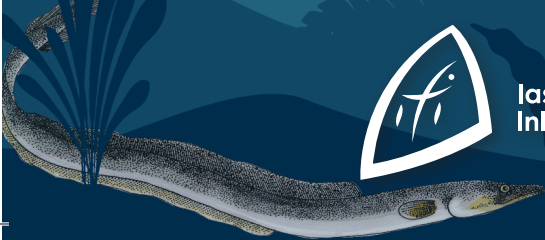


# IRELAND'S COMMON FRESHWATER

# FISH

# SPECIES



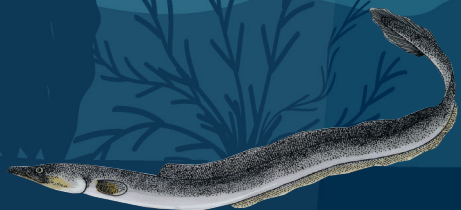
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# OUR WORLD OF WATER

When seen from outer space our world; the earth, appears blue and this is why it is sometimes called the blue planet. This is not a surprise because two thirds of the earth's surface is covered in water. There are two kinds of water on our earth, saltwater and freshwater.

Most of the earth's water is in our seas and oceans and this water is called saltwater. Freshwater is found on the earth's surface in rivers, lakes, streams and reservoirs. Water found on the earth's surface is called surface water. Some water can also be found in reservoirs under ground and this is called groundwater.

Freshwater can also be found at the North Pole (Arctic) and South Pole (Antarctic) in the form of ice.



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# THE WATER CYCLE

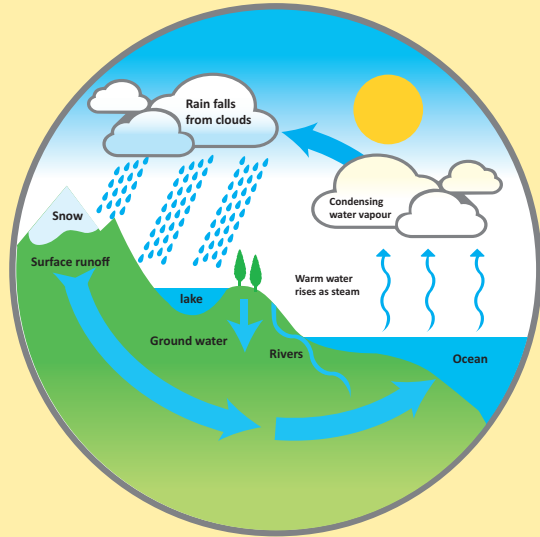
Water is always changing and moving around our world through what we call the water cycle.

This is how it works.

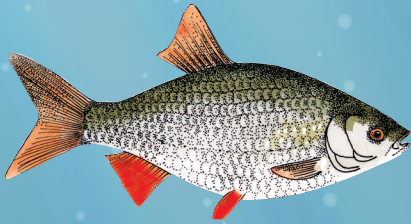
Water in our rivers, lakes and seas is heated by the sun. The water turns to steam and rises up into the air.

As it rises, it gets cooler and forms very small drops of water which join together to form clouds. When the clouds move over the mountains, the water drops get bigger and heavier and fall from the sky as rain or sometimes as sleet or snow.

The rain falls on the mountains and ground and then runs into rivers, streams and lakes. The rivers and streams join up with the sea. The water is now back where it started and the process starts all over again. This is why we call it the water cycle.



# Freshwater Fish in Ireland



**Rudd**  
(*Scardinius erythrophthalmus*)



**Carp**  
(*Cyprinus carpio*)



**Trout**  
(*Salmo trutta*)



**Pike**  
(*Esox Lucius*)



**Bream**  
(*Abramis brama*)



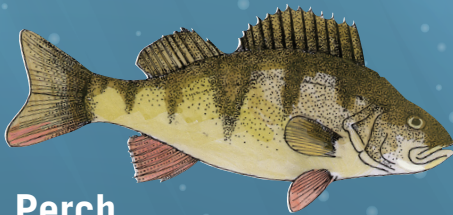
**Salmon**  
(*Salmo salar*)



