

# Eel-like catfish can 'walk' on land

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A researcher at Belgium's Ghent University reportedly has discovered an eel-like catfish that can wriggle out of the water to stalk prey on land.

Scientists told National Geographic News the discovery by Biology Professor Dominique Adriaens may shed light on how some prehistoric fish species evolved into land animals.

Like many fish, the eel catfish is a typical suction feeder when it's in the water -- it sucks in a mouthful of water and its prey. But on land the eel catfish lifts the front part of its body and bends its head down toward the ground. That ability is essential to thriving on land, write the researchers whose findings appear in the journal *Nature*.

Adriaens, a co-author of the study, told NGN her discovery is significant for anyone studying evolution. "It shows that a transition from aquatic feeding to terrestrial feeding is possible without the necessity of a lot of spectacular (body form) and functional changes and can thus be explained by Darwinian evolution."

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