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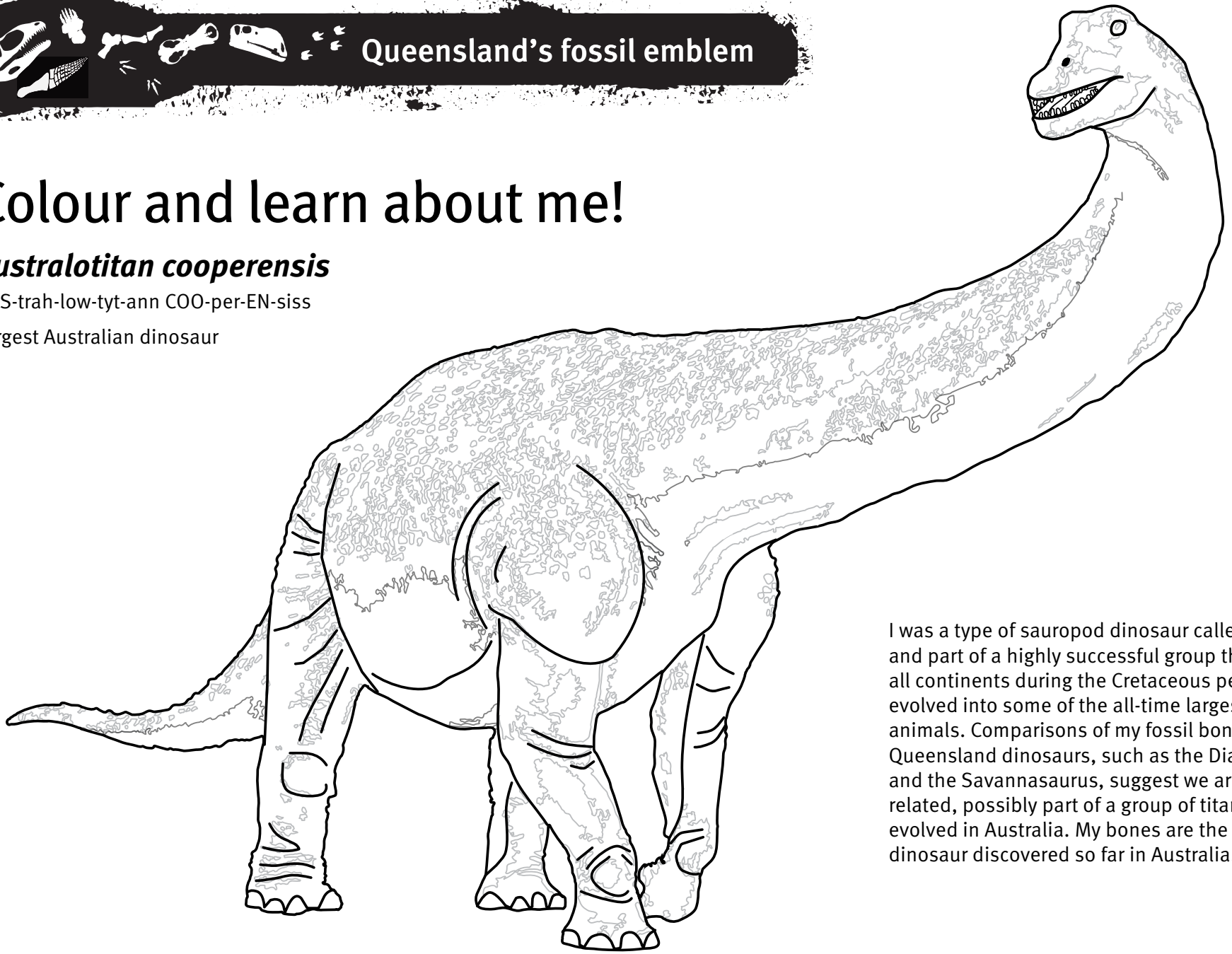
Colour and learn about me!

Australotitan cooperensis

OSS-trah-low-tyt-ann COO-per-EN-siss

Largest Australian dinosaur



I was a type of sauropod dinosaur called a titanosaur, and part of a highly successful group that colonised all continents during the Cretaceous period and evolved into some of the all-time largest land-dwelling animals. Comparisons of my fossil bones with other Queensland dinosaurs, such as the Diamantinasaurus and the Savannasaurus, suggest we are closely related, possibly part of a group of titanosaurs that evolved in Australia. My bones are the largest of any dinosaur discovered so far in Australia.

