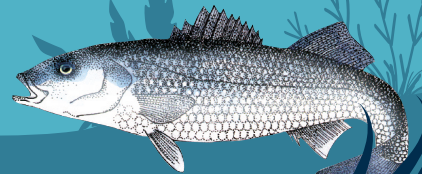


IRELAND'S COMMON SALTWATER

FISH

SPECIES

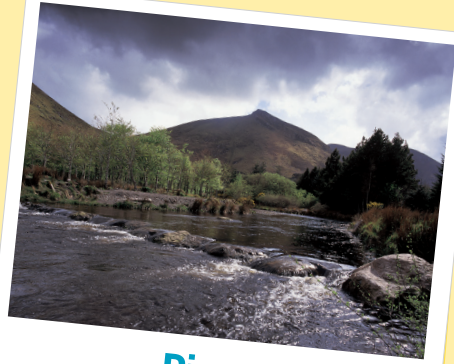


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FACTFILE



The Ocean



Rivers

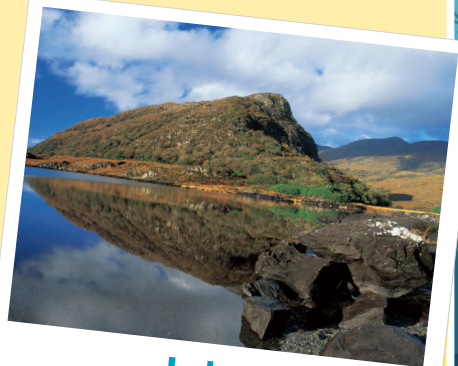
Water, Fish and Other Living Things

Fish live in freshwater and salt water. They show us that our water is clean. If fish cannot live in water then it shows us that is water is dirty or polluted.

All living things need water to survive – people, plants and fish. People can live for weeks without food but can not live very long without water.

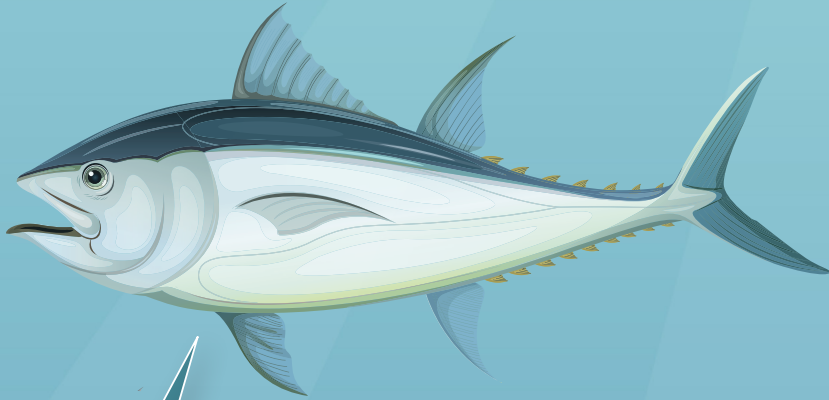


Ponds



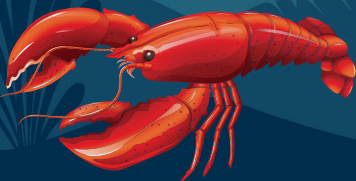
Lakes

Did you know that...



Ireland's waters are home to Atlantic bluefin tuna, the largest tuna in the world, they can weigh up to 640kg the same weight as a horse or a cow!

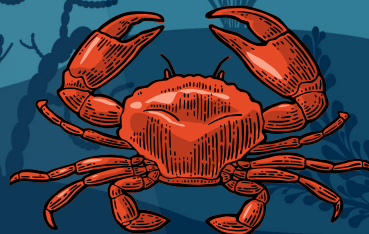
Although jellyfish and crayfish have the word fish in their names, they aren't actually fish.





Seahorses can look backwards and forwards at the same time! The males are the ones who become pregnant instead of the females and they carry their babies in a pouch. They are the only species to do this. A baby seahorse is called a fry like salmon fry. Unfortunately, they are under threat due to pollution, illegal trade and the destruction of their seagrass homes.

Crabs communicate with each other by drumming or waving their pincers. The collective name for the group of crabs is a cast. A crab's shell is its skeleton!

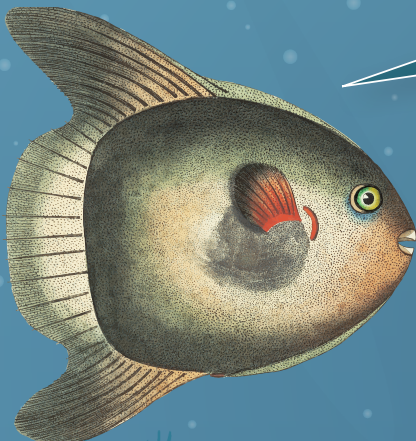


Did you know that...