**Roach**  
(*Rutilus rutilus*)



**Tench**  
(*Tinca tinca*)



**Perch**  
(*Perca fluviatilis*)

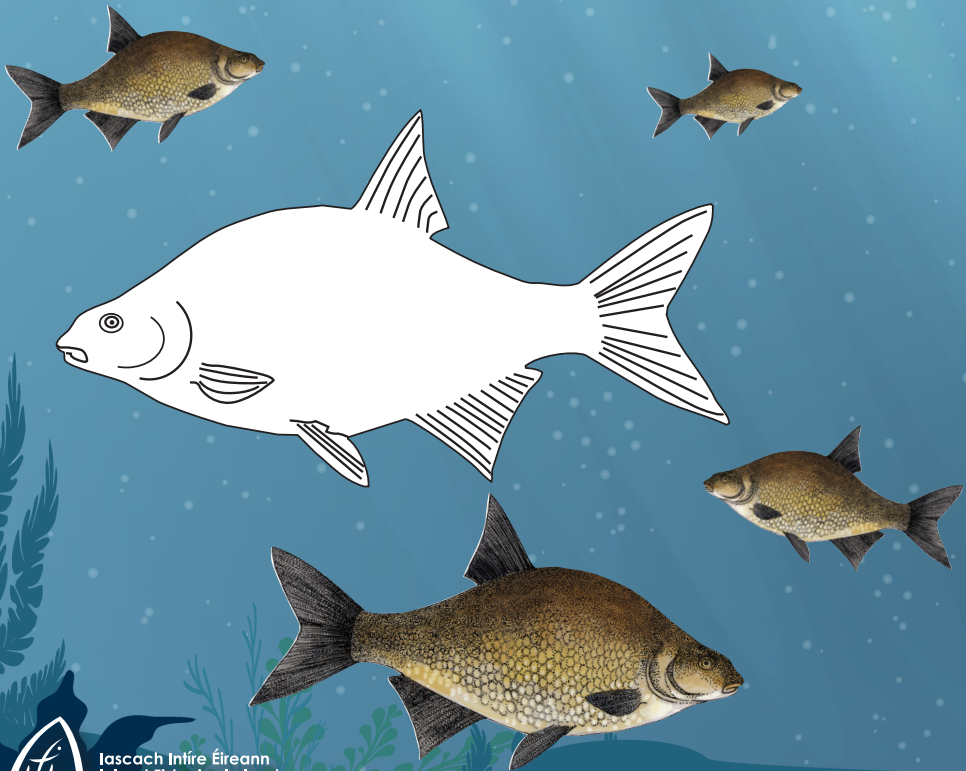


**Eel**  
(*Anguilla anguilla*)

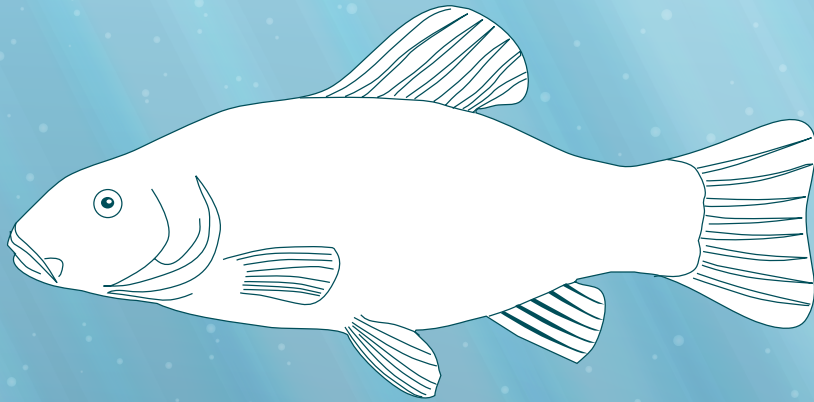
## Bream (*Abramis brama*)

This fish is easily recognised with its deep bronze colour, black fins and protruding mouth. They can be found in rivers, lakes and canals. Bream look for food in large groups called shoals but can also travel on their own. They feed more in the summer time when the water is warm and eat small water bugs and insects that live in our lakes and canals.

Young bream are silver in colour and are called skimmers. Bream usually spawn in May and June but this depends on the weather and water temperatures. They are often found in deeper water in the winter time and sometimes dig into soft mud. In Ireland, bream can grow to over 5kgs in weight.