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I am a heavily-built titanosaur, which is a group of sauropod dinosaurs that lived around the world during the Cretaceous period, when western Queensland was covered by vast floodplains. My first fossil was found buried in an ancient billabong, mixed with bones from aquatic animals such as turtles and crocodiles, as well as the theropod dinosaur, Australovenator. Multiple fossil specimens of me have been found, suggesting I was probably a relatively common dinosaur.

Colour and learn about me!

Diamantinasaurus matildae

DY-man-teen-oh-saw-rus MAT-ill-de-ay

Sauropod bones from a billabong

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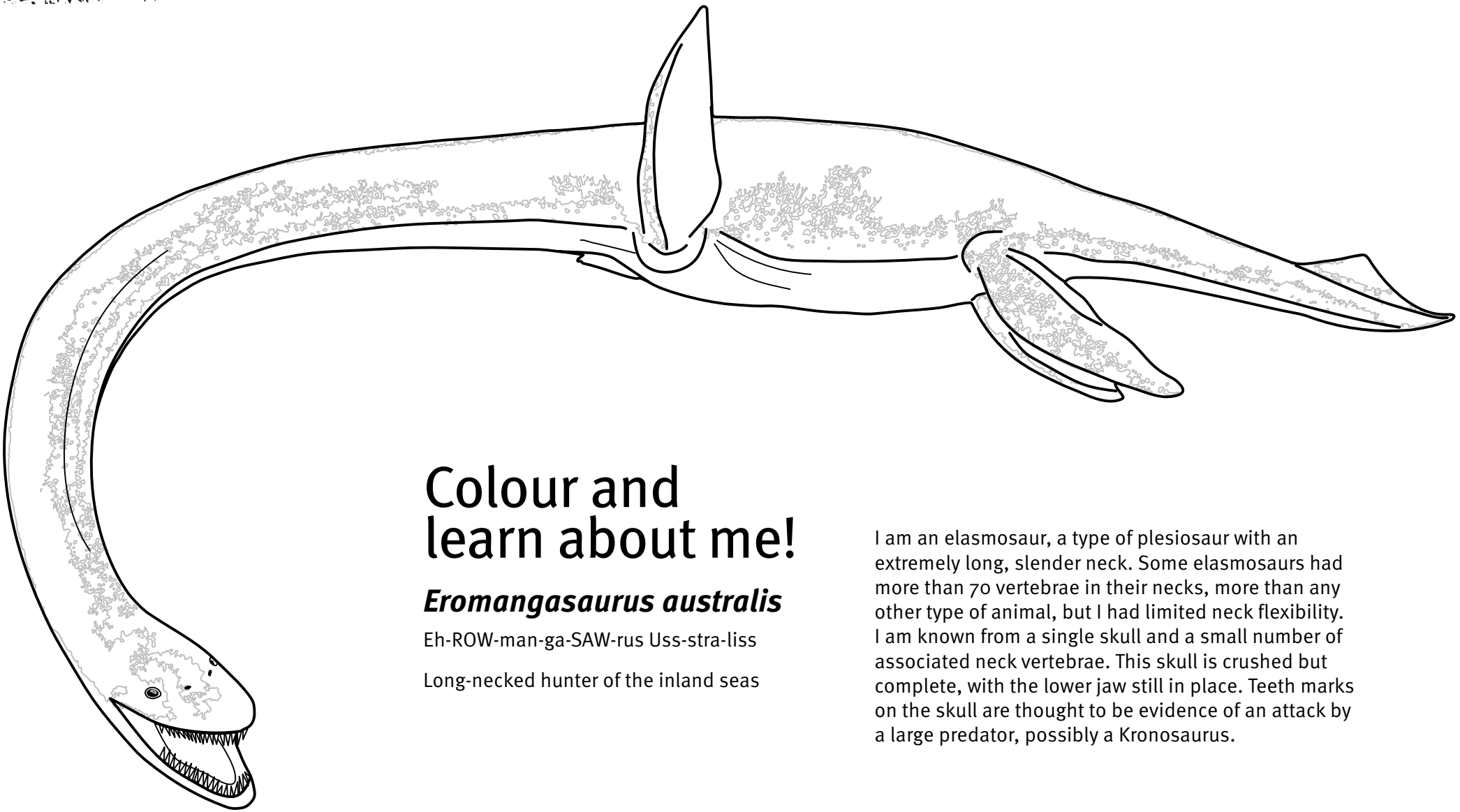

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Eromangasaurus australis

Eh-ROW-man-ga-SAW-rus Uss-stra-liss

Long-necked hunter of the inland seas

I am an elasmosaur, a type of plesiosaur with an extremely long, slender neck. Some elasmosaurs had more than 70 vertebrae in their necks, more than any other type of animal, but I had limited neck flexibility. I am known from a single skull and a small number of associated neck vertebrae. This skull is crushed but complete, with the lower jaw still in place. Teeth marks on the skull are thought to be evidence of an attack by a large predator, possibly a Kronosaurus.

