

STUDY QUESTIONS

TO “A SLIPPERY MYSTERY”

Study and learn facts and ideas based on this Young Naturalists nonfiction story in *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, March-April 2024, www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine.

Minnesota Conservation Volunteer magazine is your guide to wild things. Every other month, six times a year, the magazine arrives in your school library. Each one has a story for Young Naturalists like you. **Are you curious about wild things?** Young Naturalists tells true stories that can answer all kinds of questions such as these—

Have you ever heard of a purple wartyback? How about a pink heelsplitter, pimple-back, or monkeyface? All are Minnesota freshwater mussels. Read Young Naturalists stories to learn which species (kinds) of critters live in Minnesota—frogs, salamanders, snakes, wild cats, wild dogs, weasels, mice, and rabbits.

Want to **peek inside the den of a red fox** and see how the kits grow up? Are you a rock hound searching for agates? Have you ever wondered what’s alive under snow? How animals see? Why is a bluebird blue? How birds fly?

Would you like to hear the true story of **giants of the ice age**? Young Naturalists also tells you about the underground universe. You can read the story of a tiny owl that went to a hospital with an injured wing. Find out about a boy who worked in a logging camp. Read the story of Ojibwe children today hunting and gathering like their ancestors did.

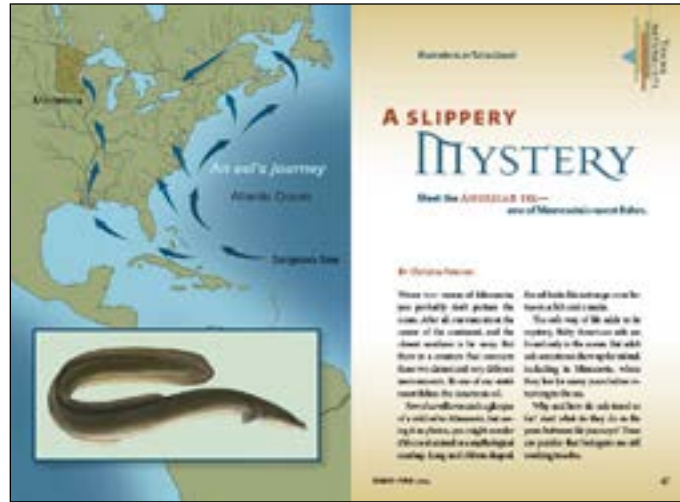
Learn how to get started **camping, snowshoeing, ice fishing, or canoeing**.

Find these stories and more online at www.mndnr.gov/young_naturalists.

Your knowledge of wild things helps you explore and enjoy the outdoors. Have fun!

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1. HOW DOES THE AMERICAN EEL CONNECT MINNESOTA WITH THE OCEAN?

2. WHAT ORGANS DOES AN EEL USE TO TAKE UP OXYGEN? CIRCLE ALL CORRECT ANSWERS.

- A) LUNGS
- B) GILLS
- C) KIDNEYS
- D) SKIN
- E) HEART

3. TRUE OR FALSE: EELS ARE ACTIVE MAINLY DURING THE DAY?

4. WHERE DO MOST MINNESOTA EELS SPEND THEIR LIVES? PUT THE FOLLOWING IN ORDER FROM THE DAY THEY HATCH TO THE DAY THEY PRODUCE THEIR OWN YOUNG. NOTE THAT SOME OF THE OPTIONS MAY BE USED MORE THAN ONCE!

- GULF OF MEXICO
- SARGASSO SEA
- OTHER MINNESOTA RIVERS
- ATLANTIC OCEAN OUTSIDE THE SARGASSO SEA
- MISSISSIPPI RIVER

5. WHAT EATS EELS?

6. HOW DOES PRODUCING ELECTRICITY HARM EELS?

- A) IT ALLOWS IT TO SEE DEAD THINGS FAR AWAY
- B) IT HELPS IT SEE IN THE DARK
- C) IT HELPS IT BUILD ITS WEB
- D) IT HELPS IT POUNCE JUST THE RIGHT DISTANCE TO CAPTURE PREY

7. WHAT FIVE KINDS OF ANIMALS DOES THE STORY TELL US USE SARGASSO SEA SEAWEED FOR FOOD OR SHELTER?

8. WHAT ARE THE FOUR LIFE STAGES OF AN EEL, FROM YOUNGEST TO OLDEST?

Larva, elver, glass eel, adult

Elver, larva, adult, glass eel

Glass eel, larva, elver, adult

Larva, glass eel, elver, adult

9. HOW LONG DO ADULT EELS LIVE IN MINNESOTA?

10. HOW DO EELS HELP KEEP MINNESOTA'S LAKES AND RIVERS CLEAN?

11. TRUE OR FALSE: THERE ARE NO MALE AMERICAN EELS IN MINNESOTA?

12. A SINGLE FEMALE EEL CAN LAY UP TO HOW MANY EGGS?

- a. 20
- b. 2 million
- c. 20 million
- d. 200 million

13. CHALLENGE QUESTION: MOST EELS FOUND IN MINNESOTA ARRIVE VIA THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER. WHAT IS THE OTHER WAY SOME EELS GET HERE?

MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS PRACTICE ITEMS

1. WHAT TWO THINGS COVER AN EEL'S SKIN?

2. NAME THREE ADAPTATIONS THAT HELP AN EEL SWIM.

3. TRUE OR FALSE: MALE EELS ARE BIGGER THAN FEMALE EELS.

4. HOW DOES AN EEL'S COLOR CHANGE HELP PROTECT IT?

5. WHICH OF THESE BORDERS THE SARGASSO SEA?

- a. The Gulf of Mexico
- b. ocean currents
- c. Denmark
- d. Minnesota
- e. a, c, and d

VOCABULARY

canal – an artificial waterway connecting two other bodies of water

debris – garbage

epic – amazing

inland – not by a body of water

inlet – a small outpouching of a water body

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