Some flatfish use camouflage to hide themselves away from predators while on the ocean floor.

Plankton are microscopic animals that float in the water. There are 2 kinds: phytoplankton (plants) and zooplankton (animals). They are very important to our ecosystems as they are a vital food source to fish and many other water based creatures.



The weird & wonderful Ocean Sunfish patrols the ocean depths looking for its prey, jellyfish. But sometimes it gets cold so to warm up again it swims to the surface and bathes in the sun! Seabirds will also remove parasites from the sunfish when it is sunbathing so it gets groomed as well. They can measure up to 3m in length and weigh 2500kg! Females can produce over 100 million eggs to fertilise.

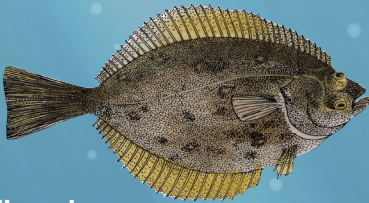
Saltwater Fish in Ireland



Bass
(*Dicentrarchus labrax*)



Cod
(*Gadus morhua*)



Flounder
(*Platichthys flesus*)



Ling
(*Molva molva*)



Mackerel
(*Scomber scombrus*)



Pollack
(*Pollachius pollachius*)



Ray
(*Raja spp.*)



Skate
(*Raja spp.*)



Tope
(*Galeorhinus galeus*)



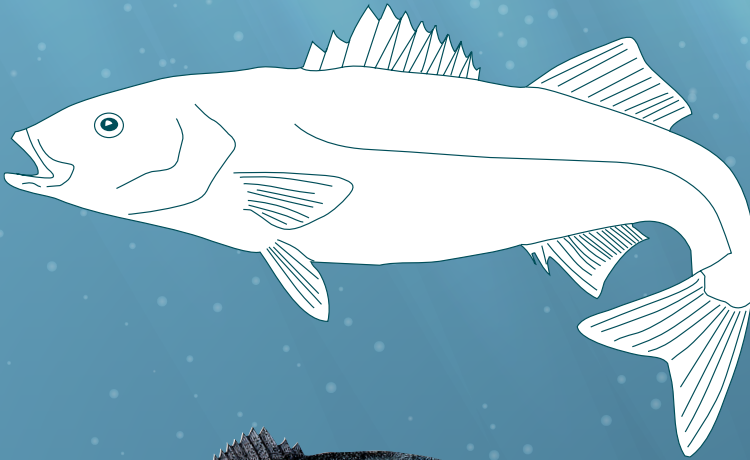
Wrasse
(*Labrus spp.*)

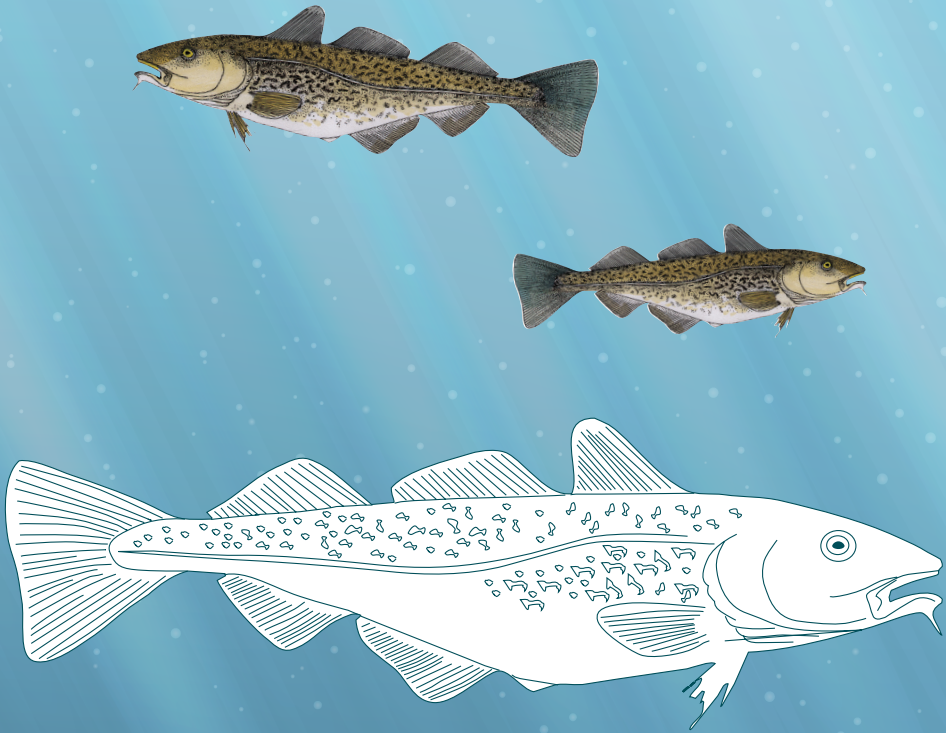
Bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*)