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## Tench (*Tinca tinca*)

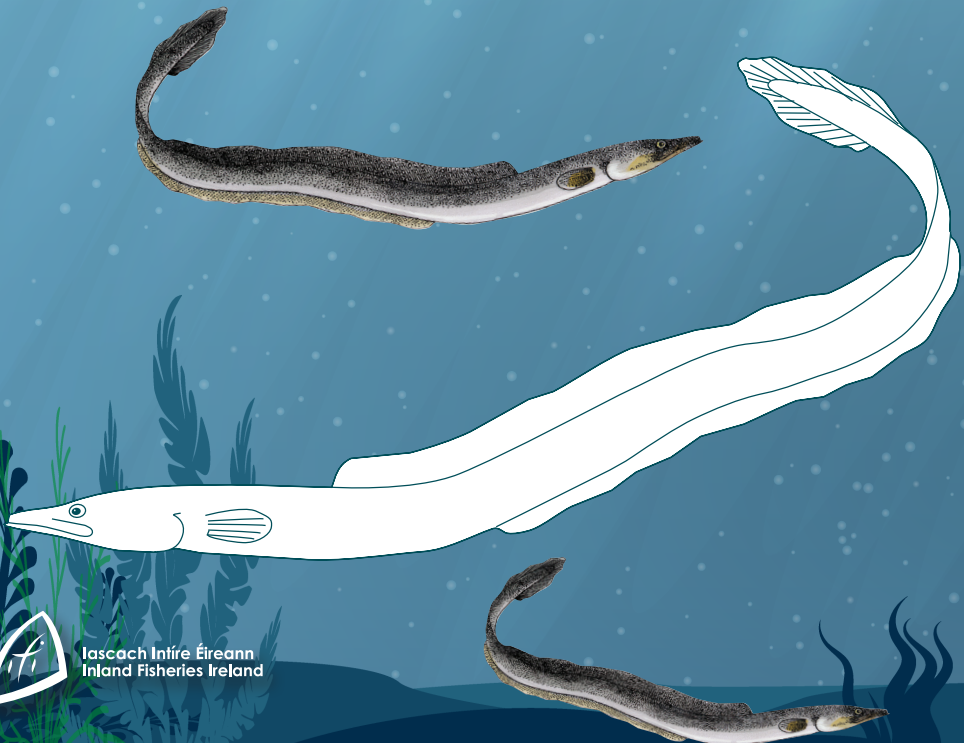
Tench are a greenish coloured fish and appear almost smooth because of their very small scales. Their fins are rounded and the tail which is often called a paintbrush is almost straight.

Tench live in rivers, lakes and canals and like living on the bottom. They spawn during the summer months when water temperatures are high. Tench eat insects and worms that live in the underwater mud and vegetation.

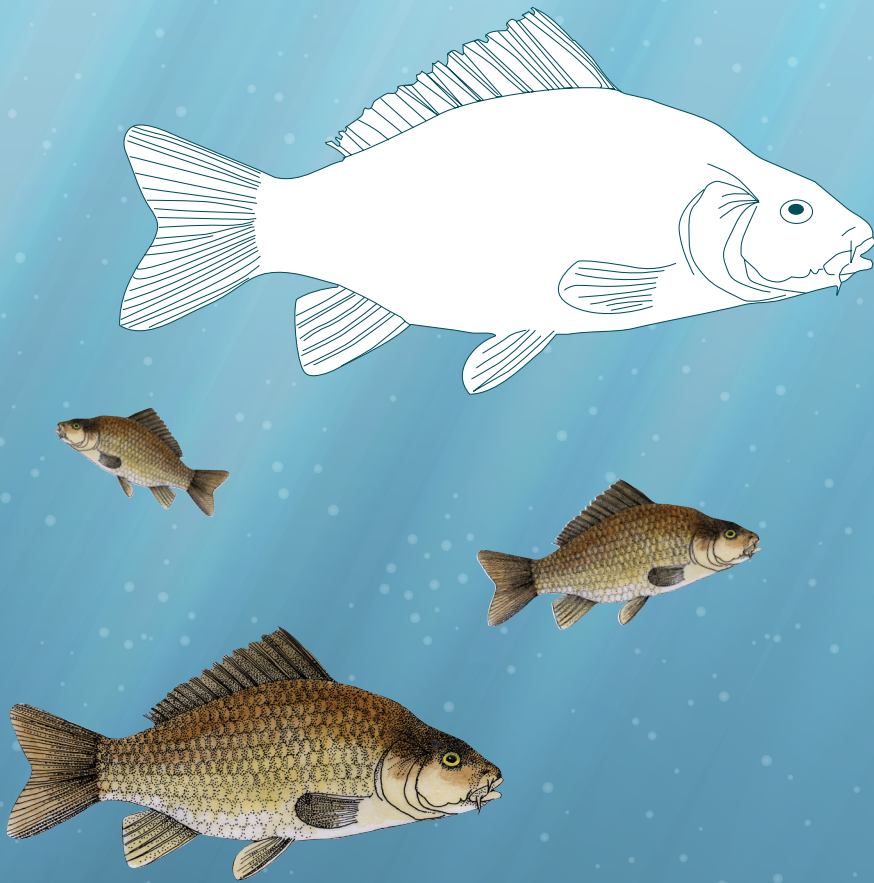
## Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*)

