

Transcript for **Ice Age and Manhattan**

It's easy to imagine that the Ice Age affected only remote mountain ranges. But it also left a legacy that has affected millions of people.

Manhattan – the island at the centre of New York. When you look at it from a distance, it's actually got a very distinctive profile. There are two clusters of skyscrapers, with much lower buildings in the middle. This is a direct result of the Ice Age.

20,000 years ago, this part of America was at the edge of a vast ice sheet that covered much of the northern hemisphere. The ice would have towered over any modern skyscrapers. When it retreated, just as in Yosemite, ice left behind these boulders, rock smoothed and polished by ice. The ice exposed a hard bedrock called schist, solid enough for sinking deep foundations to support tall buildings. Without this schist, New York couldn't have been built so high. The one part of the skyline that dips is the one place where the ice sheet deposited mud and soil, no good for building towering skyscrapers.