Explaining Biodiversity: Why so many ground finches in the Galapagos?

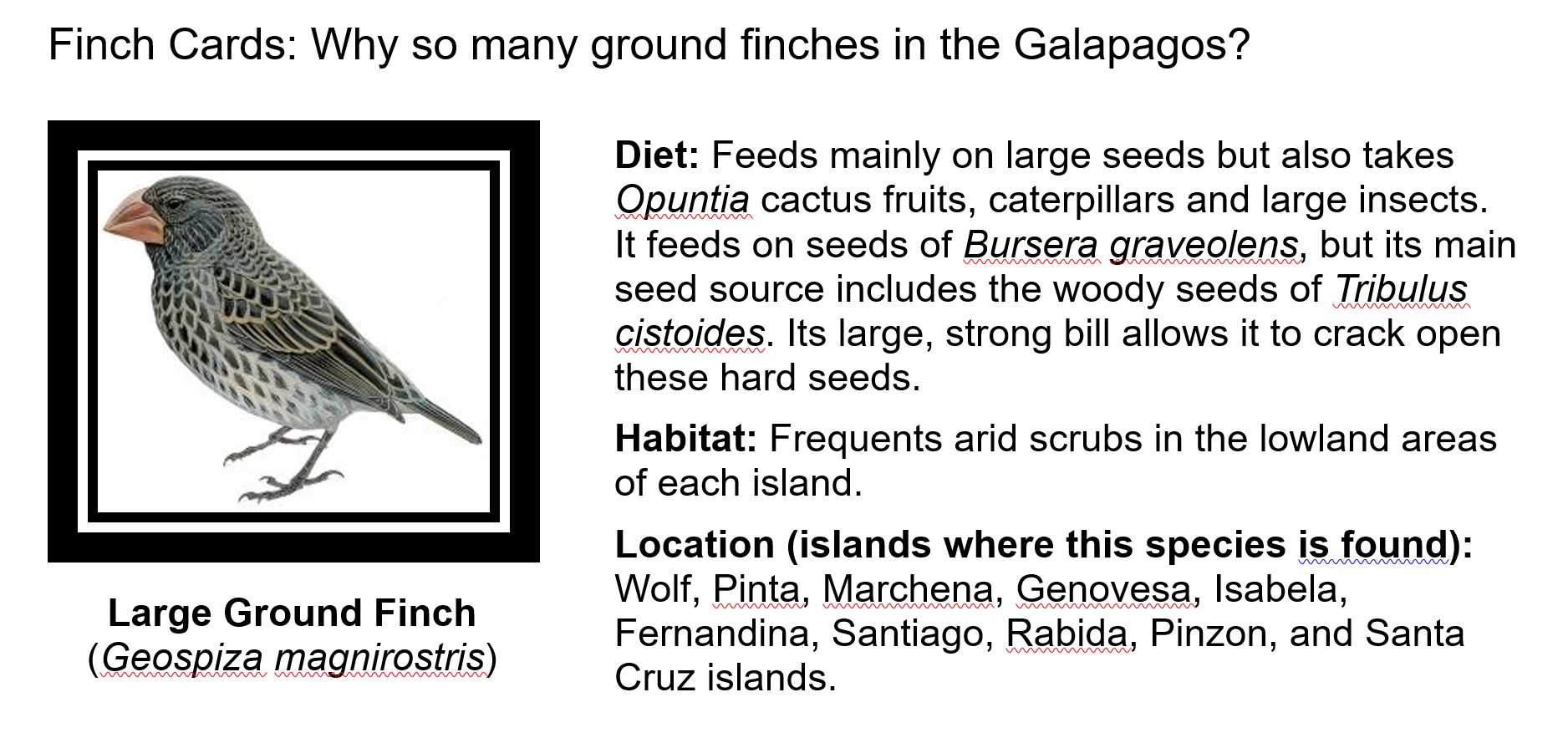
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We’ve figured out something about how new species arise, and we have some kind of explanation for how the more than seventeen species of finches endemic to the Galapagos islands came to be.

*But why so many species?* What factors might have led to such diversity?

We’re going to consider our question by looking at only the six species of ground finches. Your task is to read over the cards for these six. Each card describes the dietary and habitat needs of the species, plus where it is found geographically. Use the Galapagos map you’ve been given to study the distribution of each species (the patterns of where it is located). You might want to number your species from 1 to 6 and then use the numbers to label their locations on the map.



Using the data, the map, and your whiteboards, uncover any patterns you think might help to answer our question about why there are six different species of ground finches in the Galapagos.

You may use the table below to help if you wish or you may create something similar with your group on your whiteboard.

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| Species | Diet | Habitat | Similarities to Other Ground Finches | Differences from Other Ground Finches |
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Q. Why do you think there are so many different species of ground finches in the Galapagos?