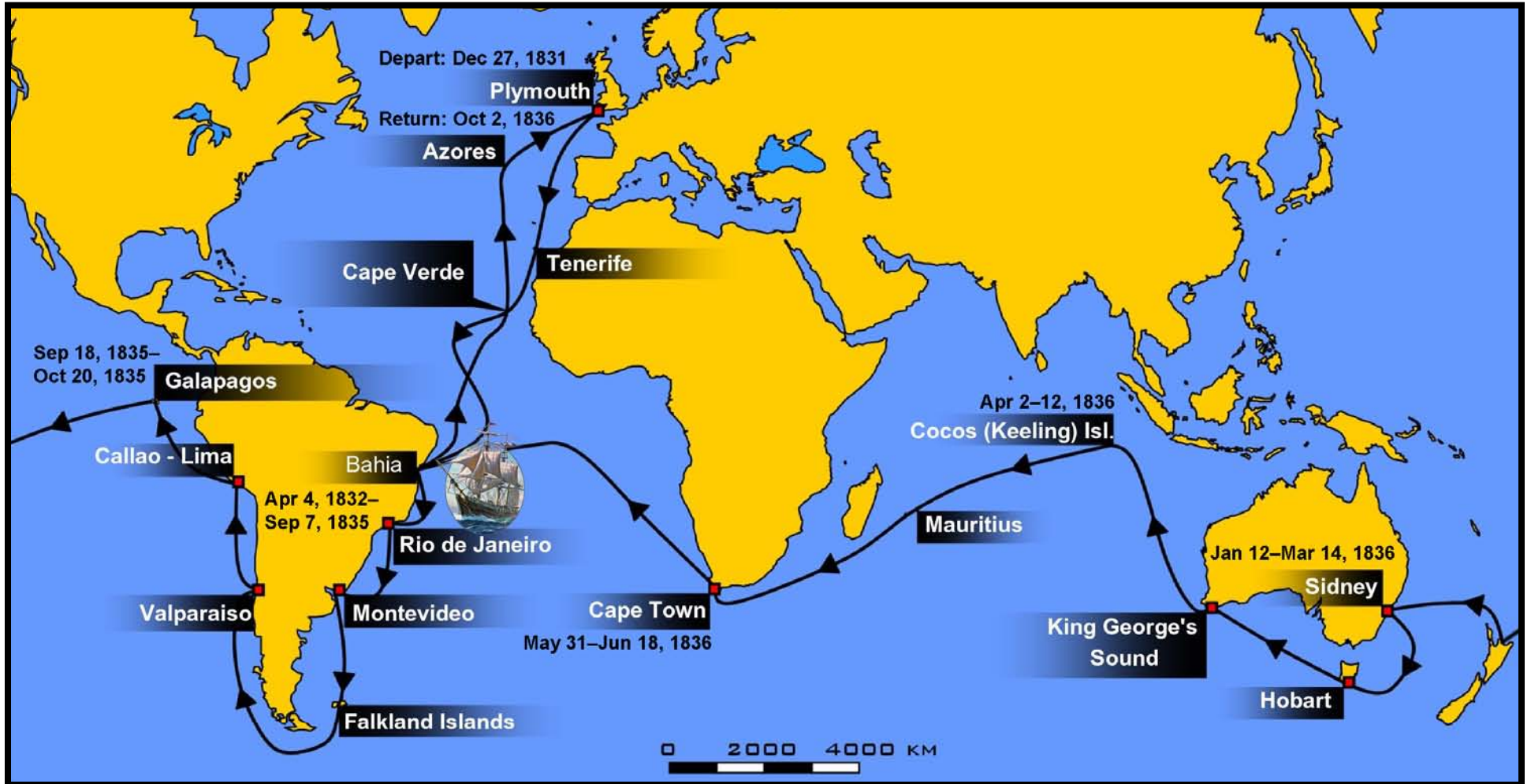


Modified from map in the public domain, from Wikipedia



The *HMS Beagle* explores portions of South America between April 4, 1832, and September 7, 1835.

South America, circa 1832

This image is in the public domain, from Wikipedia



- Darwin spent over three years in South America
- He discovered many fossils there
- These fossils made him think about the history of life

Guinea Pigs



Capybara,
the largest living rodent

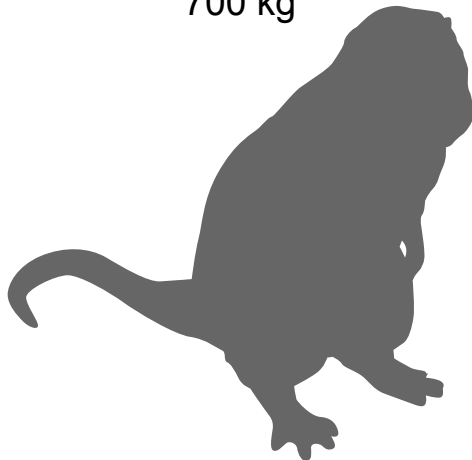


What Darwin thought was a giant, extinct capybara proved to be from an unrelated group of mammals, however, giant, extinct capybaras have since been found in South America, such as *Phoberomys* (below). *Phoberomys* lived about eight million years ago in Venezuela.

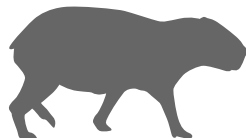
Guinea pig and capybara photos in the public domain, from Wikipedia; reconstruction of *Phoberomys* by Carin L. Cain, © Science



Phoberomys
700 kg



Capybara
50 kg



Guinea pig
1 kg



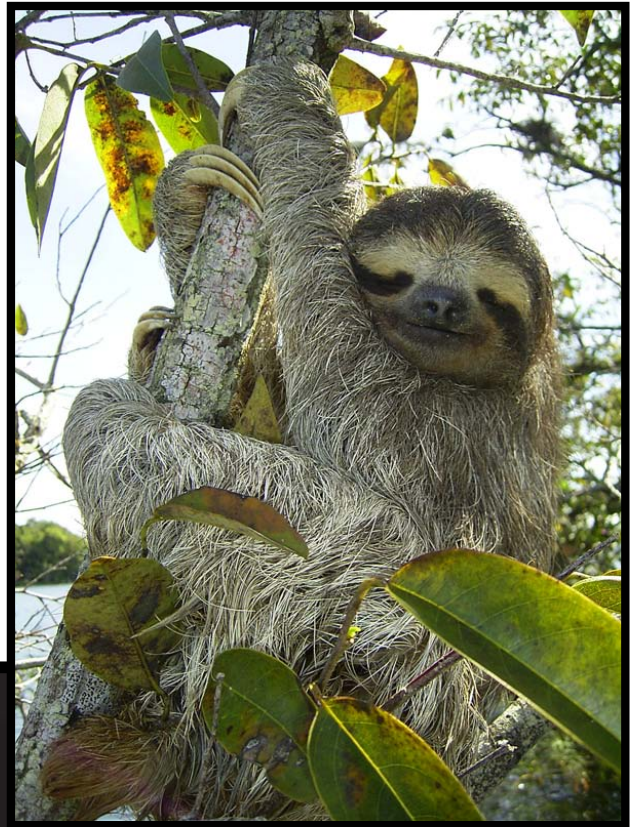
Rat
300 g



Mouse
30 g



Three-Toed Sloth photo in the public domain, from Wikipedia; Ground Sloth photo © Smithsonian, <http://www.si.edu/>



Three-Toed Sloth



An extinct Ground Sloth