Bass are a silver grey fish with a spiny dorsal fin. They are most common on the southern half of the Irish coastline but they are moving further north as sea temperatures rise.

Bass are good hunters and eat crabs, prawns, shrimp, small fish and shellfish. Bass can grow to over 8kgs. Spawning takes place in fast currents and the eggs are scattered and float freely until they hatch.

The bass is a great hunter and patrols the shoreline and rocky outcrops on the lookout for its next meal. Bass are very popular with anglers and are protected from over-fishing by law.





Cod (*Gadus morhua*)

This fish is easy to recognise, having three fins on its back and a barbel on its chin. The colour can vary greatly from golden to dark brown and sometimes grey to brown. Cod love ship wrecks and rocky reefs where they feed on small fish and shellfish.

The cod is one of our favourite fish for our fish and chips dinners. They can be caught all around the coastline of Ireland but are not as common as they used to be because of over-fishing.

The cod is known as the dustbin of the sea, and some big cod landed off the coast of Norway have been known to have some strange items in their stomachs, things like rubber balls, discarded cans, even a part of an old car registration plate!!!

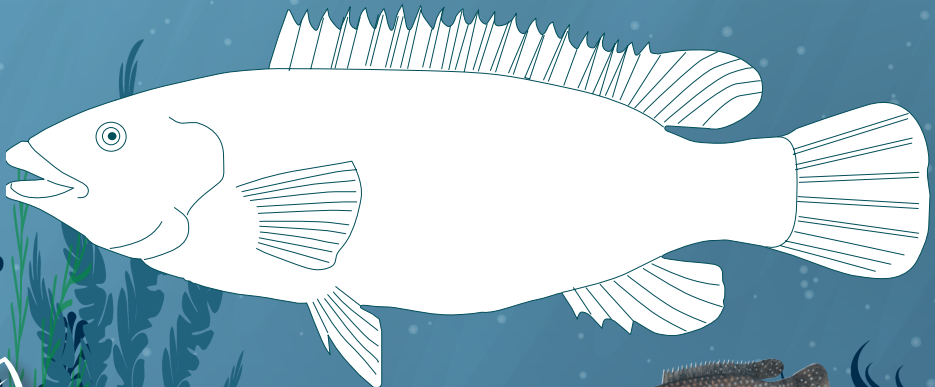
Wrasse (*Labrus spp*)

There are a number of members of the wrasse family that live around the Irish coastline and the cuckoo and ballan wrasse are the two most common. The cuckoo wrasse is a very colourful sea fish with strong orange and blue colours on it's sides. The ballan wrasse is less colourful but is perfectly adapted to its environment, with its colour matching its habitat of kelp beds and rocky weedy areas.

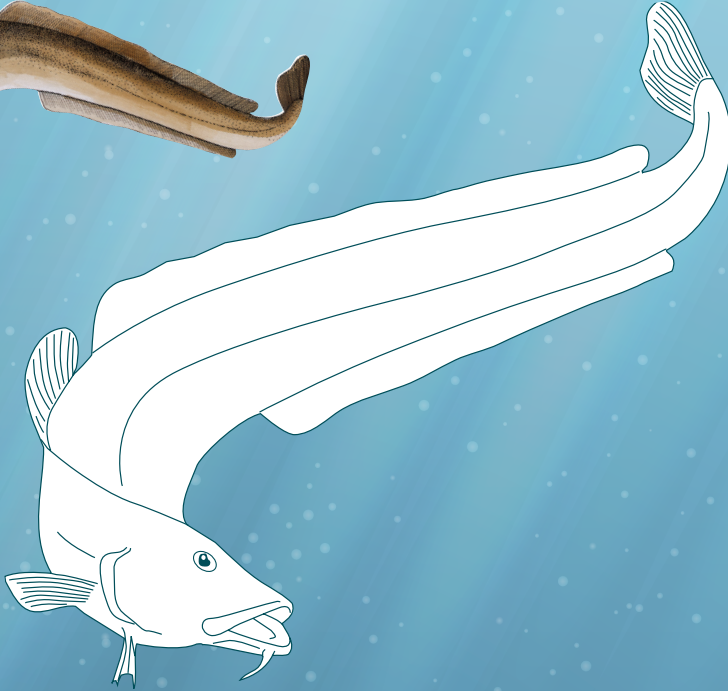
Wrasse like to live near wrecks, reefs and rocks and they have almost human like lips and teeth, which they use to grind up and crunch their prey and pull limpets and other shellfish from rocks. They spawn in weedy areas and they are one of the few sea fish to build a nest. The male fish guards the nest until the eggs hatch.



