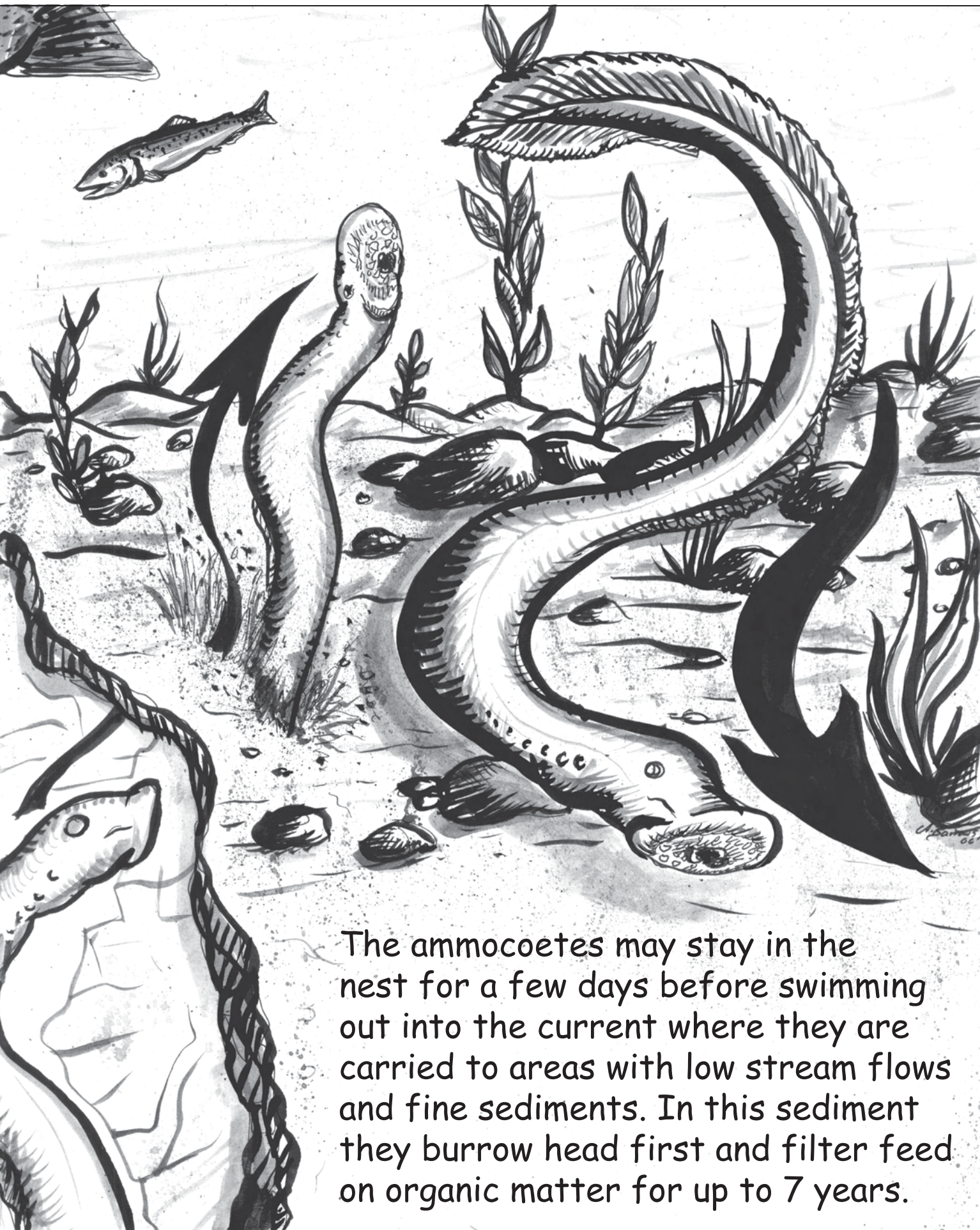




After several weeks,  
the eggs hatch into  
small blind larvae  
called ammocoetes.



The ammocoetes may stay in the nest for a few days before swimming out into the current where they are carried to areas with low stream flows and fine sediments. In this sediment they burrow head first and filter feed on organic matter for up to 7 years.



After 4 to 6 years, while still buried in sediment, the ammocoetes undergo a transformation, or metamorphosis, into a "smolt"-like stage called macrophthalmia. They develop eyes, a sucking disc with teeth, emerge from the sediment, and migrate downstream to the ocean.