The eel is the most easily recognised of freshwater fish. It looks like a snake and swims with a wriggling movement. They are olive green on the back with golden yellow sides. They change colour to black on the back and silver on the sides before migrating to the Sargasso sea to spawn. Young eels are called elvers.

Eels live for a very long time and can be found in all types of water including rivers, lakes, canals, ponds, streams and ditches. Eels can live out of water for short periods of time and can cross dry land to get from one place to another. They feed on insects, small fish and freshwater shell fish







## Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*)

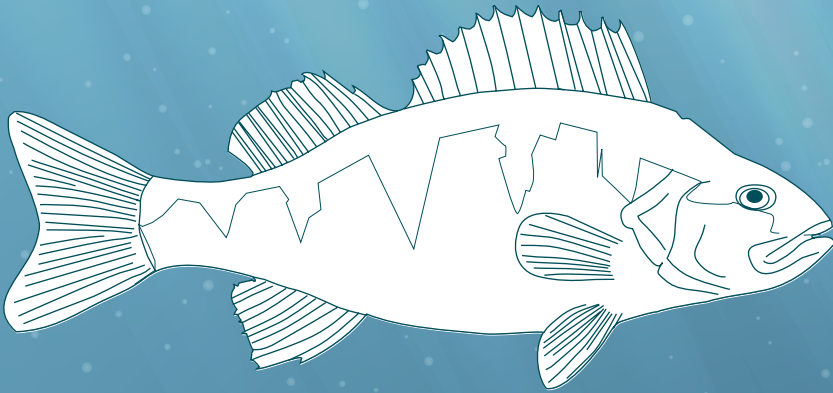
These are by far the biggest coarse fish in Ireland with the exception of pike. There are three types of carp in Ireland, the common carp, the mirror carp and the leather carp. They are mostly golden brown in colour and can be found in lakes and canals.

Carp feed mostly on the bottom on insects, worms and snails but occasionally feed on the surface. Carp spawn in the summer months when the water is at the right temperature. Carp can live for a very long time, up to 50 years.

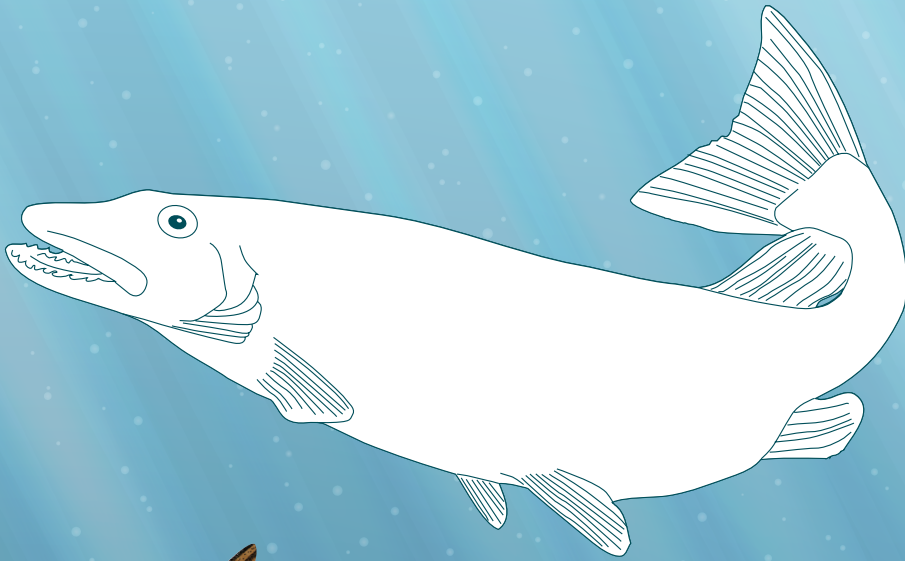
## Perch (*Perca fluviatis*)