Cuckoo Wrasse are one of the most colourful fish from around our coast



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Ling (*Molva molva*)

The ling looks like an eel but it is related to cod. They are rust red or olive green in colour and have a barbel under their chin. Ling have very sharp teeth and eat small sea creatures, small fish and shellfish.

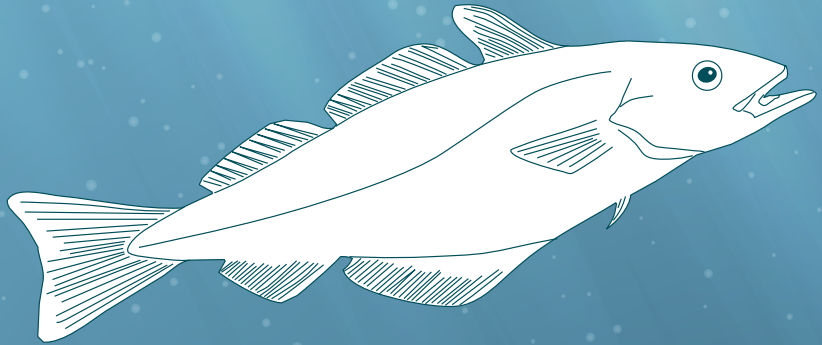
Ling like deep water and often live around ship wrecks and reefs. They spawn in rocky areas and the eggs are guarded by the male until they hatch.

The ling can be caught all around our coastline and is a strong powerful fish growing up to 25kg. The female can carry between 20 and 60 million eggs!!!!!!

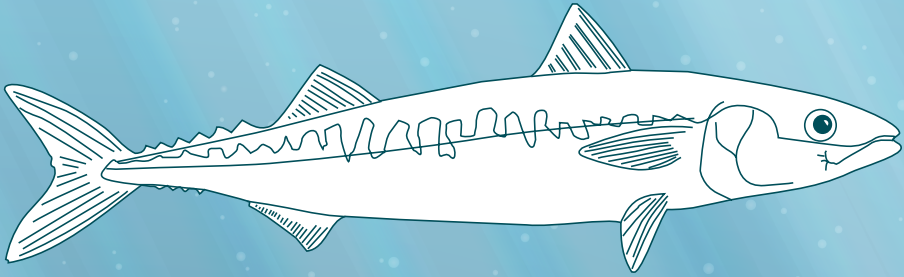
Pollack (*Pollachius pollachius*)

Pollack are one of the most common fish species found around the Irish coastline. They look similar to cod but have no barbel under their chin and have a different shape to their mouth. Pollack can vary in colour to blend in to their environment with those living around reefs having a pale colour, while those living near kelp beds having a deep red/brown colour.

Pollack feed mainly on small fish and shellfish and can grow to over 8kg. They are a strong fish which makes them a very popular species with anglers



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Mackerel *(Scomber scombrus)*

