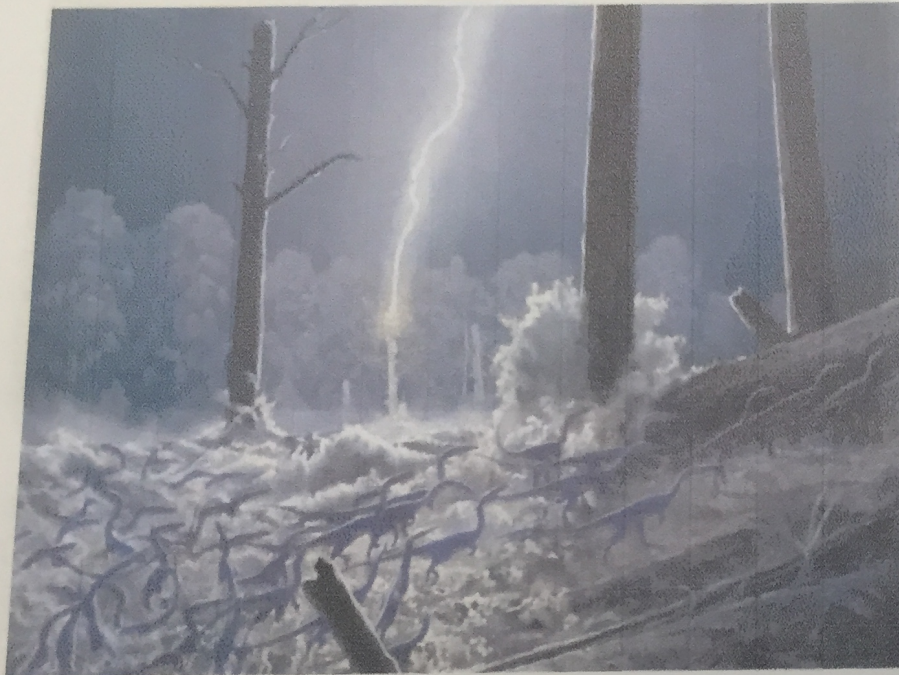


# A Fearsome Flood?



A group of *Coelophysis* dinosaurs sleep in their resting area away from the riverbank under tall evergreen trees. It has been raining for days. This night the rising water spills over the top of the river channel and rushes down a wide valley. *Coelophysis* groups from many areas wake and begin to run, but the water is too fast. They are caught up and drowned by the churning flood. A few dinosaurs who run up the valley, instead of down, are saved.

Soon the rain clouds pass, and the river returns to its old channel. Down the valley rest the bodies of hundreds of dinosaurs, with a few phytosaurs, fish, and other reptiles. They are wrapped together, necks over tails, one on top of the other. The rains aren't finished yet. Another tropical storm begins, and the river floods again. New mud and water flow into the old riverbed and cover the dinosaurs before other predators arrive.

**Claim:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Evidence/Data:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Explanation/Justification:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Rebuttal/Counter Claim:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My Thoughts/Questions:** \_\_\_\_\_

The tangled positions and good condition of the skeletons (no cracks from the sun, no tooth marks from predators) might well have been caused by a flood. After the dinosaurs drowned, they could have been thrown together by a rush of floodwater and mud and buried quickly.

But if this is true, how do we explain those dinosaur skeletons that were found on their sides with the necks curved toward the tails? This position happens only if a dead animal, such as a cow lying in a field, is undisturbed long enough for its muscles and ligaments to shrink. Why were these dinosaurs arranged differently than the rest? Even the suggestion of a flood doesn't fit all the clues.