Perch are easily recognised with red fins, green and black striped bodies and a spiky dorsal fin. They eat other small fish as well as worms, snails and insects.

Perch live in rivers, canals and lakes and usually spawn from April to May in the weedy margins.



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## Pike (*Esox Lucius*)

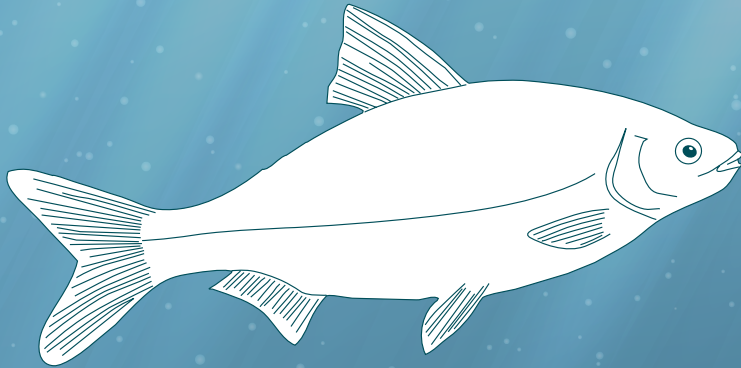
Pike are the top freshwater predator. They mainly eat other freshwater fish including other pike.

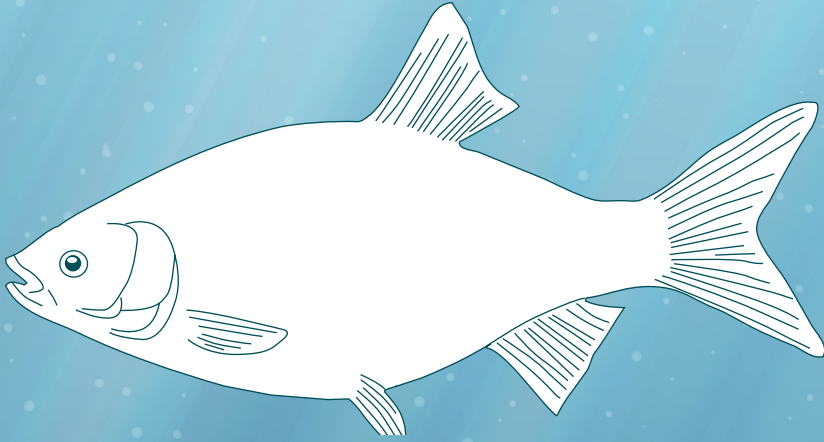
They have long torpedo shaped bodies with olive, yellow and green sides. The pikes mouth is filled with row after row of sharp teeth which replace each other when they become damaged. Pike live in canals, lakes, rivers and reservoirs. Pike spawn from February to April.

# Roach (*Rutilus rutilus*)

Roach are a very handsome fish and are silver in colour. They have red fins and red eyes. Like many coarse fish, roach live in rivers, lakes and canals. They like to eat a lot and feed on the bottom of the lakes and canals on small bugs, insects, snails and plankton.

Roach spawn around the month of May. When they breed with other fish such as rudd and bream, the young fish are called hybrids. Roach are still active in the winter. They can grow to around 2kgs.





## Rudd (*Scardinius erythrophthalmus*)

The rudd is very like the roach but is a golden colour and has a different shaped mouth. They live in rivers, lakes and ponds and are not as plentiful as roach.

