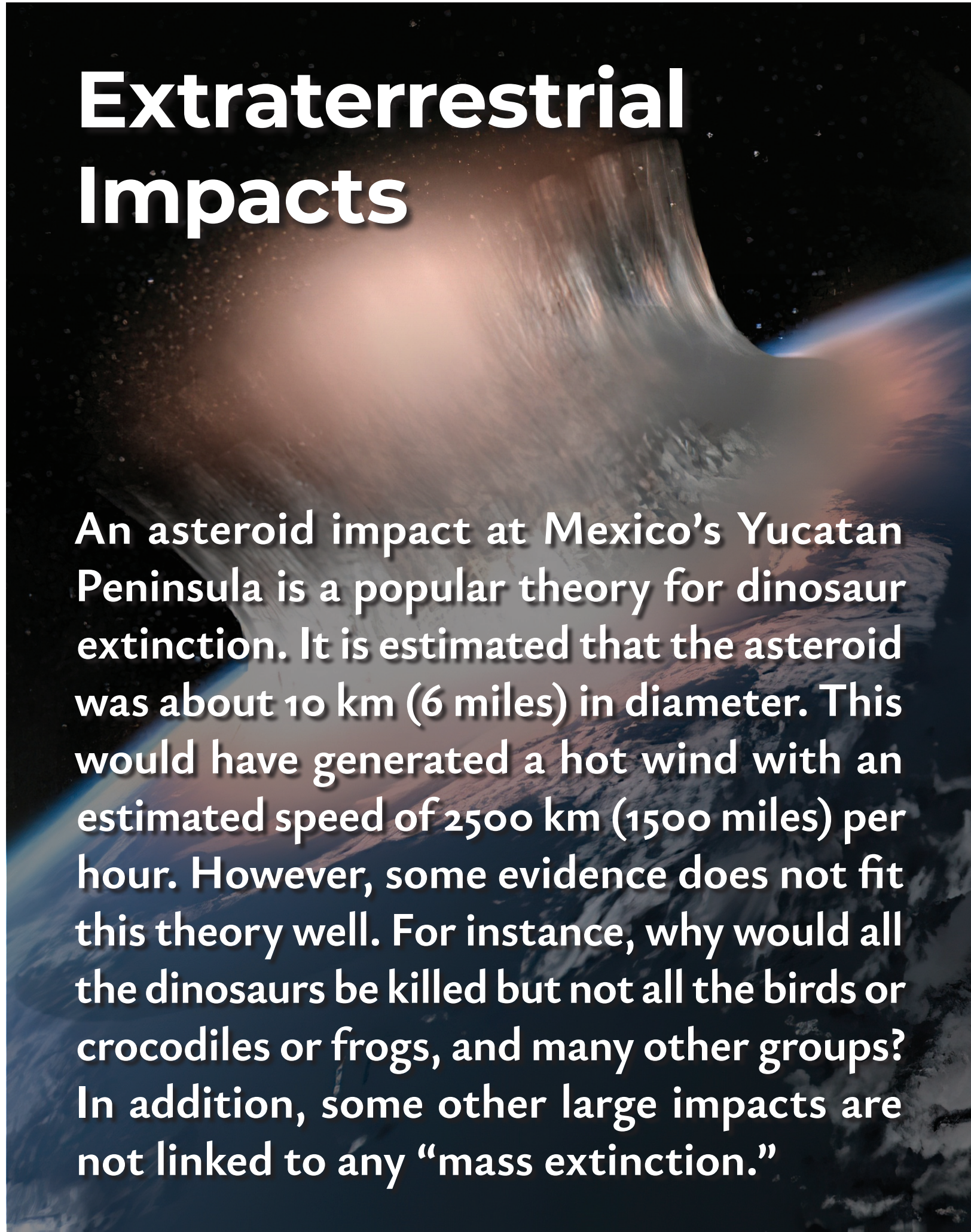
Large Volcanic Eruptions



Some scientists have proposed that huge lava outpourings in India caused catastrophic climate changes that wiped out the dinosaurs. Massive lavaflows have also been linked to several other “mass extinctions”. But some other large lava outflows are not linked to any particular “mass extinction,” and scientists are divided over the explanation for the extinction of the dinosaurs.

