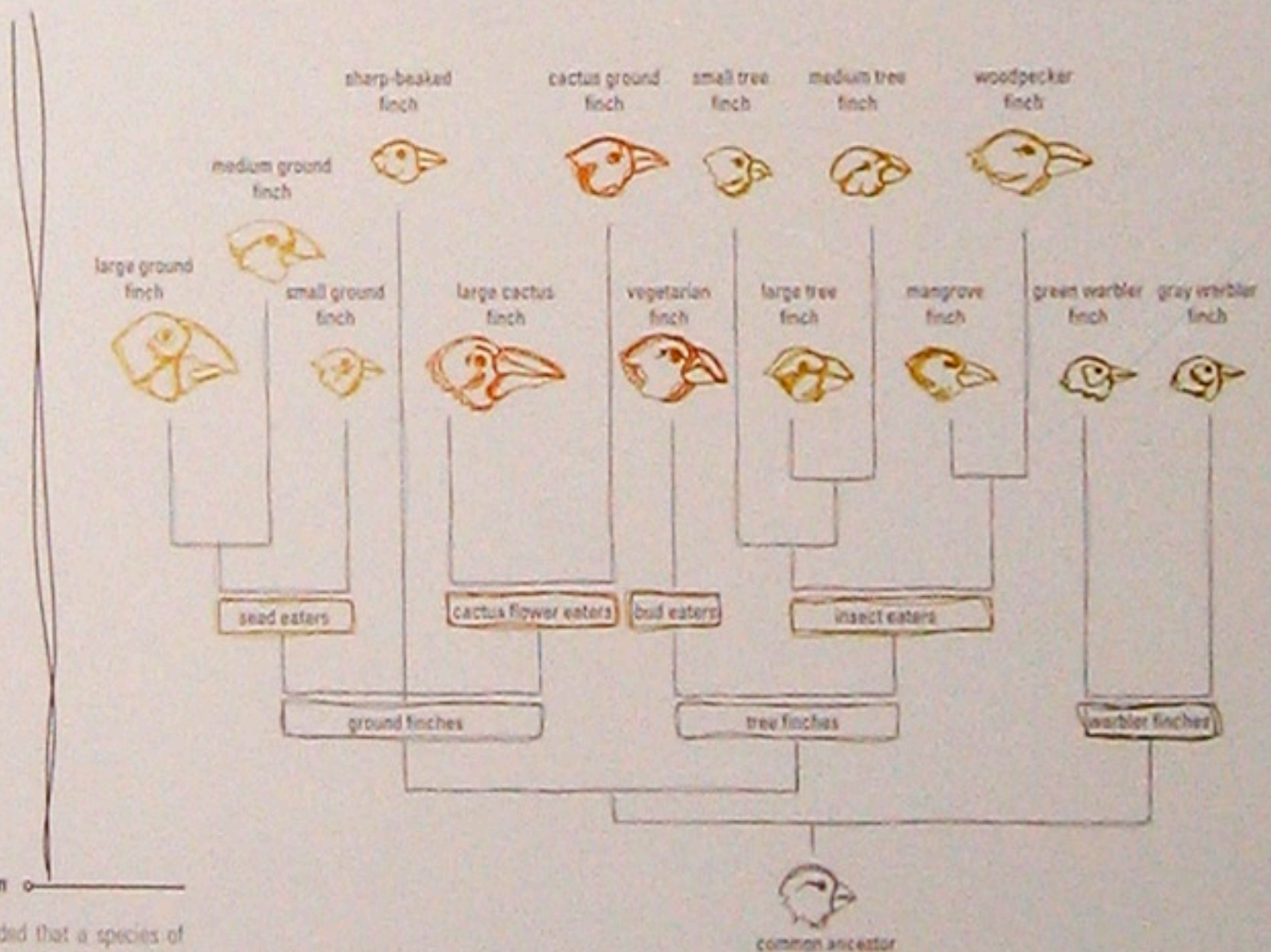


what is natural selection?

Darwin referred to the means by which evolution occurs as "natural selection." He described it as the process by which some inherited traits become more common in a population over time, while others become less so.

He interpreted the abundance of an inherited trait in a population—such as beak shape in a population of finches—as an indication of the trait's past success in helping individuals to survive and reproduce.



diversification

Darwin concluded that a species of ancestral finch that first colonized the Galapagos Islands had diversified, after many generations, into many different species.

The ancestral South American finch that colonized the different Galapagos Islands evolved different beak shapes in response to the unique environments and food sources.