During the summer months, rudd like feeding high up in the water and can often be seen feeding on flies and insects on the surface. Rudd prefer to live and feed in weedy areas and spawn in April and May

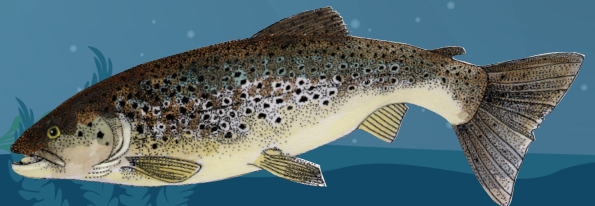
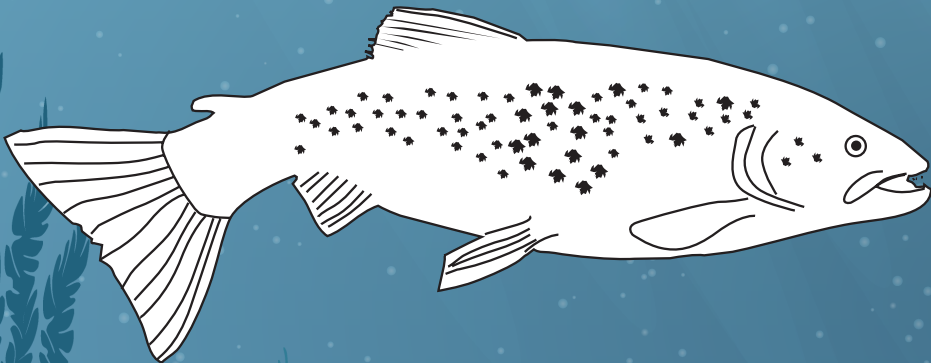
## Trout (*Salmo trutta*)

There are two main types of trout in Ireland, these are called the brown trout and the sea trout. Brown trout look like salmon but are darker in colour. They are generally a golden yellow colour with black and red spots and a white underbelly.

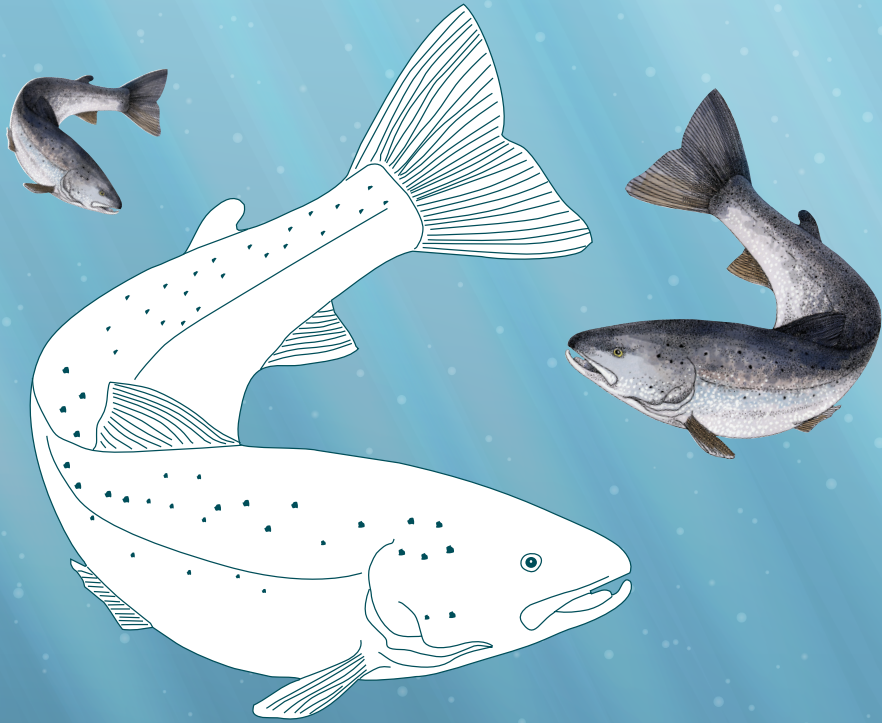
They live in rivers, streams and lakes and feed on small insects. In summer, they can easily be seen feeding on flies floating on the surface of the river or lake. They spawn like salmon by digging a nest in the clean gravel of the riverbed into which the female lays her eggs. Trout spawn from October to December. The small trout hatch out some weeks later to start their lives in the river.

The life cycle of the sea trout is similar to that of the brown trout. The big difference is that the young sea trout gets a silver coat like the young salmon and goes to sea where they feed along the coastline on shrimps and sand eels.

