



The Amazing European Eel

Eels in The River Witham



River Witham Management Catchment

The main river in Lincolnshire is the River Witham, it is approximately 82 miles long and has many **tributaries** (streams and drains) flowing into it. The **source** is just south of Grantham near a village called South Witham. The Witham flows northwards through Grantham and then Lincoln where it begins to flow back in a southerly direction towards Boston. In Boston it joins the Haven River and flows out to sea at the Wash.

The largest barrier in the Witham is the Grand Sluice, which was built to help to prevent flooding at Boston, just before the Witham flows into the Haven. Eels and other fish can pass upstream through the sluice and freely migrate all the way up to Fiskerton Locks, just over 40km away. This stretch of river give allows some eels to live out their entire lifecycle but opening up the river further by installing fish passes would certainly help to increase numbers.

As in the rest of the UK, eel numbers in the River Witham are rapidly declining. In 1987 a survey of the Upper Witham found a record 961 eels! Sadly, just 30 years later in 2017 the number found was only 20!





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Additional Activity Sheets

- How to draw an eel
- Make a paper plate eel with this Ely Museum activity - <https://www.facebook.com/ElyMuseum/videos/226027018654143>
- River Collage Project
- River Creature Fact File and Food Chain
- Eel Wordsearch



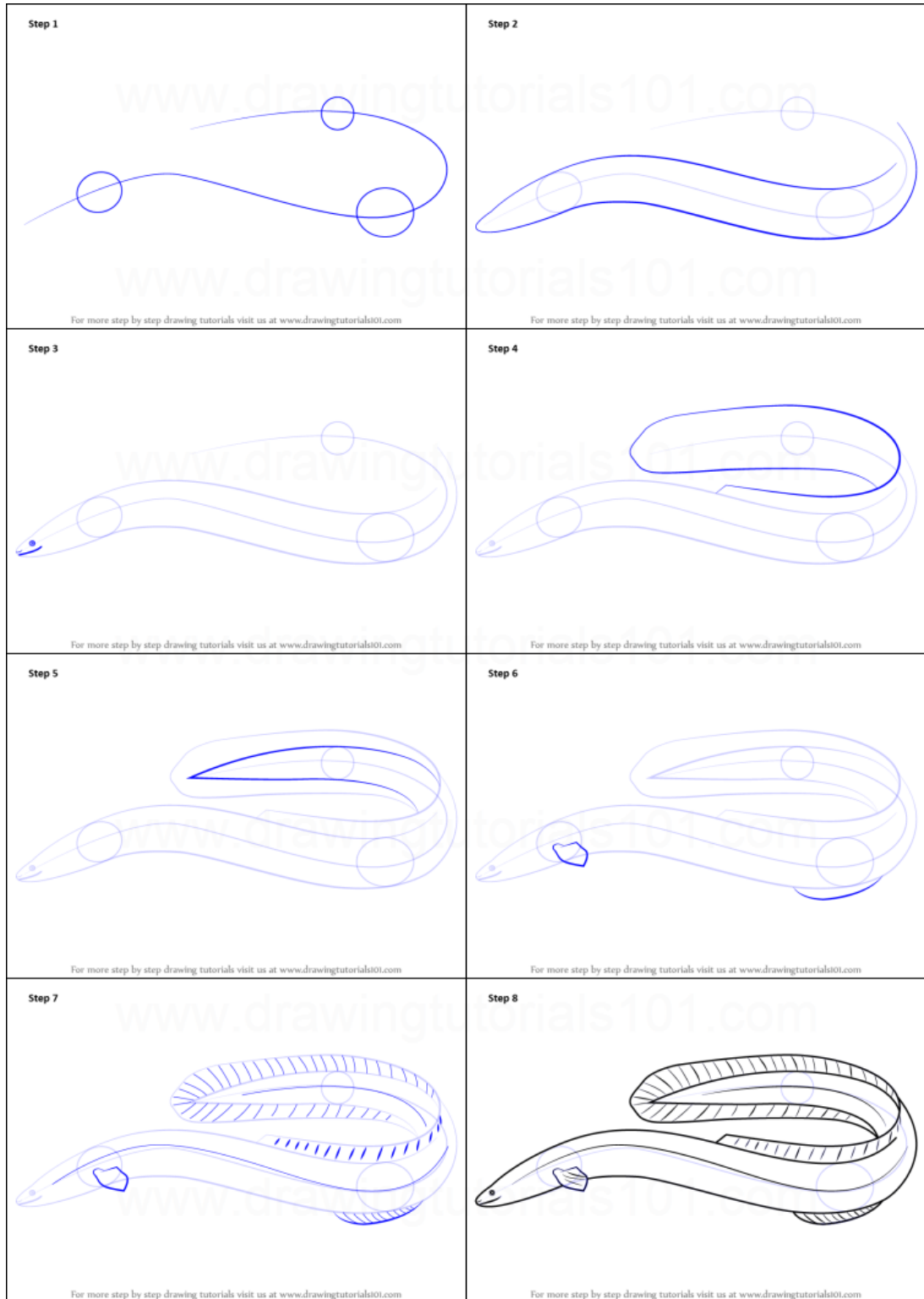
We'd love to see how you got on with your projects. Please do share your project photographs and artwork with us.

Find us on Social Media @LincsRivers or
email Gail.talton@lincsrivers.org.uk



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How to draw you very own eel - don't forget to label it 😊



www.drawingtutorials101.com





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Litter Collage

Project Worksheet



Using 'safe' litter you can find at home or on a local litter pick (supervised by an adult) make a collage of a river or stream.

Will your river flow out to the sea or perhaps join another river?

Who might live in or alongside your river?

- Think about different plants, birds, fish, **mammals**, **amphibians** and **invertebrates**.
- You could include eels at different stages of their life cycle on your collage – think about where in the river they might be at each stage.

Will your river have any weirs or other man-made barriers?

You can even include areas of pollution (e.g. chemical spills, discarded litter etc.) Do you think there will be living plants and creatures in that area of the collage?

Perhaps you can work together with your family to create your collage.





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Think about your favourite river creature and do some research to help you fill in the worksheet.

My favourite River Creature is _____

Draw a picture of your creature in the box:

A large, empty rectangular box with a blue border, intended for drawing a picture of the chosen river creature.

All about my favourite River Creature:

It has _____ legs.

It has _____ tails.

It does/does not have **antennae**.

My creature leaves the water to grow up? Yes or No

My creature eats...

- Plants – it is a **herbivore**
- Animals – it is a **carnivore**
- Plants and animals – it is an **omnivore**
- Dead things (**detritus**) – it is a **decomposer** or **detritivore**



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This is my creature's Food Chain

Write or draw your answers in the boxes

My creature eats this as food:

My creature:

Predator/Prey

These animals eat my creature:

Predator



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European Eel Wordsearch

t l g l a s s k v j z r p n g r e m
v s g j e v e n d a n g e r e d o r
j z c m i g r a t e b o g r f t z n
x w v p s c s a r g a s s o u x i k
e v d i n v e r t e b r a t e s e m
l g s n o c t u r n a l f k z f s o
a j g e p w m o w k z h j e v z i k
r h v s a q g t t y e l l o w d l s
v c a r n i v o r e l v e r g w v o
a p w s l u m m x l r k y u q y e o
e e l x f i s h f j b k g o m d r f
n k j z r i v e r r h e b z n m z t

Find the words in the puzzle

eel	glass
eggs	nocturnal
migrate	river
carnivore	sargasso
silver	sea
elver	invertebrates
yellow	endangered
fish	larvae