

REGIONAL GEOLOGY

The Gippsland Basin has an area of approximately 20,000 square miles and is roughly triangular in shape with its apex pointing south. Roughly 70% of the basin lies offshore in the Bass Strait area of the Tasman Sea. The northern boundary is formed by onshore basement type rocks seen in the hills of southeast Victoria. The southwest side is formed by a basement ridge running from Wilson's Promontory southeast to Flinders Island and northeast Tasmania. The eastern limits are unknown. The basin is filled with up to 25,000 feet of Mesozoic and Tertiary sediments.

Palaeozoic sediments, ranging in age from Carboniferous to Ordovician, along with intrusive and extrusive igneous rocks probably underlie all of the Gippsland Basin. These Palaeozoic rocks form part of the section of the Tasman Geosyncline a north south trough extending along eastern Australia from New Guinea to Tasmania.

The Gippsland Basin probably began forming during Jurassic time subsiding along an east west trend and the Jurassic - Lower Cretaceous Strzelecki Group of sediments were deposited in the early stages of the basin development. These predominantly alluvial to upper deltaic sediments were derived from uplifted Palaeozoic igneous and sedimentary rocks north and south of the basin. The resulting thick sequence of greywacke and subgreywacke with abundant plant material and thin coal seams exhibits poor porosity where encountered onshore in the basin