When they have grown, the sea trout return to the river to spawn. Sea trout can be found in rivers and lakes in Ireland. Just as the small sea trout resembles a salmon at sea, the small sea trout soon turns brown to resemble the native wild brown trout.



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## Salmon (*Salmo salar*)

Salmon are often referred to as the 'king' of our game fish and can be found living in rivers, lakes and the sea. Salmon are born in freshwater but go to live in the sea to feed and grow. After one or two years in the sea, they return to the river in which they were born to spawn. While living in the sea, salmon are silver in colour but this colour changes to reddish brown after they have been in the river for some time.

Salmon spawn in fast flowing stretches of rivers and streams in December and January. The female lays her eggs in a special nest called a 'redd'. Some weeks later, the eggs hatch out and the small fish begin their lives in the river or stream. After a number of years, the young salmon change. They get a shiny silver coat and are now called smolts. The young salmon (smolts) are now ready to go to sea to feed and start the cycle all over again.

# Rainbow Trout Arts and Crafts

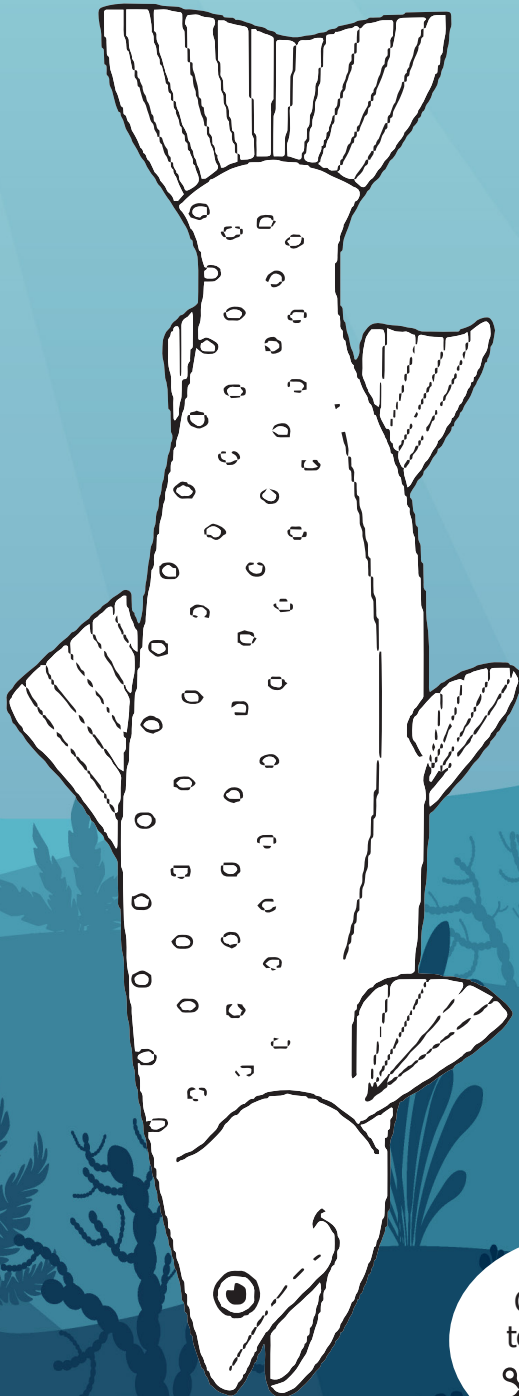
Make your own rainbow trout to hang on the fridge or your wall.

What you will need:

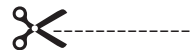
Paper, Scissors, glue, eco-friendly glitter, crayons, pencils

