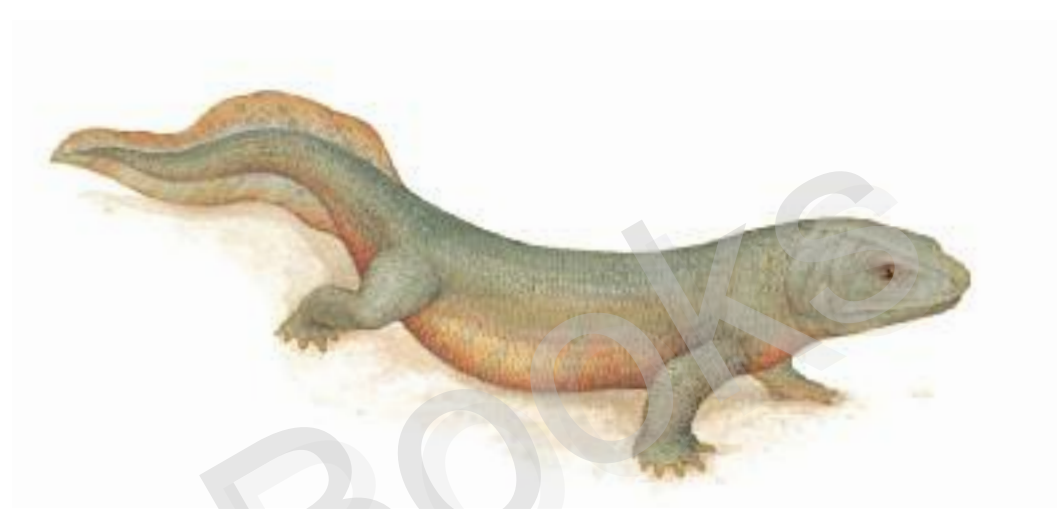


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The first living things

Can you imagine what life on Earth was like hundreds of millions of years ago—even before the dinosaurs lived? Let's go back in time and meet some of the animals that lived all that time ago. Notice how, over millions and millions of years, the animals gradually *changed*: for example, from fish to amphibian, or from fish to reptile.

What were the first living things?

The first living things on Earth appeared in the oceans more than 3500 million years ago. These early life forms were microscopic bacteria. They lived in warm pools of water near the coast.





Now let's fast forward to about 540 millions years ago. The warm seas are teeming with life—in all shapes and sizes.

I am Anomalocaris (my name means “odd shrimp”), the largest and fiercest predator of my time. I am as long as your arm and will eat almost anything that comes close! All the other sea creatures live in fear of me. I use my pincer-like arms to grab my victims and push them into my spine-rimmed mouth.

I might give those spiky, bottom-living creatures a miss though ...