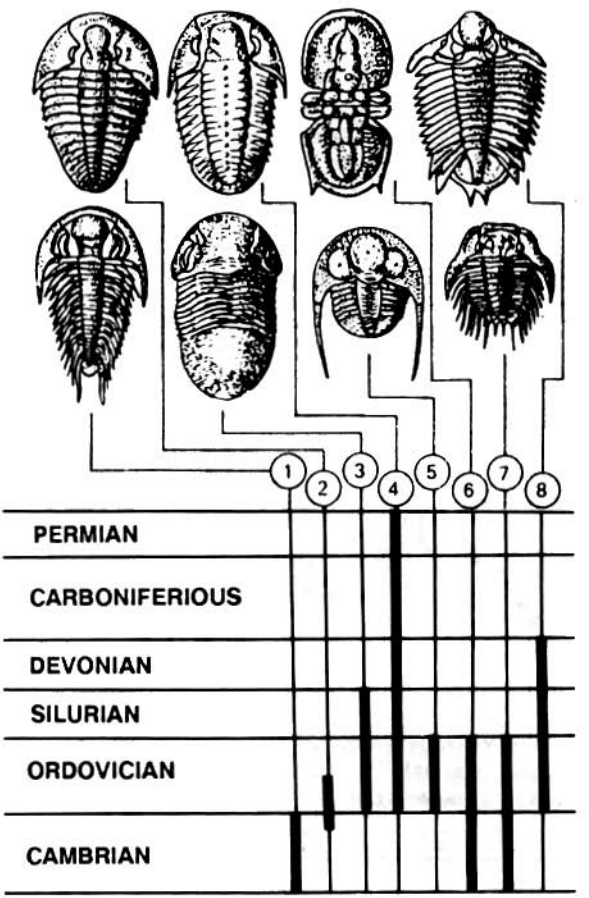
INDEX FOSSILS

Here are eight index fossils. Can you date anything by looking at them? Neither can anyone else. Men date the index fossils by a century-old theory of what they thought the dates should be. It is something like pulling numbers out of a hat. Once they date the index fossils, then they date the strata by the index fossils, and then date the rest of the fossils by the strata. That is the official way it is done. But it all starts with a theory, not with any real dates or dating evidence.

Each of the six fossils, below, are various families of trilobites. They are numbered as follows: (1) Redlichiida; (2) Asphidea; (3) Ilanidae; (4) Proetidae; (5) Trinucleidae; (6) Agnostida; (7) Odontopleurida; (8) Lichida.