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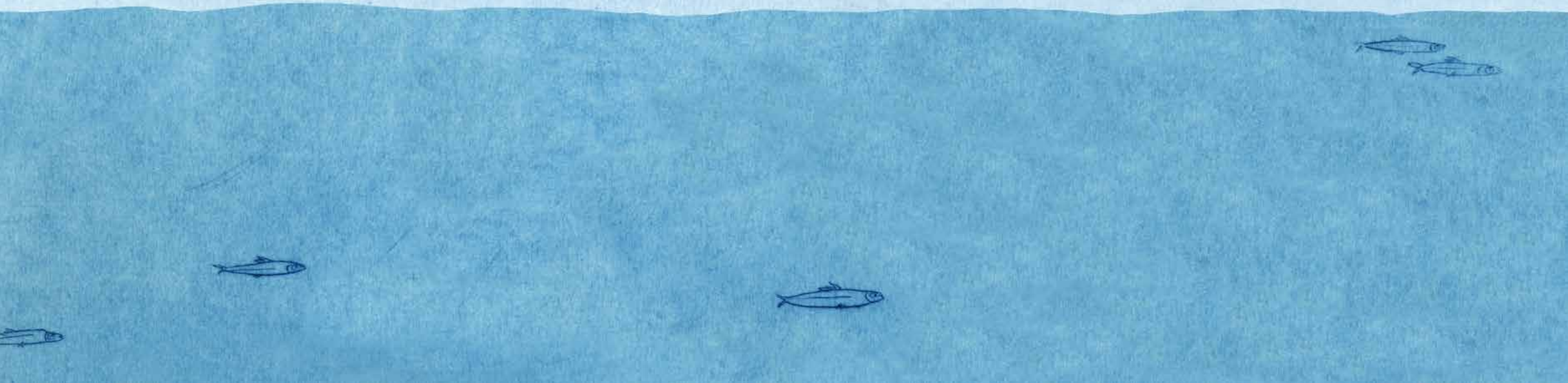
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ANIMALS ON THE MOVE

Imagine being a baby swallow in autumn. Just a few weeks ago you left your nest for the first time. Now, before you are even two months old, you have to fly thousands of kilometres – all the way to Africa.

And your challenge doesn't end there. Next spring, when you are old enough to make your own nest, you will have to fly all the way back to Europe again. In fact, every year, for the rest of your life, you will make that same journey to and from Africa.

Swallows are not the only long-distance travellers. Many different animals around the world make similar journeys – crossing mountains, deserts and oceans along the way. These journeys are called migrations, and they happen in many different ways: while birds fly through the air, elephants trek across the land and turtles swim through the sea.

Animals migrate because their environment changes with the seasons. They travel to new places where they can find food and have their babies safely. Along the way, they must survive harsh weather and hungry predators. It may sound exhausting, but if these travellers stayed put they would not be able to survive. This book follows the migration journeys of 20 different animals around the world. Each has its own amazing story to tell.

A WHALE OF A JOURNEY

A baby humpback whale sticks close to its mother as they move through the deep blue ocean. At just six months old, this baby already weighs as much as an elephant. But it still needs its mother: the two have a long journey ahead. Along the way, she will protect her baby and provide milk to help it grow bigger and stronger.

The mother gave birth during winter in the warm Pacific Ocean, near Australia. Many humpback whales gathered here, all looking after their babies. They didn't feed. Instead, they lived off the fat that their bodies had put on during the previous summer.

Now the whales are hungry again. They are heading south to the Antarctic, where they will find their food. It will be summer there when they arrive. The cold Antarctic waters will be full of tiny, shrimp-like creatures called krill, which whales love to eat. They will feed for about six months, gulping down krill in huge mouthfuls. The baby will learn how to do this, and soon it will start building up the thick layer of blubber that it needs to keep out the cold.

Around April, the humpback whales will return north. The youngsters will have grown large enough to fend for themselves. In the warm Pacific they will splash and play, whacking the water with their tails and sometimes leaping clear of the surface.

At ten years old, our baby humpback whale will be full-grown. For the rest of its life it will migrate every year between the warm Pacific and the cold Antarctic. It may travel more than 25,000 km a year. That's the longest swim of any animal on Earth.



Humpback whales grow up to 18 m long. They spend winter in warm oceans around the world, where they have their calves. In summer they migrate to polar regions, where they feed.