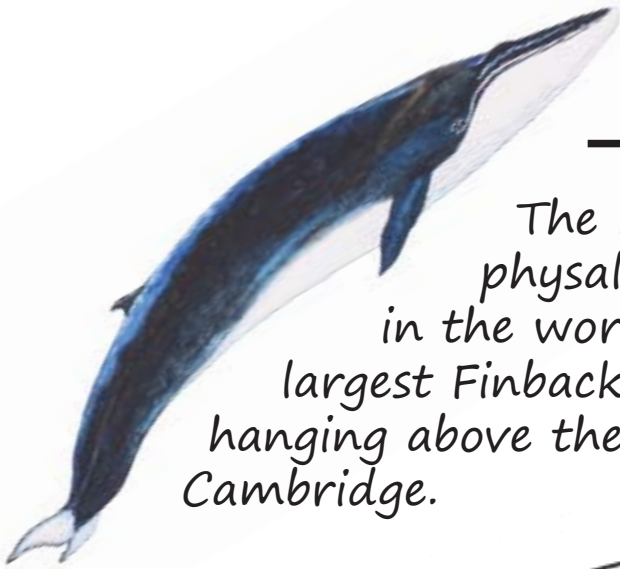


# The Mighty Finback



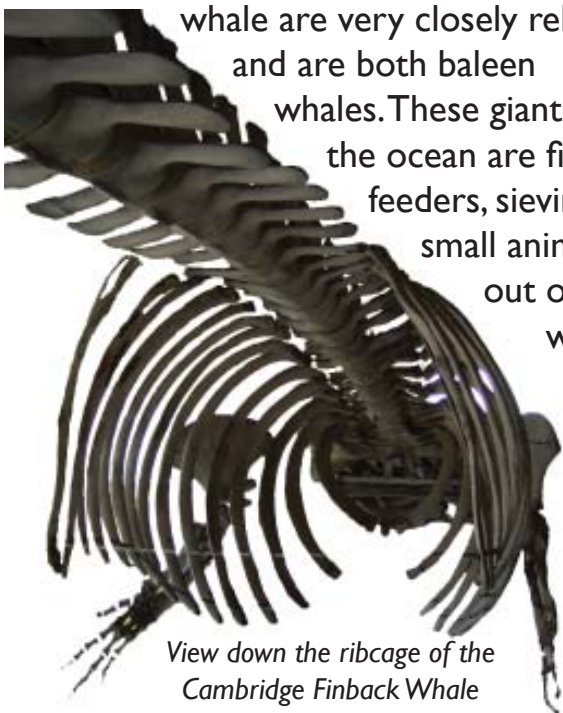
The Finback Whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*) is the second largest whale in the world. The skeleton of one of the largest Finbacks known can be seen floodlit and hanging above the University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge.

The Cambridge Finback Whale measures a

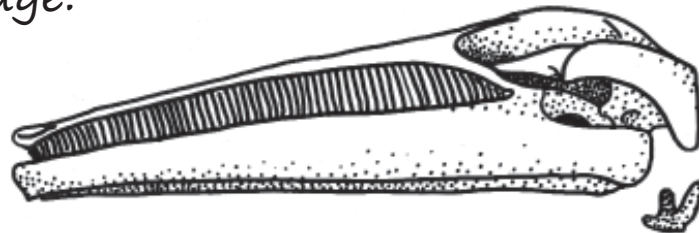
whopping 21 metres long and would have weighed 80 tonnes when it was alive. That is the same as about 8 double decker buses! This whale was washed ashore dead at Pevensey in Sussex in 1865, where around 40,000 people went to see it on the beach. The skeleton was later bought by the museum.

Finback Whales are second in size only to Blue Whales, which can reach lengths of over 33 metres! These two species of

whale are very closely related, and are both baleen whales. These giants of the ocean are filter feeders, sieving small animals out of the water.



View down the ribcage of the Cambridge Finback Whale



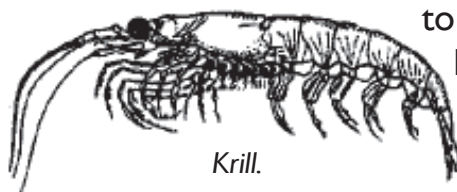
Instead of having teeth, these whales line their

jaws with fringed plates called baleen that are made from the same stuff as your hair and fingernails. Blue and Finback Whales feed by taking an enormous mouthful of water, increasing the size of their throat massively to do so. Strong muscles in the throat then

force the water out, passing it through the baleen plates that filter out any food.

The tongue removes the food from the baleen to be eaten.

The main food of a Finback Whale is a small, shrimp-like crustacean called Krill. Each individual krill is only a couple of centimetres long, so it takes a lot of krill



Krill.

Tip of the snout of the Cambridge Finback Whale



to keep a Finback from feeling hungry!