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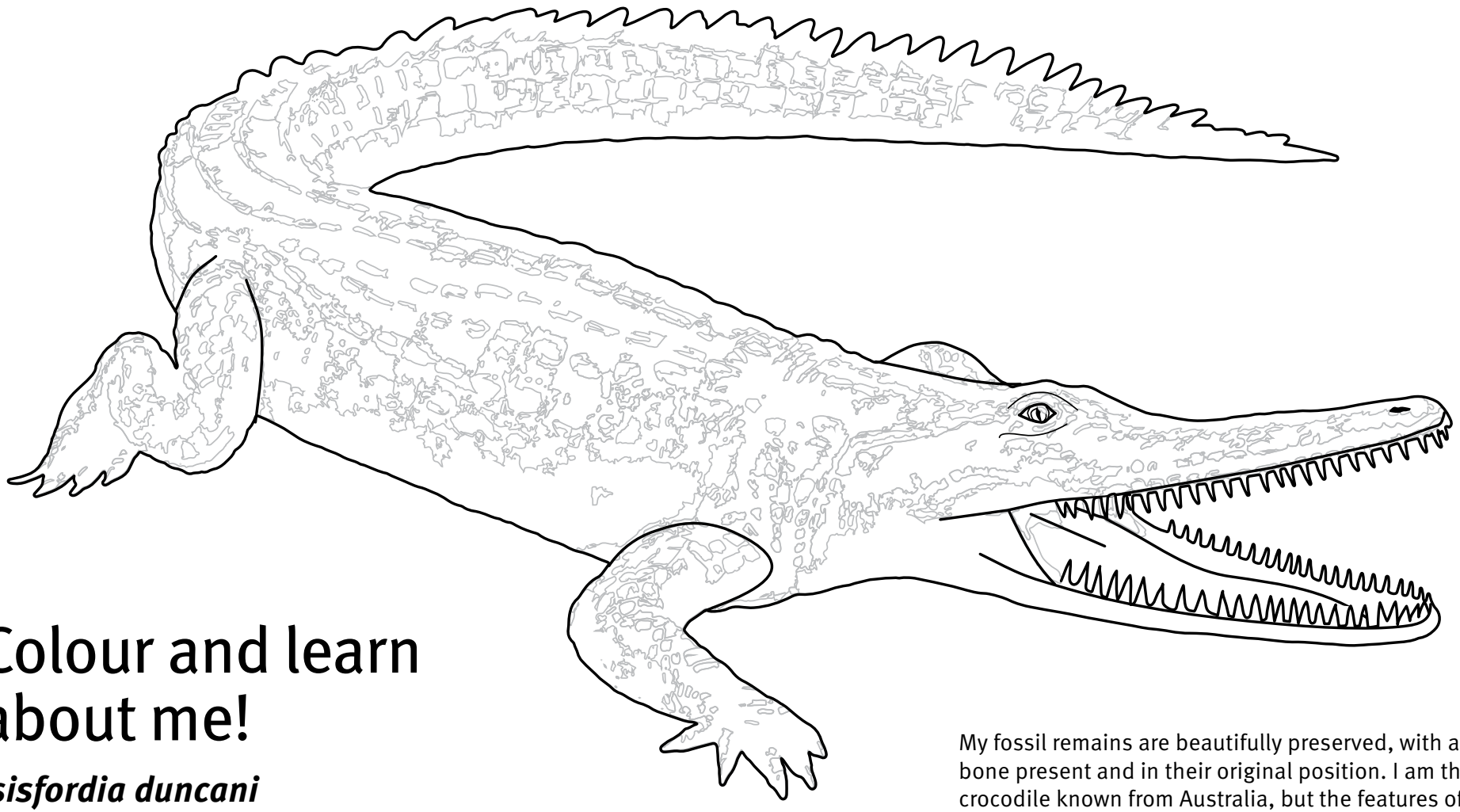

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Isisfordia duncani

EYE-sis-FORD-EE-AH dun-CAN-eye

Early crocodile in the outback

My fossil remains are beautifully preserved, with almost every bone present and in their original position. I am the oldest crocodile known from Australia, but the features of my anatomy are surprisingly modern-looking, suggesting I may belong to the lineage that gave rise to all living crocodiles.