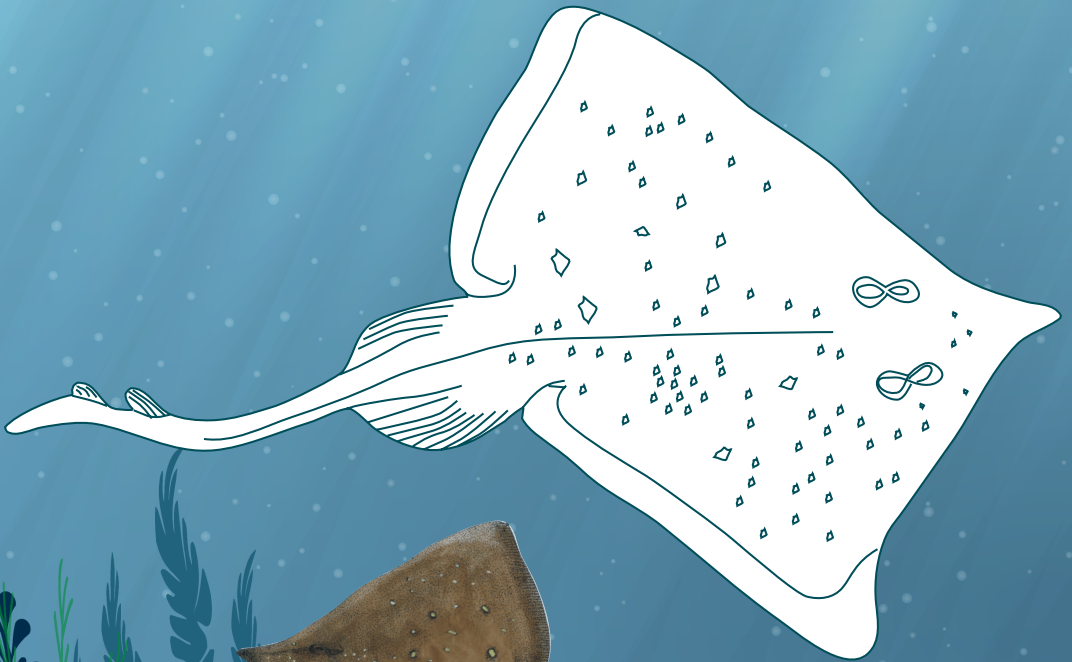
Mackerel have dark backs and greenish blue sides with wavy stripes. They are very common around Ireland, returning to our shores every summer to feed on shoals of sprats, sand eels and small fry.

They can be caught in huge numbers and so are great fun for kids to catch as it is often fast and furious sport. They are delicious to eat, especially when fresh and are also a great fish to use as bait for other species due to their oily nature which leaves a strong scent trail.

Common Skate *(Raja batis)*

These unusual looking bottom dwelling fish have flattened bodies, long tails and fins like wings. They are brown or grey in colour and can change colour to hide in the sea bed. Their swimming movement is like a bird flapping its wings. Skate can grow very big with common skate close to 100kgs being caught in Ireland. It is often said by anglers that when you hook up one of these giants it feels like you are connected to the sea floor... only it moves!!!!

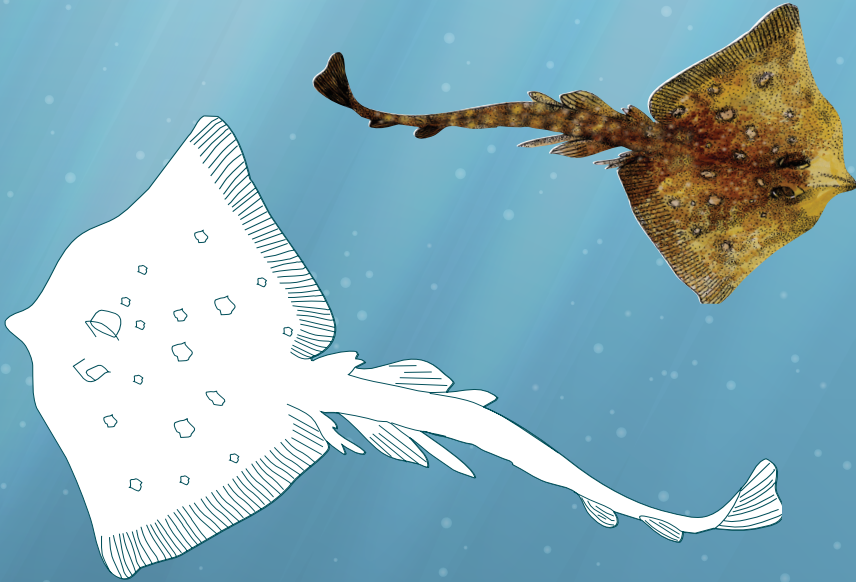
Skate mainly eat shellfish and small sea creatures and will sometimes eat other fish. During spawning, skate produce egg sacks known as mermaid's purses which can anchor to rocks and reefs on the sea bed.



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Skate and Ray lay unusual looking eggs known as Mermaid's Purses



Ray (*Raja spp*)

