

Is there any evidence of fossil vent communities that could provide info about their evolution?

From Linda Fowler (3 July 2013)

Reply by Adrian Glover, Natural History Museum

Yes, there are fossil hydrothermal vent deposits in places such as Cyprus and the Southern Urals. The only well preserved animal remains at these sites are hard structures such as clams and worm tubes. However, these provide convincing evidence of past hydrothermal vent communities. The earliest known vents are Silurian in age, but it is not clear if these early deposits had the same fauna as modern vent communities, as the Palaeozoic seas were quite different to our modern oceans.