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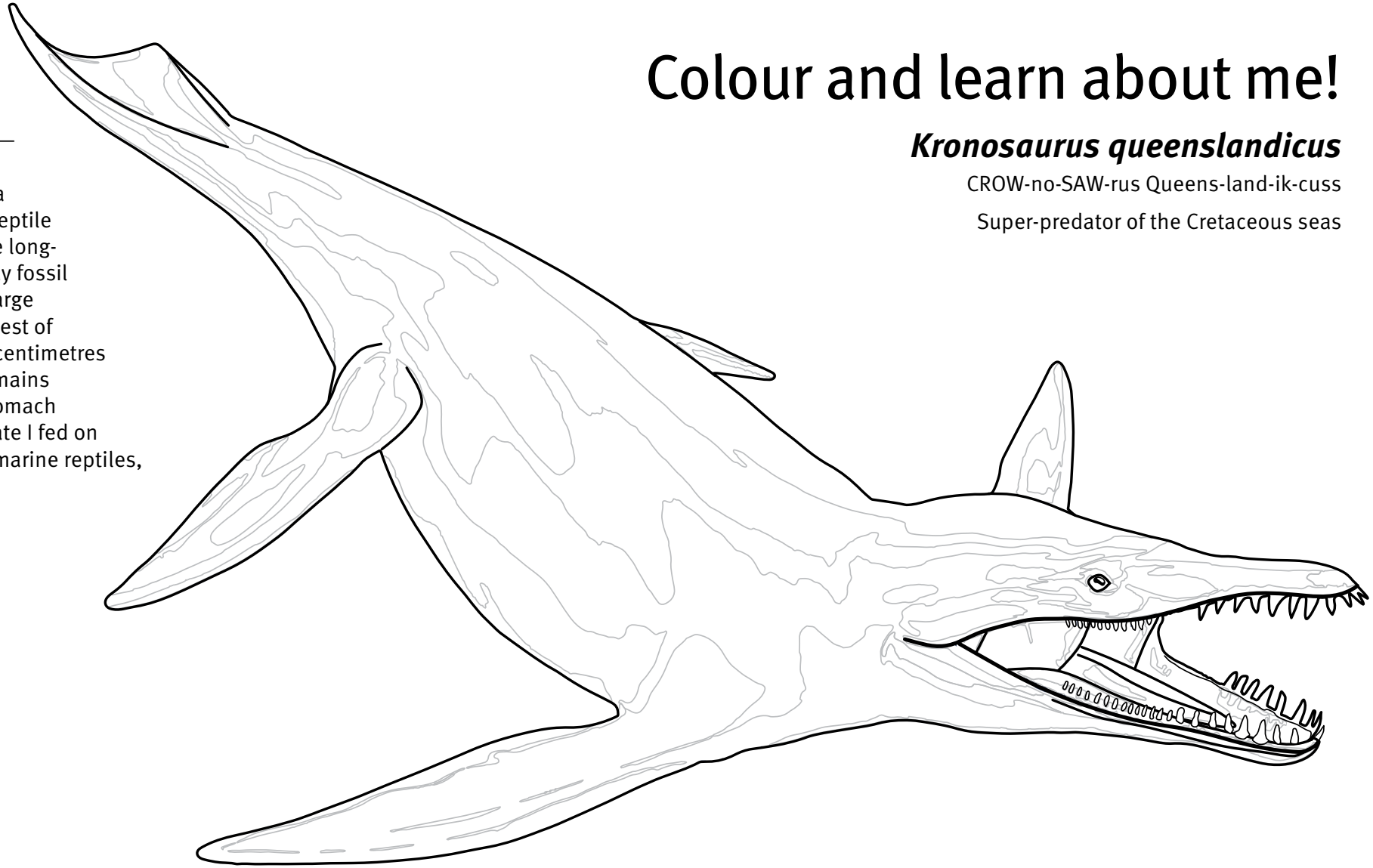
I was a fierce predator—an enormous pliosaur with a massive head, a short-necked marine reptile distantly related to the long-necked plesiosaurs. My fossil jaws contain rows of large conical teeth, the biggest of which were nearly 30 centimetres in length. My fossil remains sometimes include stomach contents, which indicate I fed on turtles, other smaller marine reptiles, fish and sharks.