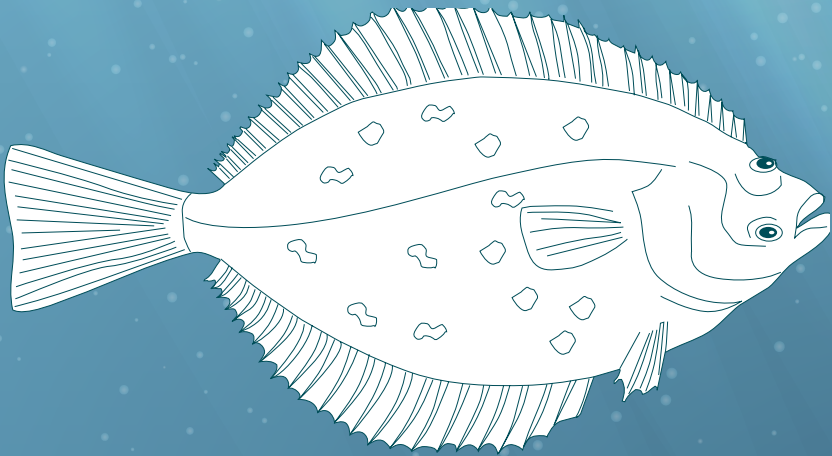
Ray are from the same family as skate and look very similar although they are smaller in size. They vary in colour but are speckled which hides them when they lie on the sea bed. There are eight species of ray found around Ireland's coast: Thornback Ray, Blonde Ray, Cuckoo Ray, Electric Ray, Homelyn Ray, Undulate Ray, Painted Ray and the Sting Ray.

Ray mainly eat shellfish, small sea creatures as well as other fish. They feed on the bottom and we know this as their mouths are on the underside of their bodies. They have no teeth, but powerful crushing pads in their mouths to grind up their food.

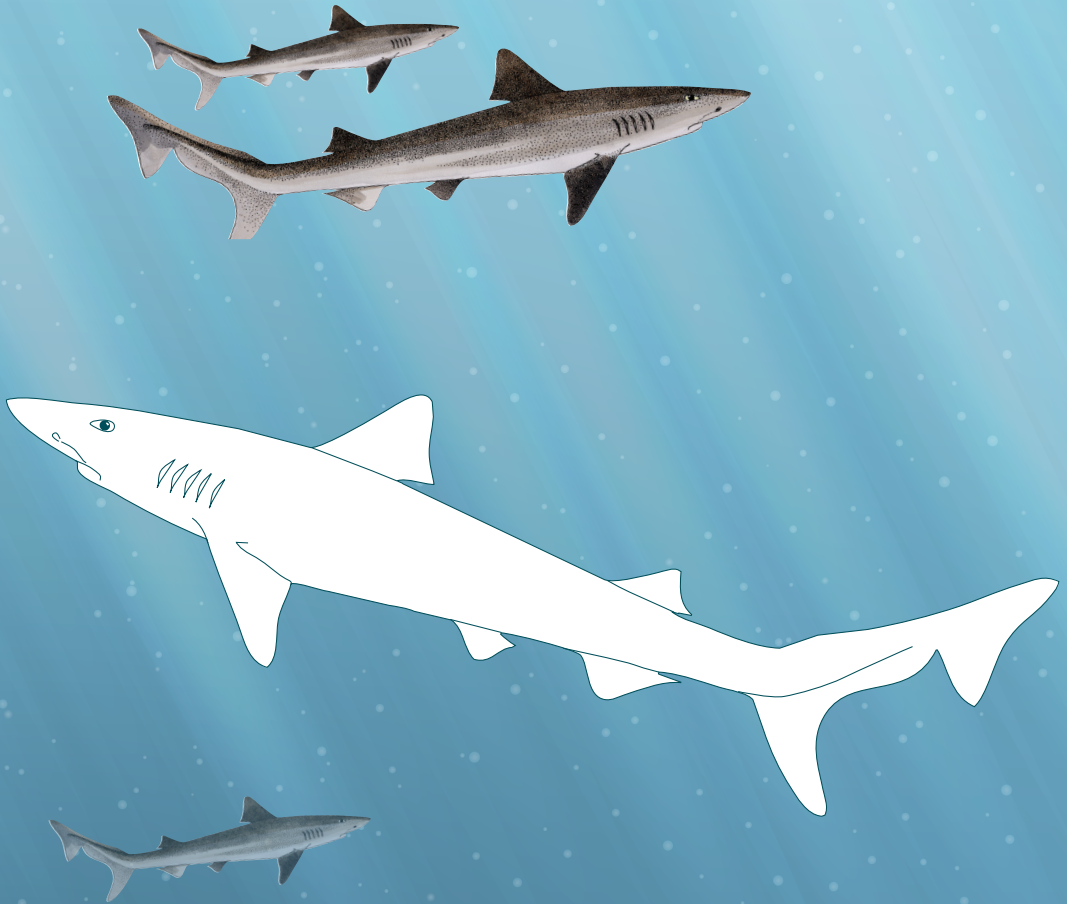
Flounder *(Platichthys flesus)*

Flounder are a type of fish known as flatfish because their bodies are flat instead of round. Many flatfish are born with round bodies like normal fish but when they are very young their body changes and their eyes move to the same side of their face and they become flatfish. Other kinds of flatfish are plaice, dab and sole.

