

What's being done to help eels now?
There's lots being done to improve things for eels.

This project is helping eels by:

- Raising awareness of this important fish.
- Training volunteers to monitor young eels entering the river.
- Training staff and volunteers to identify and surveys barriers that stop eels from swimming upstream.
- This information will help decide where future projects can help eels the most.

What eels need to thrive:

- Healthy rivers with connectivity.
- We need to be able to move up and downstream to:
- Find good habitats
- Find food – plenty of the creatures that make up our diet
- Escape pollution incidents
- Be able to return to the Sargasso Sea to spawn.



What can I do?

- Enjoy and value your river.
- Rivers are great places to visit, you never know what you might see!
- Understand rivers are important for people and wildlife.
- Not contribute to pollution.
- Always put litter in a bin or take it home.
- Litter can harm wildlife.
- Report pollution.
- If you spot pollution, get an adult to report it to the Environment Agency 0800 807060.

The eely amazing eel's tale



Eels are amazing!

Once they were a common fish in your rivers.
They are now critically endangered.



Eels were used to pay rent!

The 1086 Domesday Book records eels used as currency, to pay rent and taxes; and this continued for another 500 years. This shows there used to be plenty of eels. Records in the Domesday Book show there were at least 56 locations where rents were paid in eels in the Thames catchment.

Jellied Eels

Eels were once an important nutritious and readily available food source for the working class of London. Eel was and still is served with vinegar and white pepper, but now the eels served up come from the Netherlands. Eel pie and mash houses have been in London since the 18th century.



Green Recovery Challenge Fund



Epic Eel Journey

I hatched from a tiny egg about 6,500km away in the Sargasso Sea.

Did you know I spend most of my life in rivers?

I may have started my life in the saltwater of the Sargasso Sea; however, I will spend most of my life in freshwater rivers.



The Return Migration



As I become an adult eel, I transform into a silver eel and I need to swim all the way back to the Sargasso Sea to find a partner eel to breed and make the next generation of eels.

Weir Stuck!

I need to get further up the river to find food and healthy habitats, but humans have built lots of barriers in the river that I cannot pass.



How long does an eel live in your river?

It can vary, from 7 years up to about 30 years.

How big does an eel get?

Male up to 40cm long
Weight around 150g
Female 45cm - 1m+ long
Weight 250g - 6kg



Why are eels in trouble?

Climate change is having an effect on the motion in the ocean.

Oceanic currents are what tiny eels drift on to get here and it is thought that flow is slowing.

Barriers. There are thousands of barriers (including weirs), blocking the eels from migrating up our rivers.

Over fishing. In the past too many eels have been taken.

Natural wet places by rivers such as wetlands, that are perfect for eels have been drained.

Getting caught up in pumps that get our water and turbines that make electricity.