Kronosaurus queenslandicus

CROW-no-SAW-rus Queens-land-ik-cuss

Super-predator of the Cretaceous seas



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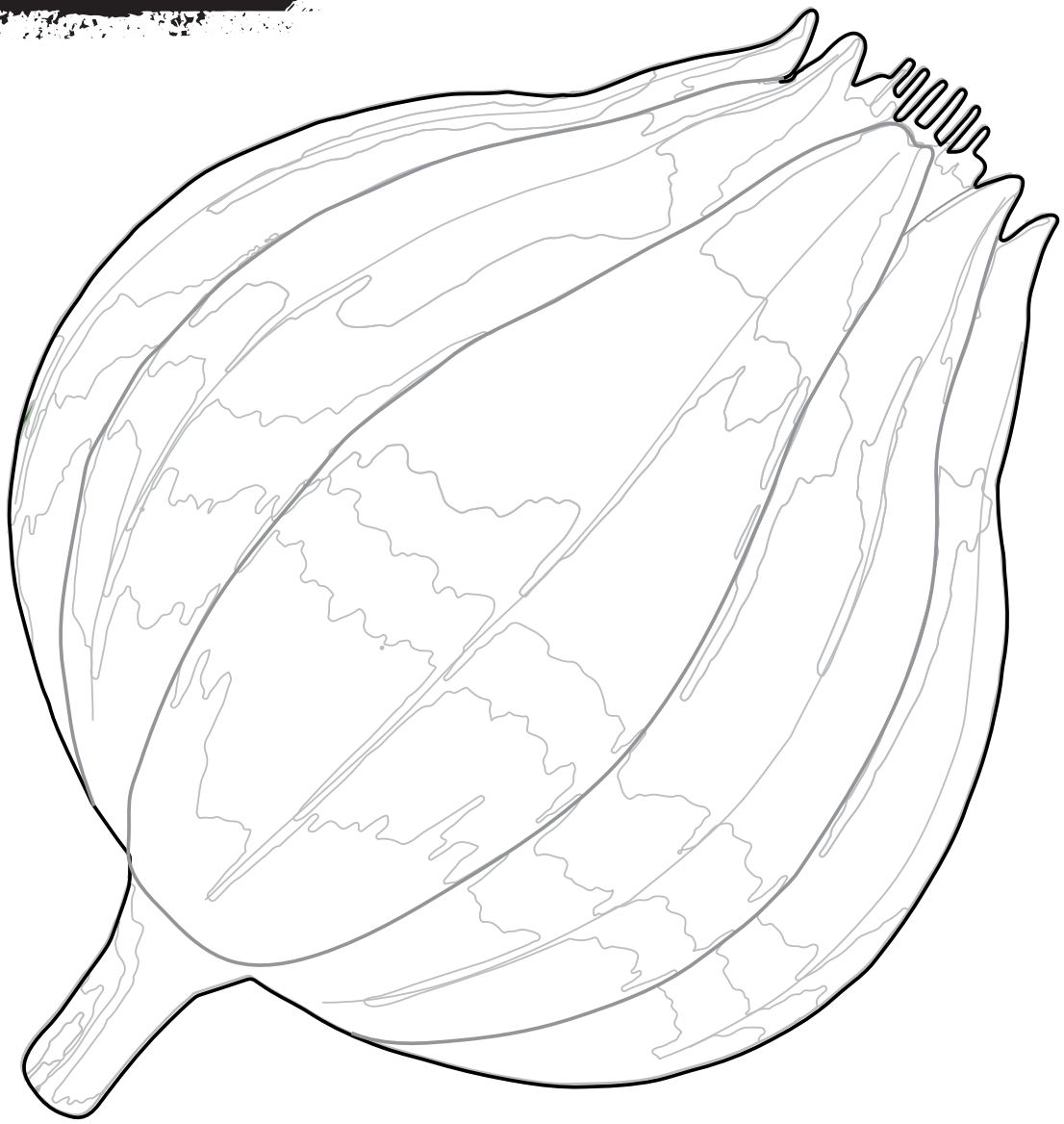
Lovellea wintonensis

Low-ve-LLea win-TON-ensis

Dinosaur food – oldest known permineralised fossil flower

Fossil flowers are rare and what makes my specimens even more unusual is that they are the oldest permineralised fossil flowers to be found. This means the internal and fine structures of my flowers and fruits are three-dimensionally preserved. Because my petals and stamens are so well preserved, I can be compared with the flowers of modern plant families. These floral features indicate that I have similarities with the Laurel families, which are mainly found in rainforests, but the exact familial relationships remain unknown.



