

Evolution of Vertebrates

Vertebrates are animals with a backbone, representing a significant evolutionary milestone. Their evolution spans from aquatic environments to complex terrestrial ecosystems, showcasing remarkable adaptations and diversification.

Key Stages in Evolution

1. Cambrian Explosion:

- The first vertebrate-like organisms emerged around 500 million years ago in marine environments.

- **Example:** *Agnatha* (jawless fish with primitive backbones).

2. Ordovician and Silurian Periods:

- Early vertebrates became more complex, with the development of jawed fish.
- **Example:** Early cartilaginous and bony fish.

3. Devonian Period: