

# For Creative Minds

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## Can You Find the Fish?

Many animals, including fishes, use camouflage to hide from predators or so they can catch prey. Find the hidden fish and learn more about the type of camouflage it uses.

Concealing Coloration: An animal is the same color as its surroundings or habitat.

*Can you find the flounder?*



Disruptive Coloration: An animal has spots or stripes to make it hard to see the exact outline of their body.

*Can you spot the razorfish hidden amongst the coral?*



Disguise: An animal's body shape or texture looks like its background or habitat; for example, a tail may be shaped like a plant leaf.

*Can you spot the Pacific Spotted Scorpionfish?*



Mimicry: A harmless animal tries to look like a more dangerous animal, or a predator tries to pretend that it is prey.

*Can you tell which of these pictures is the frogfish and which is the toxic, bad-tasting flatworm it's trying to mimic?*



Mimicry answer: the frogfish is on the left

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## Design a Fish

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Fish come in many different body shapes and sizes. Each body type helps a fish survive in its habitat in different ways.

Look at the wide variety of fish body shapes.

Create your own fish by drawing, painting, or sculpting.

Identify your fish's adaptations and design its ideal habitat.

How does your fish's body shape fit its habitat?

What does it eat and how does it get its food?

How does it protect itself from becoming another animal's prey?



bluespine unicorn



caballito de mar



raya con púa



largemouth bass



hammerhead shark



shaggy frogfish



longhorn cowfish



striped marlin



brook trout

## Match the Fish to its Habitat

**Habitat**—where an animal lives. Habitats have food, water, shelter, and space for animals.

**Adaptation**—what helps an animal live in its habitat. Adaptations can be parts of an animals' body, like tails or claws or scales, or what an animal does, like swimming, digging, or hunting at night.

**Freshwater**—non-salty water found in lakes, rivers, streams, ponds, or wetlands.

**Saltwater**—ocean and sea water with salt.

**Brackish water**—water that is a mix of salty and fresh, found where freshwater meets the ocean or sea.

Fishes have different adaptations depending on the type of habitat they live in. Can you match the fishes to their habitats described on the next page?

1 Alligator gars have air bladders to help them stay in one spot without sinking or floating and to help breathe in low-oxygen waters. They prefer freshwater but can survive brackish water.



2 Beluga sturgeon live in cold freshwater for part of their lives and cold saltwater for other parts. They use whiskers near their mouths called barbels to find food.

3

Clownfish need warm saltwater. They live in and around stinging anemones to protect themselves from predators.



4 Adult electric eels cannot see so they use electrical impulses to navigate in dark, muddy waters—similar to bats using echolocation. The impulses also stun prey and fight off predators. They get oxygen from surface air instead of using gills.

5

Electric yellow cichlids live in warm freshwater. They eat small insects. Other cichlids that live in the lake eat algae, plants, or other fish.



6 Turbots live in cold salt or brackish waters. They are flat-bottomed and skim along the sand.



- A. Amazon River, South America
- Muddy freshwater is dark and hard to see through.
  - Water is low in oxygen, so it can be hard to breathe underwater.
- B. Baltic Sea, Europe
- Cold saltwater with a variety of habitats, including sandy seafloor.
  - Multiple rivers flow into the sea, so the water can be brackish (mix of saltwater and freshwater).
- C. Everglades Wetlands, North America
- Warm, mostly freshwater, though close to the ocean it may be brackish (a mix of saltwater and freshwater).
  - Little oxygen in the slow-moving water, so fish must adapt to breathing differently.
- D. Great Barrier Reef, Australia
- A large saltwater reef in the Pacific Ocean home to colorful coral, anemones, and many species of fish.
  - Predators like sharks and barracuda live here, so prey fish need to hide, camouflage, or protect themselves in other ways.
- E. Caspian Sea, Eurasia
- This cold sea is mostly freshwater where rivers such as the Volga flow into it, but it gets saltier further from the rivers.
  - The sea gets 3,300 feet (1005 m) deep, so much of the water is dark and hard to see.
- F. Lake Nyasa/Lake Malawi, Africa
- One of the most diverse freshwater lakes in the world, it is home to hundreds of species of the same kind of fish.
  - Fish have adapted to be different colors and eat different foods to survive in the same habitat.

Answers: 1C alligator gar-Everglades; 2E beluga sturgeon-Caspian Sea; 3D clownfish-Great Barrier Reef; 4A electric eel-Amazon; 5F electric yellow cichlid-Lake Nyasa/Lake Malawi; 6B turbot-Baltic Sea