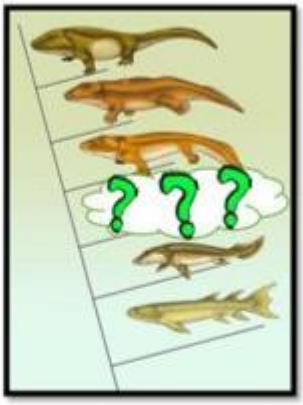
The Quest for Tiktaalik

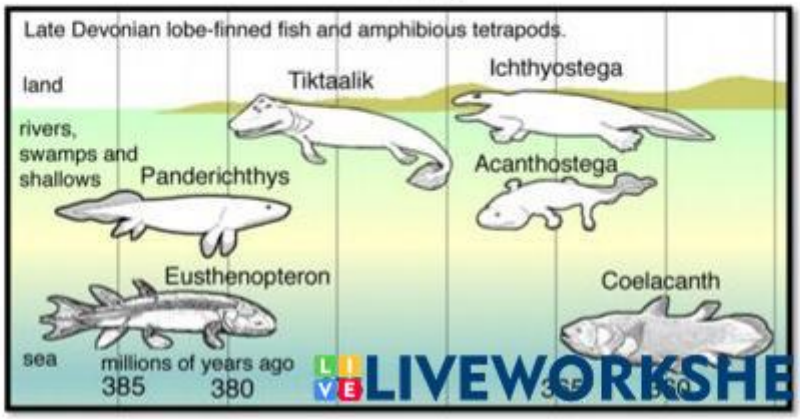


Some fossils tell us a lot about Evolution. Scientists hypothesized for many years that amphibians evolved from fish and made their way on to land. But at the time we only had fossils of fish and amphibians. If amphibians did evolve from fish and make this huge evolutionary jump to being able to live on land, then shouldn't there be some fossils to show this? There should be some evidence of a **transitional species**, an animal that was a mix between a fish and amphibian.

Scientists knew that this transition took place around 375 million years ago. After some extensive planning, a team of scientists found an area of exposed rock that was the right age and had the right fresh water conditions that could possibly be right for this transitional species. In 2004, scientists discovered what was known as "Tiktaalik", a fossil that had features of a fish and an amphibian.



Tiktaalik had fins, scales, and gills - all signs that it was a fish. However, it also had a flattened body and head which fish do not have. It also had a neck that separated its head from its body, digits on its forelimbs, and eyes on top of its head, it was clear that this also had the features of a tetrapod (land animal).



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