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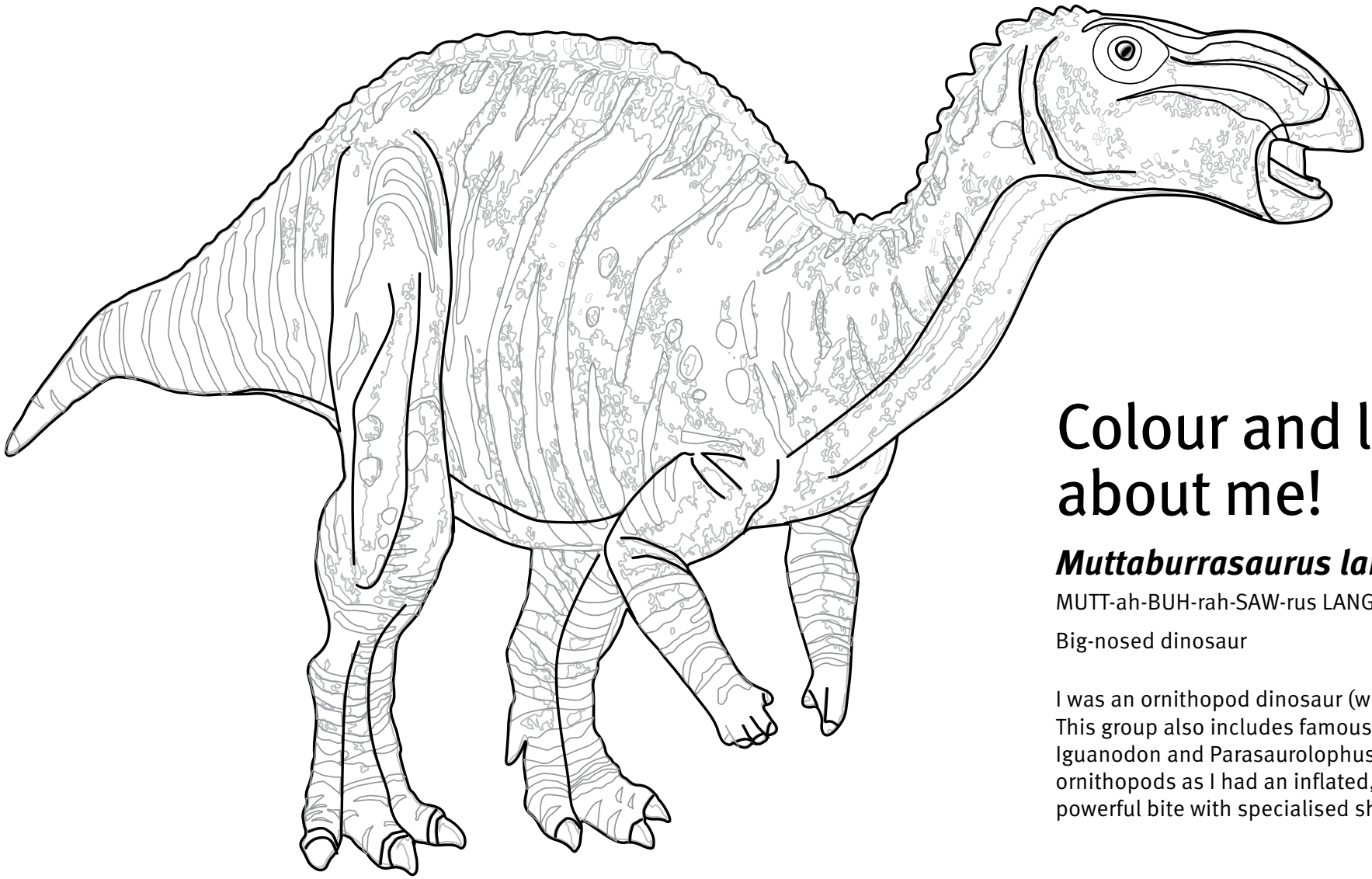

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Muttaburrasaurus langdoni

MUTT-ah-BUH-rah-SAW-rus LANG-dunn-eye

Big-nosed dinosaur

I was an ornithopod dinosaur (which means 'bird-footed'). This group also includes famous dinosaurs such as the Iguanodon and Parasaurolophus. I differed from other ornithopods as I had an inflated, bulbous snout and a powerful bite with specialised shearing teeth.

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Obdurodon dicksoni

Ob-dew-ROH-don Dik-son-eye

Ancient platypus with teeth

I had a set of small molars that were used to crush prey, like yabbies and aquatic insects. This is remarkable for a platypus, as the modern platypus lacks teeth as an adult, although puggles (young platypuses) have teeth for a short time.

Fossil teeth of monotremes (the group that includes modern platypuses and echidnas) have been found in rocks dating back to the Cretaceous period, but as my skull is beautifully preserved and relatively complete, it has provided insights into how the platypus skull evolved.

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Rhoetosaurus brownei

REE-toh-SAW-rus Brown-eye

Titan from the Jurassic

I was a medium-sized sauropod dinosaur, and my fossil is the only dinosaur skeleton known from the Jurassic period in Australia. Like other sauropods, I had a long neck that allowed me to browse vegetation that was beyond the reach of most other herbivores. My fossil's skeleton has some features that share similarities with the very earliest sauropods. For example, my fossils showed that I had four claws on my hind foot, while later sauropods only had three.

