



American Eel

Anguilla rostrata



Description:

- ◆ slender, snake-like body
- ◆ small pointed head
- ◆ one long dorsal fin extends more than half of the body
- ◆ dorsal fin is continuous with caudal and anal fins
- ◆ one small gill slit before pectoral fin
- ◆ lower jaw projects beyond upper
- ◆ yellow to olive brown above
- ◆ yellow to white below

Size:

- ◆ up to 60 inches

Range:

- ◆ found in Atlantic, Great Lakes, Mississippi River basins and Gulf basins from
- ◆ Newfoundland to South Dakota and south to South America

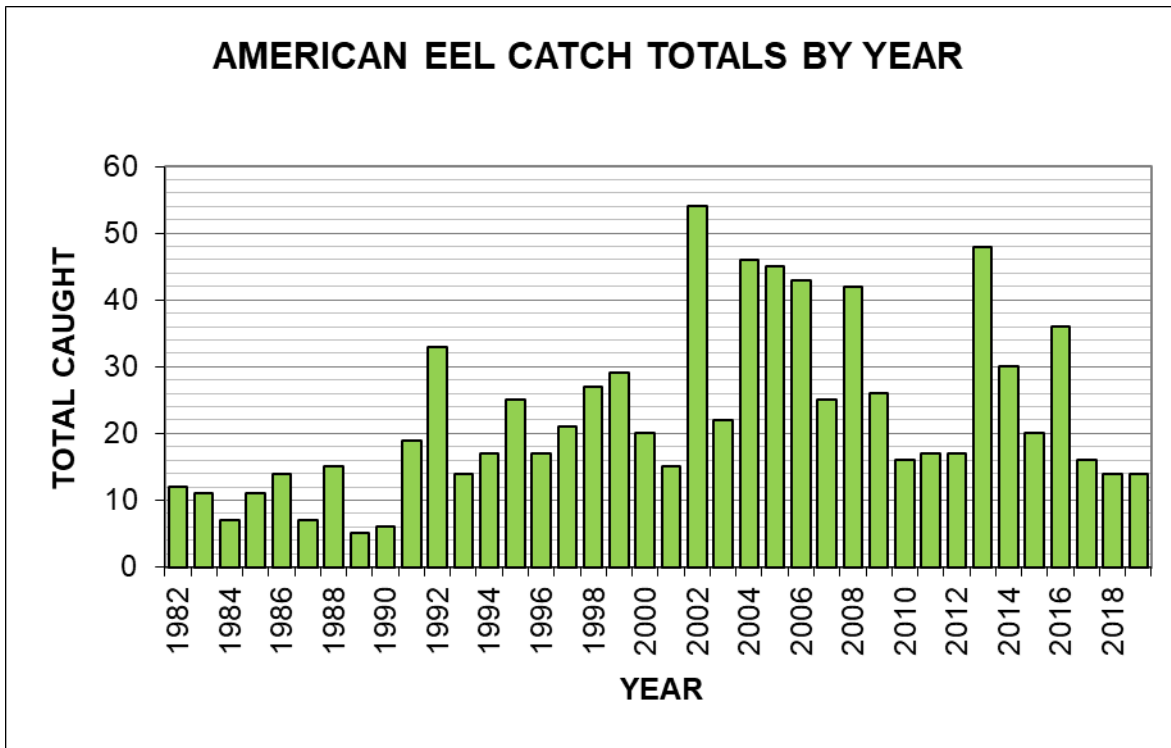
Facts:

- ◆ catadromous species (spawns in Atlantic Ocean and ascends streams and rivers in North and South America to live its life)
- ◆ hides during daylight hours
- ◆ sexually mature adults migrate to the Sargasso Sea to spawn and eventually die
- ◆ eels may reside in freshwater systems for up to 20 years before migrating to spawn
- ◆ females lay up to 4 million buoyant eggs, which are then fertilized by the males
- ◆ larvae will drift toward North American coastal waters for up to 18 months
- ◆ eels exude a prominent layer of slime
- ◆ capable of breathing through its skin as well as its gills
- ◆ can endure several hours out of water



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For more information about American eels, please check out these articles:

The Incredible American Eel

<http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/arteels15.htm>

Species Profile: American Eel

<http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/pdf/2006/digmar20-27.pdf>