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## Fish Identification

There are many features that are used to identify different fish. They include body shape, colour, fins, scales, size, markings, lip shape, barbels, spines and tail shape. Like all creatures, different species of fish have different features.

Here are some examples of this:

### Body Shape

Long and thin, "eel-like", no distinct tail, either no paired fins or only one set  
eg Eel

or

Body shape like normal "fish-like" shape, with a distinct tail, with more than one set of paired fins eg Salmon

or

Flat body, a flatfish eg Flounder

### Jaws

Distinct mouth with jaws, gill covers and always with eyes, one pair of fins eg Eel

or

No gill covers, a line of seven holes along each side of the head, no mouth with jaws, no paired fins, a "sucker" in a hood instead. Eg Lamprey





## Body Colour

Silver body colour, with black spots eg Sea trout.

or

Brown and yellow, with large black and red spots eg Brown trout.

or

Obvious pink flanks, fins and especially tail very heavily spotted eg Rainbow trout.



Brown trout

## SCIENTIFIC NAMING

Plants and animals have special scientific names as well as their commonly used names. Brown trout is the common name for a type of fish, its scientific name is *Salmo trutta*. The scientific name is made up of parts that give you information about the plant or animal.

The smallest unit is the individual **Species** eg *trutta*, The Trout.

Related Species are grouped together in a **Genus** eg *Salmo*.

- the scientific name of an animal or plant is made up of its genus and species names eg *Salmo trutta*, the Trout, *Salmo salar*, the Atlantic Salmon. The genus name has a capital letter, the species name does not.



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Related *Genera* are grouped together into a **Family** eg the Salmonidae which includes the *Genera*:

- Salmo (the trout and the Atlantic Salmon)
- Salvelinus (the charrs)

Related *Families* are grouped together into an **Order** eg the Salmoniformes which includes only one *Family*:

- Salmonidae (trouts, salmon, grayling, whitefish and charrs)

Related *Orders* are grouped together into a **Class** e.g. the Actinopterygii, the ray-finned fishes, which includes the *Orders*:

- Salmoniformes (trouts, salmon, grayling, whitefish and charrs)
- Esociformes (Pike)
- Osmeriformes (smelts)