

# Awesome eels

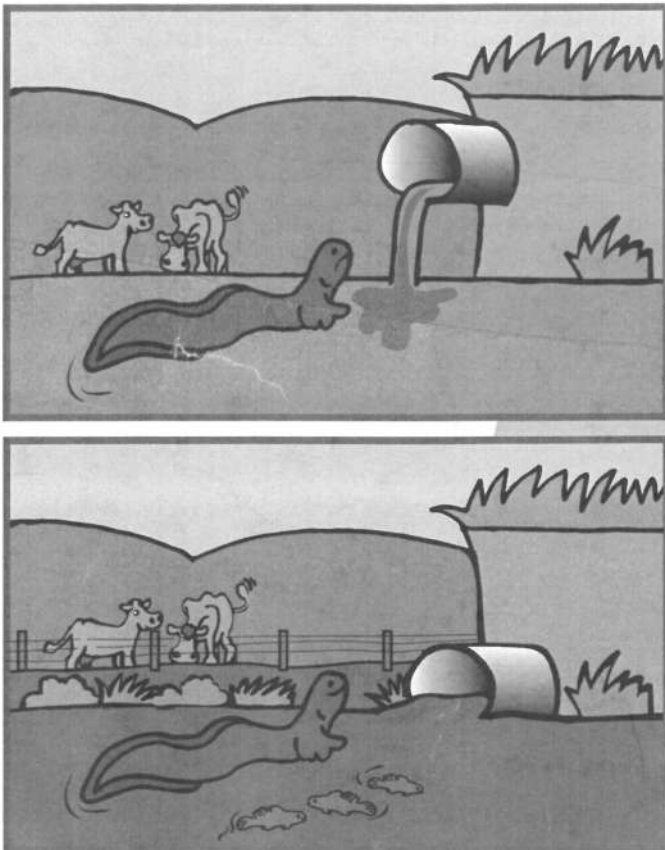
There are two main types of eel (*tuna* in te Reo Māori) living in our rivers, lakes and wetlands. Today there are far fewer eels than there used to be, and one species, the longfin eel, is now just as endangered as the little spotted kiwi.

Most LONGFIN EELS make two amazing journeys in their lifetime. After growing up in fresh water (some live for 100 years!), they migrate downstream to the sea during autumn floods. The next stage of their journey is a long swim all the way to deep trenches in the Pacific Ocean. Here they meet all the other migrating longfin eels, spawn (lay and fertilize eggs) and then they die.

Their tiny babies have a big name - LEPTOCEPHALUS (Lep-toe-sef-ah-liss) - and don't look much like eels at all. They drift all the way back to New Zealand on their own. By the time they get here they look more like mini eels but are see-through and known as GLASS EELS. Once in our rivers they rest for a while and get bigger and darker and we start calling them ELVERS. Elvers migrate up streams to find a place to settle down and grow into big eels.

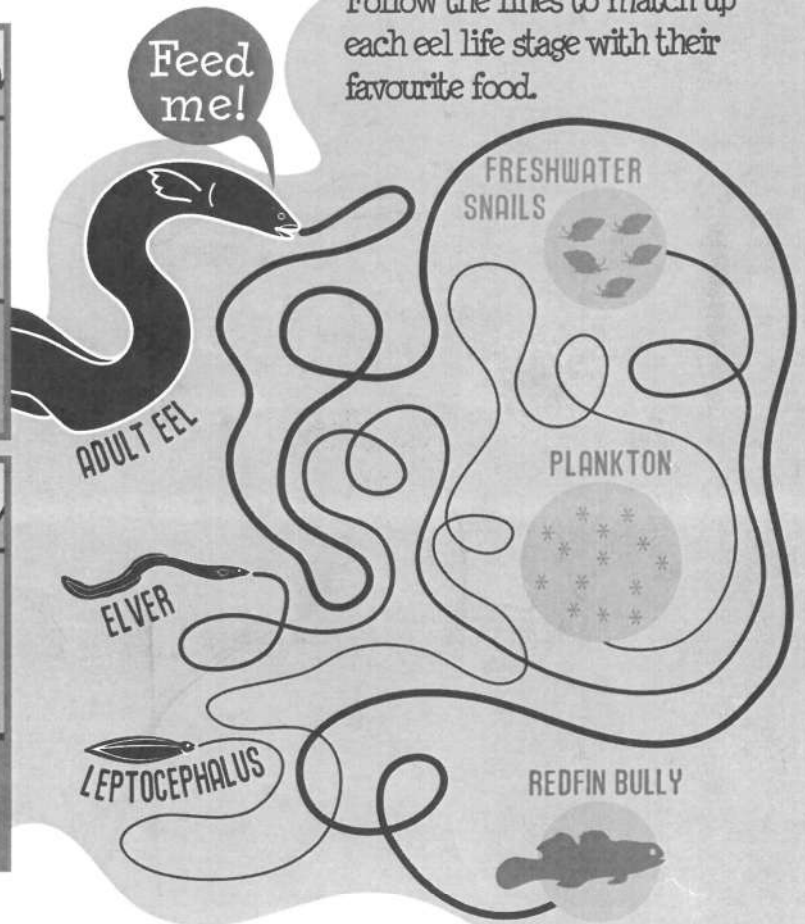
## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Spot the seven differences between these two pictures. Which is a happy eel home?



## WHAT DO EELS LIKE TO EAT?

Follow the lines to match up each eel life stage with their favourite food.



## DRAW YOUR OWN EEL



New Zealand  
Natural Clothing



The WopWops Wetland



New Zealand  
Fish Passage  
Advisory Group