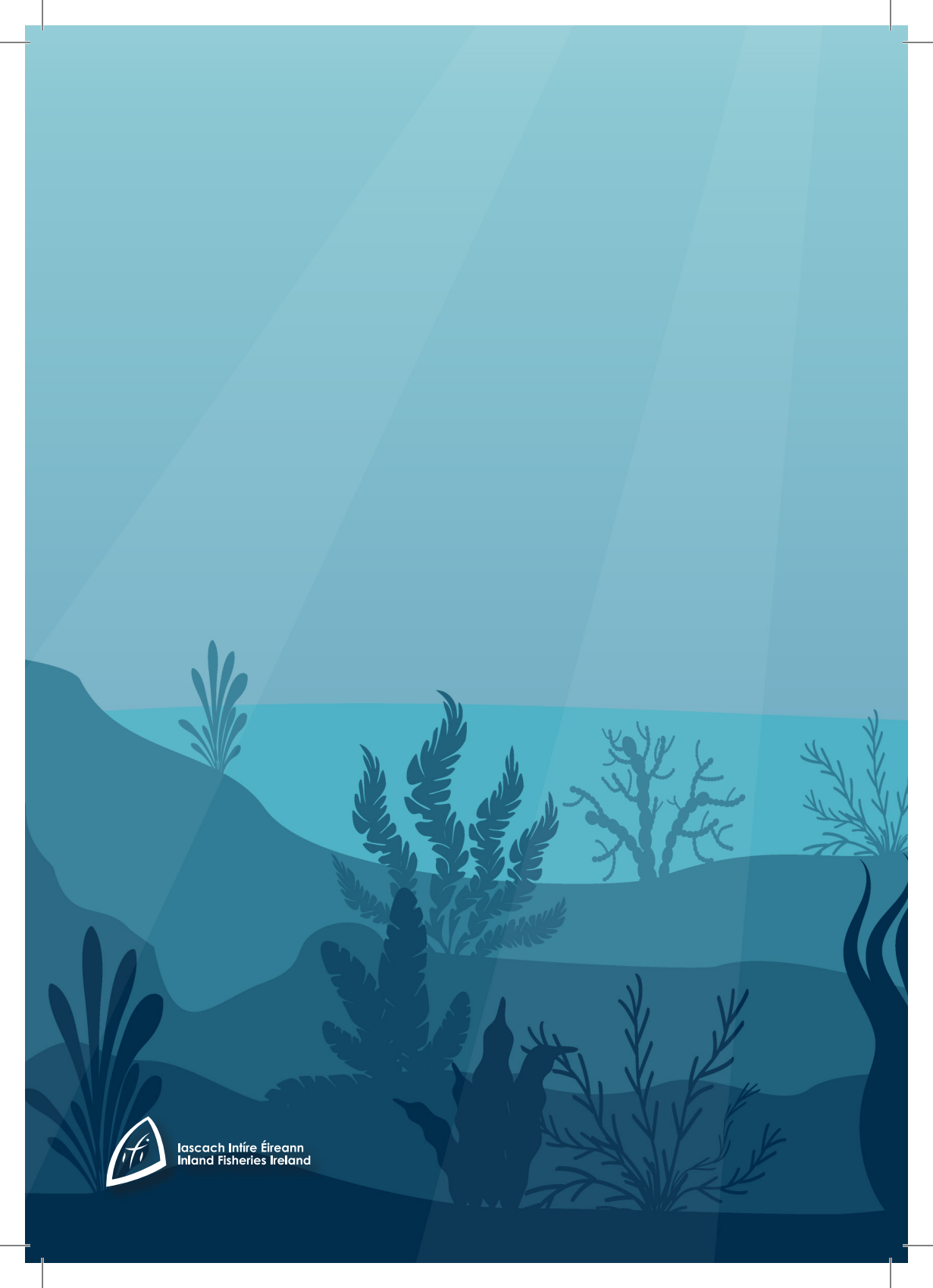






Get an adult  
to cut me out





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# Water is precious, Let's conserve it

We cannot take water for granted. On average people use 150 litres of water per day.

Here are some top water saving tips:

## Reduce the time you spend in the shower:

power showers use 125 litres of water in less than 5 minutes and baths use 80 litres of water



## Brushing your teeth:

fill a glass for rinsing your mouth instead of running the water (running taps will use up 6 litres of water per minute)

## Watering the garden:

collect rainwater instead of using a hose (a running hose will use about 9 litres of water per minute)





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For further information on our education programmes  
including the Something Fishy education resource,  
please log on to [www.fisheriesireland.ie](http://www.fisheriesireland.ie)

For educational and interactive games on our  
Fisheries resource, check out [www.somethingfishy.ie](http://www.somethingfishy.ie)

Inland Fisheries Ireland  
[www.fisheriesireland.ie](http://www.fisheriesireland.ie)  
+353 (1) 8842600



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gcuntas díomhaoin  
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