Flounder can also change colour to match their surroundings and they can be difficult to see when lying still on the sea bed. They are also able to survive in fresh water and are often found quite far up a river where most other sea fish could not live.



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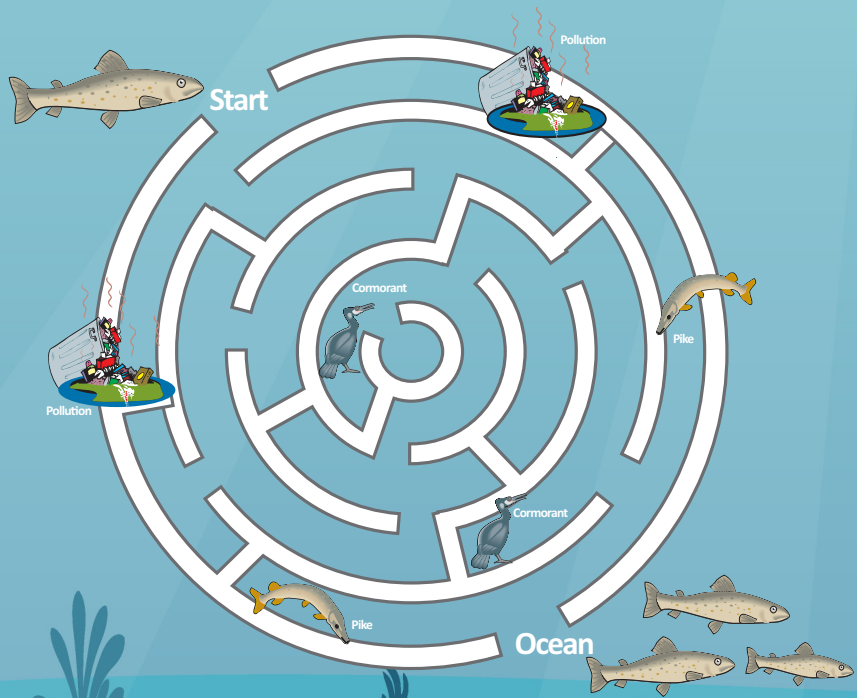


Tope (*Galeorhinus galeus*)

Tope are small sharks that are found around the Irish coastline. They have a thin body, pointed snout and is grey or sandy in colour. Tope, like most sharks have very rough skin and very sharp teeth.

Like other sharks, tope will try and eat anything but they mainly eat other fish. Young tope are born alive and fully formed. They live for a very long time and travel great distances often visiting the seas around other countries. We know that some tope have travelled more than 6000km down to the African coast after leaving Irish waters.

Get the smolt safely to the ocean



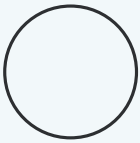
Word maze

Find the following words

- | | | | |
|-------------|---|-----------|---|
| Fishing Rod | ■ | Pollution | ■ |
| River | ■ | Bait | ■ |
| Trout | ■ | Boat | ■ |
| Salmon | ■ | Ray | ■ |
| Lake | ■ | Rudd | ■ |
| Bass | ■ | Sea | ■ |
| Sea | ■ | Water | ■ |
| Shark | ■ | Pike | ■ |
| Eel | ■ | Float | ■ |