Photo by Luis D. Alvarez

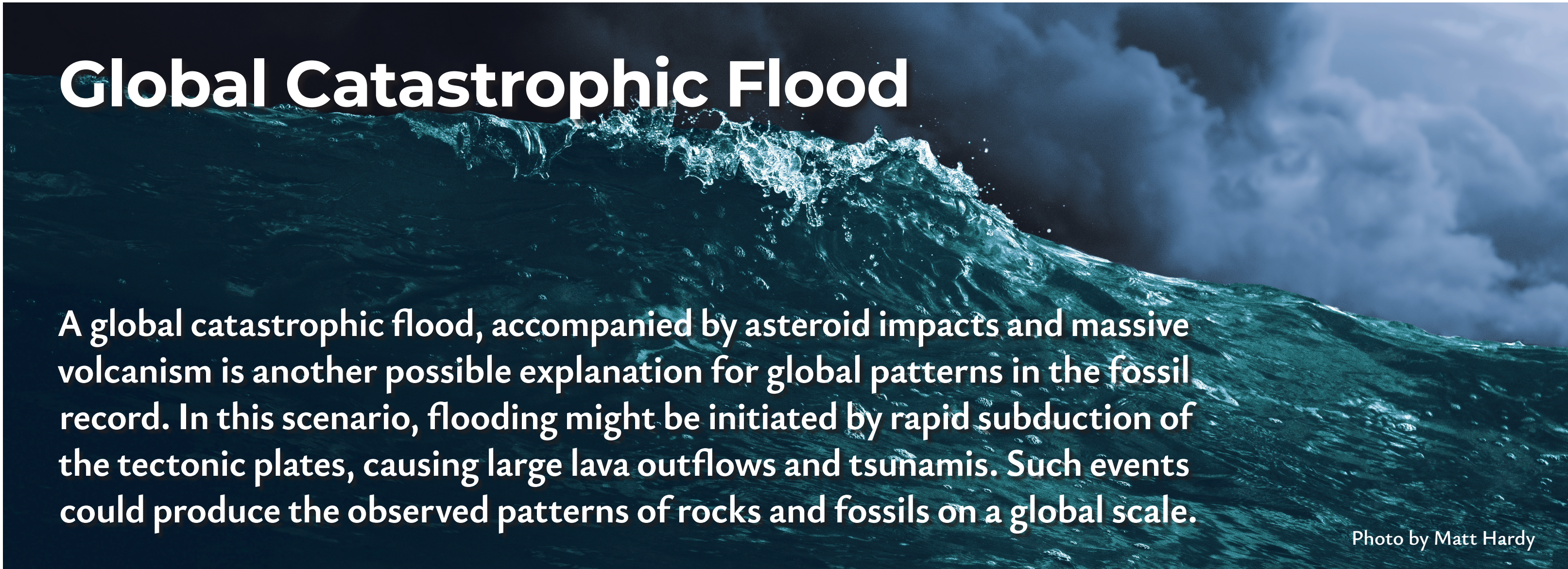
Extraterrestrial Impacts



An asteroid impact at Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula is a popular theory for dinosaur extinction. It is estimated that the asteroid was about 10 km (6 miles) in diameter. This would have generated a hot wind with an estimated speed of 2500 km (1500 miles) per hour. However, some evidence does not fit this theory well. For instance, why would all the dinosaurs be killed but not all the birds or crocodiles or frogs, and many other groups? In addition, some other large impacts are not linked to any “mass extinction.”

Photo by Luis D. Alvarez

Global Catastrophic Flood



A global catastrophic flood, accompanied by asteroid impacts and massive volcanism is another possible explanation for global patterns in the fossil record. In this scenario, flooding might be initiated by rapid subduction of the tectonic plates, causing large lava outflows and tsunamis. Such events could produce the observed patterns of rocks and fossils on a global scale.

Photo by Matt Hardy