

EELS! TRAPS AND TALES

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This is an eel trap made by Dot Peters. She is an Elder and artist from the Yarra Yarra people.

A long time ago, even thousands of years ago, Aboriginal people made traps like this to catch eels from the river. Eels were a very important food.

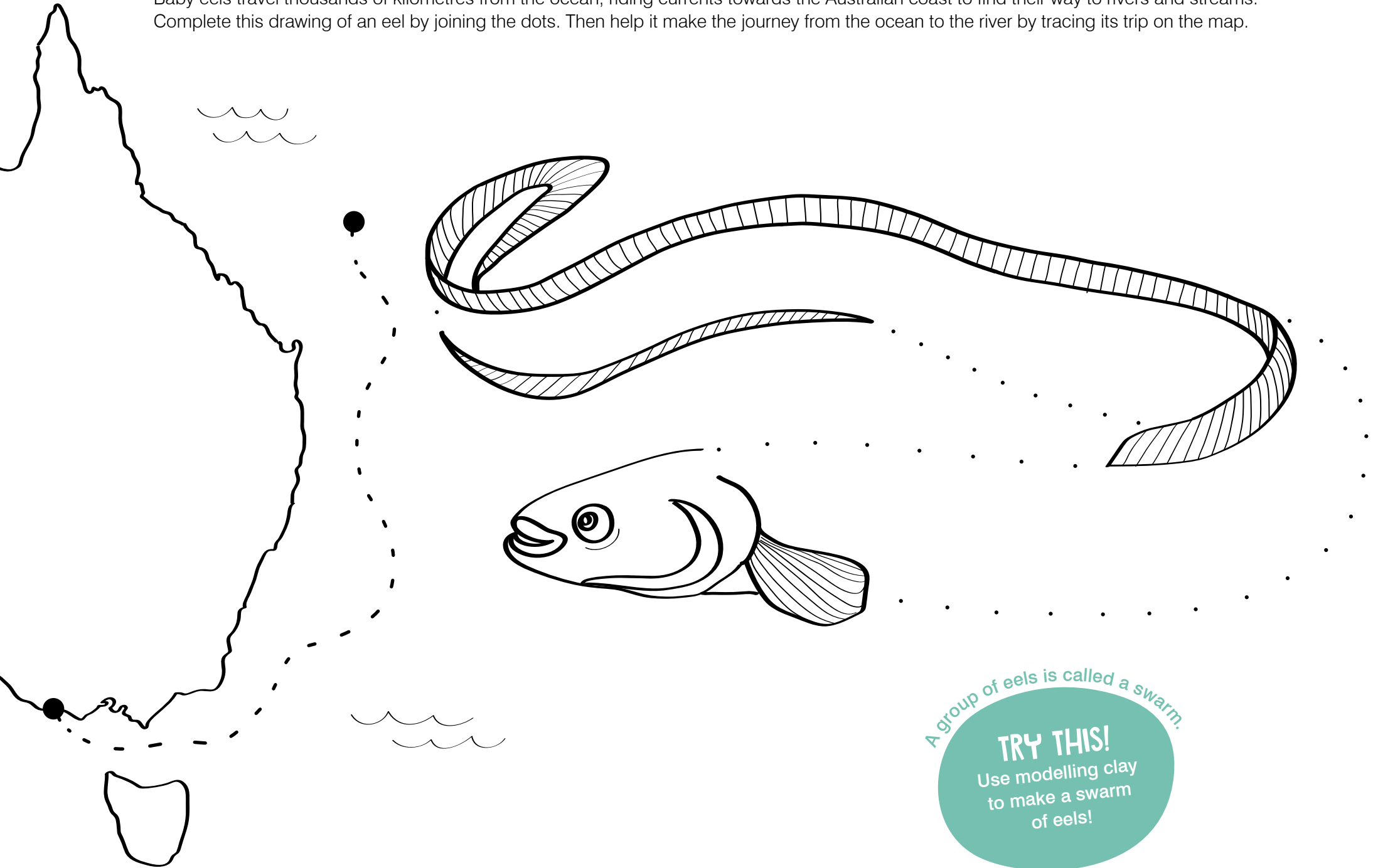
Elders teach children how to make these long, clever traps by weaving reeds and sword grass. When Dot was a little girl, she would sit with her grandmother and learn how to make eel traps.

Did you know that eels can't swim backwards? That's why this trap works! The eels swim into the small hole at the end, but then they can't find their way out!



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

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!