



Featured Creature



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

American eel *Anguilla rostrata*



Animal Type

Vertebrate



Habitat

Freshwater rivers or lakes;
Buried in the mud or sand



Diet

Varies based on age;
adults eat insects, frogs, fish,
worms, clams & more!



Range

Atlantic Ocean, Great Lakes,
Mississippi, Gulf Basin & South
America

Eel populations have declined by up to 99% in the Ottawa River, Canada.

Why do we care? Eels are top aquatic predators, meaning they keep other animal numbers in check. They're an important part of the food chain!

The cause? The construction of dams is a main factor. To help eels swim past dams, scientists have created **eel ladders**. These act as ramps and give the eels something to push against as they slither upstream, over the dam.

All American eels in the Ottawa River (Canada) are female!

Fun Fact!

They spend up to 25 years in the area, growing and eating. Once mature, the eels make the long swim to the Sargasso Sea in the Atlantic Ocean to mate.

Researcher Spotlight



Alejandro Prescott-Cornejo

Communications & Community
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Ottawa Riverkeeper

 @apcwildlife

What kind of work do I do?

I work in Communications and Community Outreach and play a key role in communicating science to our audience and building relationships with stakeholders, leading to better conservation outcomes. For our work on the American eel, for instance, I use our science team's research to write blogs in an accessible format for wide audiences.

Check out Ottawa Riverkeeper in Canada to find out more about their work: www.ottawariverkeeper.ca/