

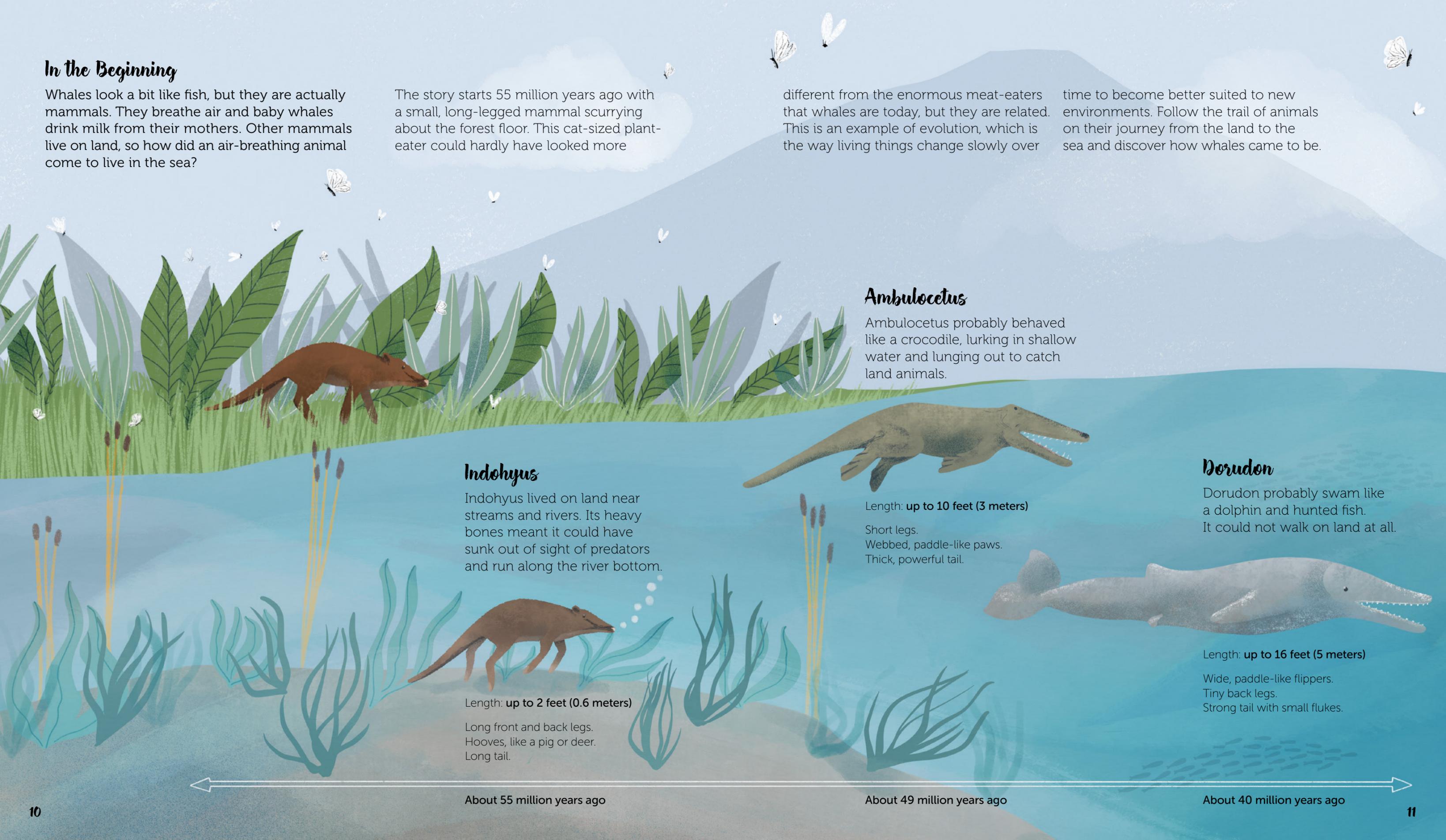
In the Beginning

Whales look a bit like fish, but they are actually mammals. They breathe air and baby whales drink milk from their mothers. Other mammals live on land, so how did an air-breathing animal come to live in the sea?

The story starts 55 million years ago with a small, long-legged mammal scurrying about the forest floor. This cat-sized plant-eater could hardly have looked more

different from the enormous meat-eaters that whales are today, but they are related. This is an example of evolution, which is the way living things change slowly over

time to become better suited to new environments. Follow the trail of animals on their journey from the land to the sea and discover how whales came to be.



Ambulocetus

Ambulocetus probably behaved like a crocodile, lurking in shallow water and lunging out to catch land animals.



Length: **up to 10 feet (3 meters)**

Short legs.
Webbed, paddle-like paws.
Thick, powerful tail.

Dorudon

Dorudon probably swam like a dolphin and hunted fish. It could not walk on land at all.



Length: **up to 16 feet (5 meters)**

Wide, paddle-like flippers.
Tiny back legs.
Strong tail with small flukes.

Indohyus

Indohyus lived on land near streams and rivers. Its heavy bones meant it could have sunk out of sight of predators and run along the river bottom.



Length: **up to 2 feet (0.6 meters)**

Long front and back legs.
Hooves, like a pig or deer.
Long tail.

About 55 million years ago

About 49 million years ago

About 40 million years ago