NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

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Play the natural selection game and support research at the Museum

Will you survive?

See if your beak helps you survive

Drought year

Natural selection is clearly observed after a drought when food is scarce.

Long period of dry weather.

Flowers die and small, soft seeds are quickly eaten.

The only food left is large tough seeds.

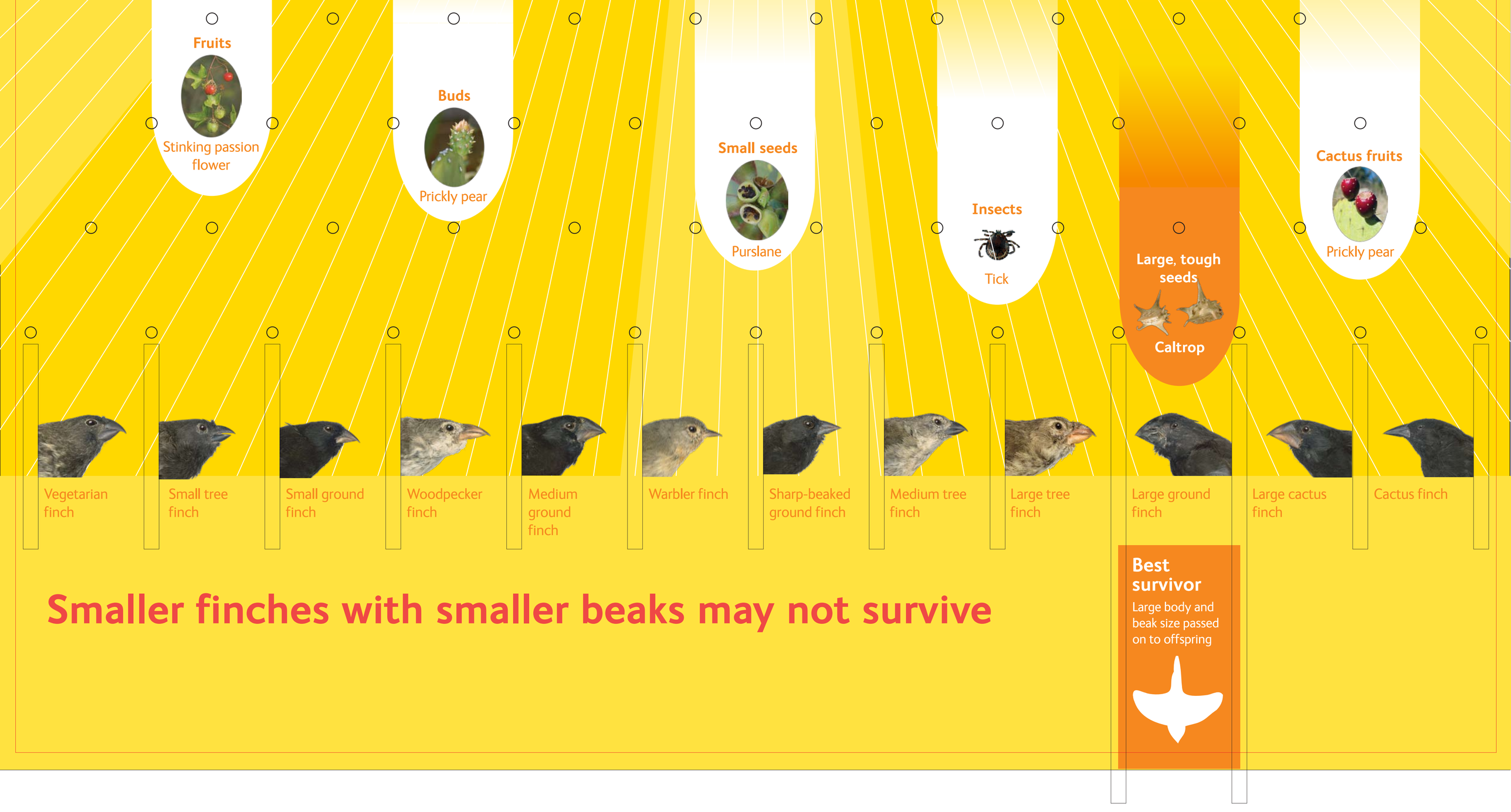
Only finches with big, strong beaks can eat them.

Many other finches die.

Natural selection at work

1977 was a very dry year in the Galapagos Islands. The few flower buds and soft seeds were eaten quickly, leaving the large, tough seeds. Only larger finches with deep, strong beaks that could open the hard seeds were able to survive and reproduce so, their offspring tended to be larger and have bigger beaks, too.

This is how natural selection favours the individuals that are most likely to survive in the future.



Smaller finches with smaller beaks may not survive

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