

SUPPLEMENT A: PHENOMENA INFORMATION PACKET (3 OF 6)

Plant Fossils

Eduard Suess was an Austrian geologist and expert in studying the Alps. In 1824, he found fossils of a fernlike tree. Scientists think that the plants that fossilized were living on Earth about 290 million years ago. Suess called the tree *Glossopteris* because *Glossa* in Greek means tongue. He used this word because the tree grew to be approximately 12 feet tall and had thick, fleshy tongue-like leaves. More than 70 species of fossils related to *Glossopteris* have been discovered. These trees are deciduous, meaning they lose their leaves during cool seasons.

These plant fossils have only been found in certain locations on Earth's continents, mainly in South America, India, Africa, Australia, Antarctica, and Madagascar. It is thought that the climate where these trees once thrived was relatively temperate.

What conclusions can you draw from this single piece of information about plant fossils? What more do you want to know? Answer the questions on Activity Sheet 2.1.

