



## 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

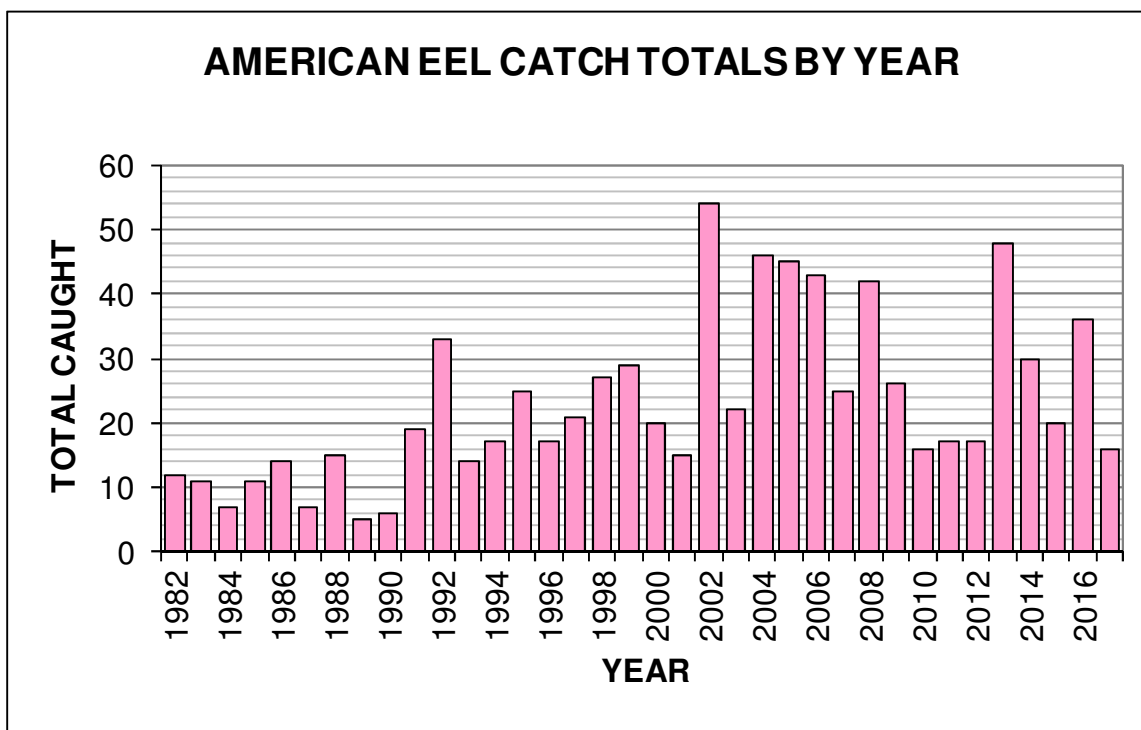
### **Range:**

- ◇ 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



**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>

American Eel Young of Year Survey

\*click on link below and then scroll down to digest page 4

<http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/pdf/2006/digmarcvr-8.pdf>

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