

Cambrian Fact File

***Echmatocrinus* (Crinoid)**

This ancient animal is so old that there is some debate about whether it is a crinoid, or just a distant ancestor of crinoids. It does resemble crinoids closely with a cup-like body, a long stalk and feathery arms to comb food from the water. At this early point in time, with life evolving all around it, it certainly seemed to be one of the most complex and common animals in the Cambrian seas. It almost certainly fed on the wide range of algae and bacteria in the water, and in turn was probably grazed on by trilobites and worms. A strong disc attached it to the seafloor or rocks, and there it spent its life, filtering food from the water.

See also: **Crinoid**