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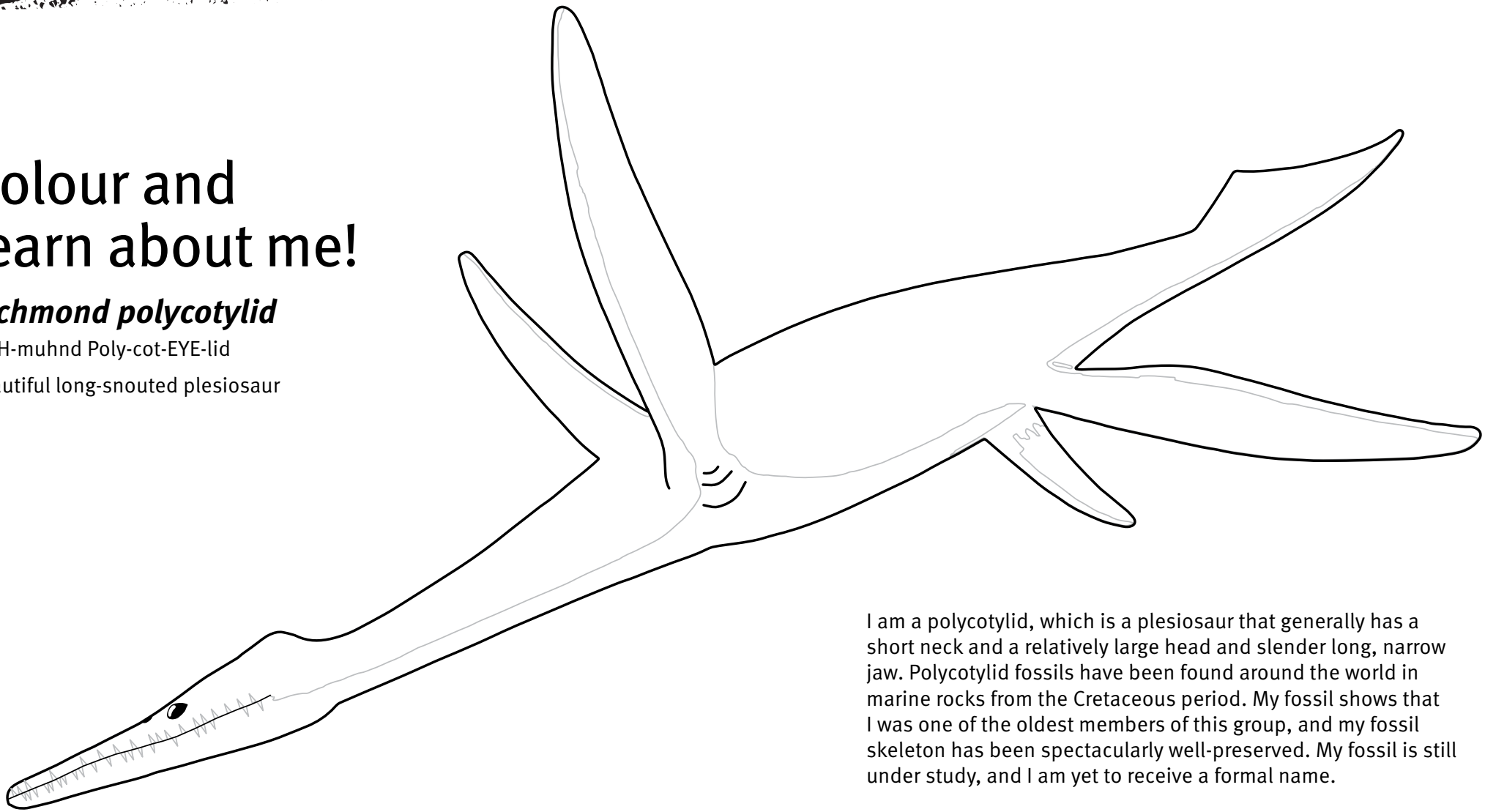
Richmond polycotylid

RICH-muhnd Poly-cot-EYE-lid

Beautiful long-snouted plesiosaur



I am a polycotylid, which is a plesiosaur that generally has a short neck and a relatively large head and slender long, narrow jaw. Polycotylid fossils have been found around the world in marine rocks from the Cretaceous period. My fossil shows that I was one of the oldest members of this group, and my fossil skeleton has been spectacularly well-preserved. My fossil is still under study, and I am yet to receive a formal name.