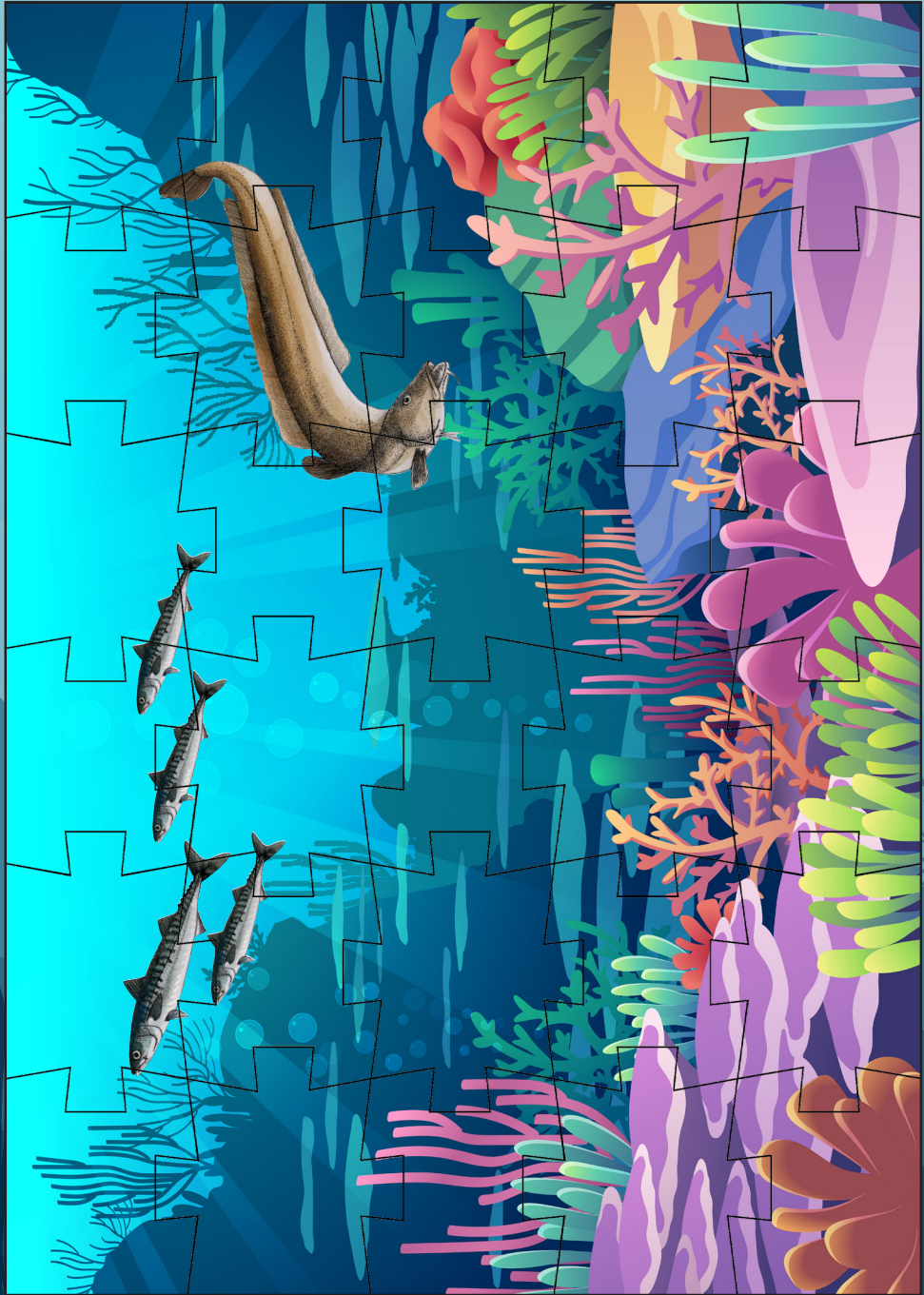
F	A	R	I	V	E	R	S	S	A	B
T	I	A	W	A	E	A	A	P	A	A
R	A	S	A	A	L	A	A	O	F	I
O	A	A	H	P	T	L	A	L	A	T
U	A	L	A	I	A	E	O	L	A	A
T	N	M	A	K	N	A	R	U	D	D
P	R	O	E	E	T	G	A	T	A	A
R	A	N	P	A	A	A	R	I	C	A
A	S	H	A	R	K	L	A	O	A	S
A	A	D	A	A	A	A	D	N	D	E
B	O	A	T	Y	A	T	A	A	A	A

Let's Go Fishing!



Connect the dots from 1 to 70 to see what you've caught!

Why not make your own Saltwater scene jigsaw?



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)



Sensory Saltwater Habit Bottle

Why not make a sensory bottle so you can have a memory of the ocean all year round!

What you will need:

- Empty water bottle-plastic or glass
- ½ cup of fine sand
- Eco friendly glitter
- Marbles
- Water
- Small seashells
- Blue food colouring
- Old small sea animal bath toys
- Small funnel
- Glue
- Sticky tape and ribbon optional

Method:

1. Use the funnel to pour the sand into the bottle. The sand should fill about 2 inches of the bottom of the bottle.
2. Add several drops of food colouring and glitter to the water in a separate container, again fill the bottle leaving 2 inches at the top empty.
3. Gently add the seashells and the sea animals next.
4. When everything has been added and you are happy with your bottle add more water to fill the bottle up.
5. Secure the lid with glue, allow drying time.
6. You can tape or wrap a ribbon round for decoration and to keep everything secure.





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For further information on our education programmes
including the Something Fishy education resource,
please log on to www.fisheriesireland.ie

For educational and interactive games on our
Fisheries resource, check out www.somethingfishy.ie

Inland Fisheries Ireland
www.fisheriesireland.ie
+353 (1) 8842600



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accounts fund