

# Did You Know This About the American Eel?



American eel in the Mi'kmaq language is **Kataq**.

Also, American eels are currently a "Special Concern" for the **Species at Risk Act!**

**Find the underlined words in the wordsearch below.**

**Mi'kmaq Uses:** Eel was used in many Mi'kmaq traditions, ceremonies and was a valued resource.

**TRADITIONAL** – It's a traditional animal for the Mi'kmaq people, used for generations for food to medicine.

**CEREMONIES** – Eel were used in many ceremonies, including a young man's first harvest, etc.

**FOOD** – Eels were and still are used for food during tough Times for the Mi'kmaq.

**HARVESTING** – Traditionally harvest using spears, but also can use eel pots. Harvest what you need and use all aspects of the eel.

**HEALING** – Mi'kmaq used almost every aspect of the eel for healing treatments. (ex. Eel skins used for sprains, ties. Eel oil provided treatment for infections (ear infections))

**MEDICINAL** – Eels were used for medicine.

**NETUKULIMK** – Mi'kmaq belief on how we should keep our land and resources as natural as possible; To give and take without harming or affecting the natural environment.

**RESPECT** – Respect the eel and all animals as if it were a human or spirit, its part of Mi'kmaq netukulimk.

**EQUALLIFE** – Mi'kmaq tradition is to represent all life equal, treat with respect and gratitude.

**SPIRITUAL** – Eels were used to calm and comfort the sick/dying as they move into the Spirit World.

**SPEAR** – Traditional Mi'kmaq fishing tool for eels.

**SHARING** – Important part of Mi'kmaq culture. Share your food (eel) with others, especially with those who are elderly/young or injured, thus cannot hunt for food.

**Life Cycle:** The eel changes a few times throughout its life.

**LEPTOCEPHALI** – Transparent larval stage that resembles a leaf or ribbon flowing through the water current.

**TRANSPARENT** – Eels are transparent during larval and first non-larval stages in life.

**GLASS EEL** – Small transparent eels, not larvae.

**YELLOW** – After glass eel, the next stage in life is yellow. This is when they are at their peak, and are very active in travel and in hunting.

**EEL** – An elongated fish, with jaws and their fins are fused together usually for one fin that runs along the eel where the dorsal and caudal would be.

**SILVER** – Old reproductive stage in life.

**REPRODUCTION** – Only reproduce once in their life.

**Migration:** From the Sargasso Sea to all over North and South America in rivers and streams.

**MIGRATE** – Eels migrate from Ocean to river, and rivers to the Ocean.

**SARGASSO SEA** – A body of water off the Southern US where most eels start and end their lives.

**SALTWATER** – Where most eels are born and die, migrate away from saltwater to freshwater.

**FRESHWATER** – Where some eels migrate to live and feed.

**HABITAT** – Where an organism lives or calls home.