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Ridersia watsonae

Ri-DERS-ia WAT-son-aay

Early sea lily-like animal (echinoderm)

I am a stalked echinoderm that came from the Cambrian seas of north western Queensland and am amongst the earliest known sea lily-like animals. My body, which consists of a complex multiplated skeleton, shares features with some other echinoderms of this age from elsewhere in the world. Collectively, these echinoderms provide a unique snapshot into the early evolution of the echinoderms, which today include modern crinoids and sea stars.

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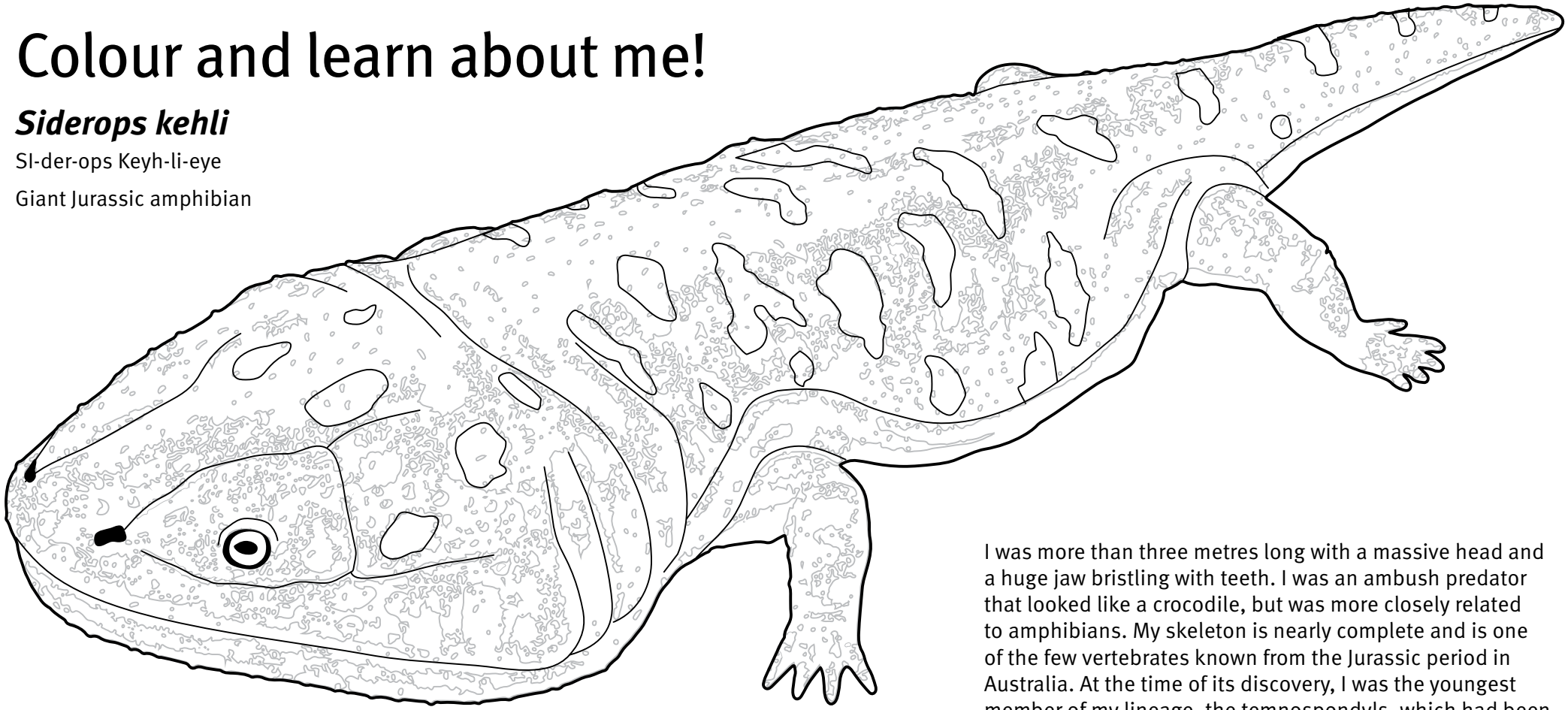
Siderops kehli

SI-der-ops Keyh-li-eye

Giant Jurassic amphibian



I was more than three metres long with a massive head and a huge jaw bristling with teeth. I was an ambush predator that looked like a crocodile, but was more closely related to amphibians. My skeleton is nearly complete and is one of the few vertebrates known from the Jurassic period in Australia. At the time of its discovery, I was the youngest member of my lineage, the temnospondyls, which had been thought to have died out much earlier. New studies from Victoria show that related temnospondyls survived much longer in Australia.

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