

EELS! TRAPS AND TALES

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This is an eel trap made by Dot Peters, a Yarra Yarra Elder and artist. Eels have long been a major food source for Aboriginal people, who invented these traps to catch eels from rivers. For thousands of years, Elders have taught young people how to weave these long, special traps. As a child, Dot Peters would sit with her grandmother, learning to weave eel traps using reeds and sword grass.

Did you know that eels cannot swim backwards? There is a small hole at the end of the trap that baby eels can swim through. When eels swim into the narrow trap they can't get out!



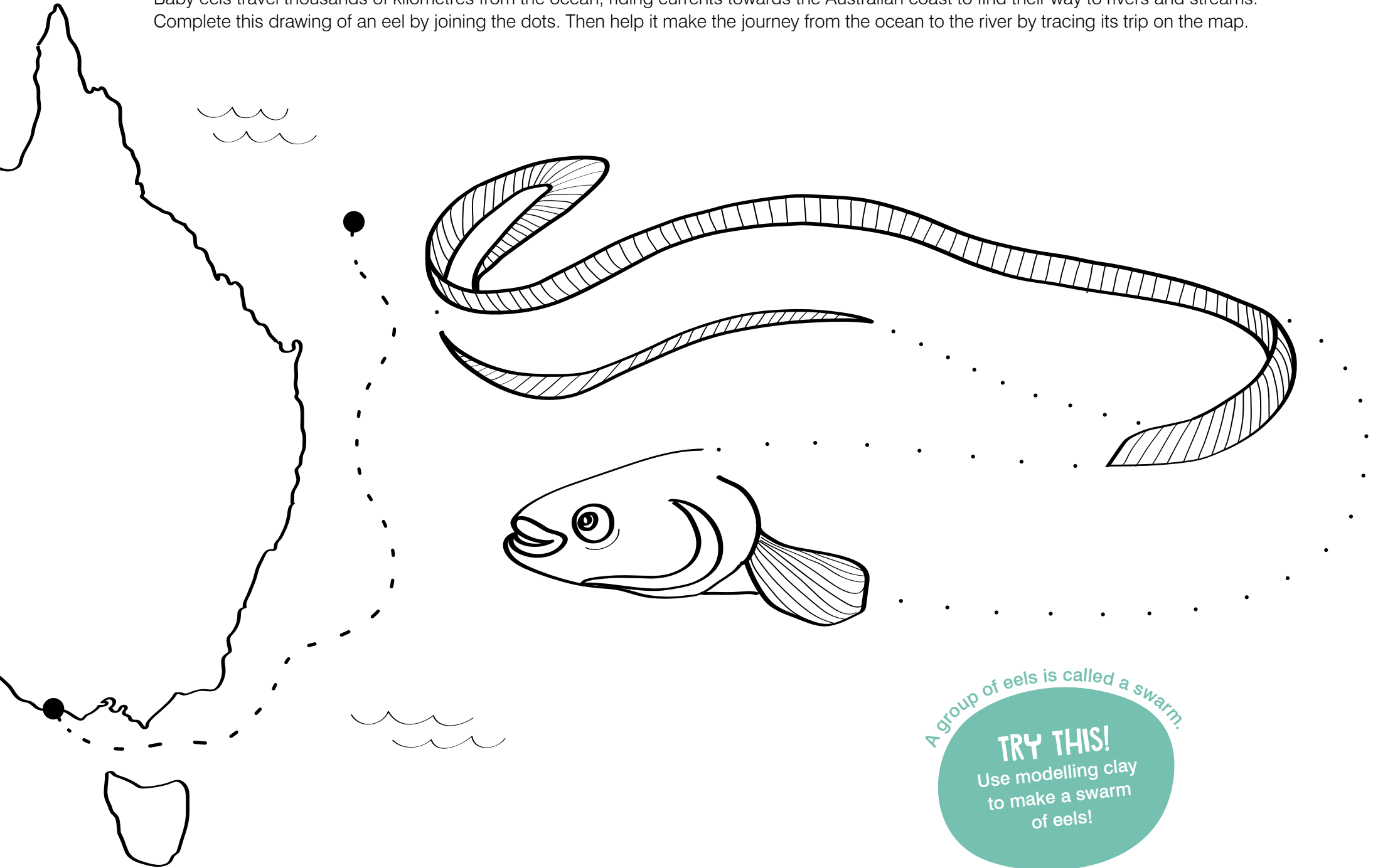
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Dot Peters *Eel trap*, 2004. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Purchased with funds donated by Supporters and Patrons of Indigenous Art, 2004. © Dot Peters.

CREATIVE VICTORIA

Baby eels travel thousands of kilometres from the ocean, riding currents towards the Australian coast to find their way to rivers and streams. Complete this drawing of an eel by joining the dots. Then help it make the journey from the ocean to the river by tracing its trip on the map.



A group of eels is called a swarm.

TRY THIS!
Use modelling clay
to make a swarm
of eels!