

# The Shapes of Fish Drawing Project

Prepared by Carmel Madigan, Artist & Explorers Outreach Officer,  
Loophead Summer Hedge School



**Aim:** The Shapes of Fish drawing project can be used to encourage children to develop their drawing skills. With a focus on drawing fish found in Irish waters, the children will be able to develop an awareness of line, shape and form. They will also consider the colour, tone, texture of the fish. The children will also learn how to scientifically draw a fish using carbon paper, as well as label the external body features of the fish.

**Discussion:** As part of the project of drawing fish, discuss how scientists in the past may have recorded living things through drawing. Today, we are dependent upon the photographic skills of divers and scientists to capture the beauty and diversity of what lies beneath the ocean.

**Did you know that there are up to 30,000 fish species in the world ocean that have been identified by marine scientists. Approximately 70% of world's fish species live in the Pacific Ocean. Approximately 20% of the world's fish come from the Atlantic Ocean.**

Each fish is unique, has its own shape and external body features. Sometimes hidden within the features of its body are survival strategies. Think about the angler fish that uses a shiny lure to bring prey within range of its sharp teeth or the black spot on the outer body of the John Dory to confuse predators into thinking they are looking into the eye of a much larger fish!

## Types of Drawing:

Often when we see colourful fish, we are drawn to its colour and not its physical shape. Drawing is a powerful learning tool. There are however many different types of drawing techniques including:

- Technical drawing is used in maths and geography to draw shapes, diagrams, tables, charts, maps and graphs.
- Creative drawing is used to express ourselves, be playful, and broadly draw objects and living things.
- Scientific drawing takes us a step closer creating incredible images that capture the exact shape and body structures that allow us to identify a species varying unique features.

By selecting fishy images on line or found in books, you can recreate scientific drawings of the species using carbon paper and a pencil.

## Activities to complete:

1. A Quick Fish Drawing.
2. Drawing a species specific fish, with some carbon assistance!
3. Design and Draw your own Fish Species.

## A Quick Fish Drawing...

Draw a fish..any fish ..max time allowed 2 minutes!





**Now consider the class drawings**

**Did anyone draw an actual species that they can name?**

**Do your fish drawings look similar?**

**Do any of your fish species look like a popular fish species from the movies?**

**Do your fish drawings look like the fish drawings you did in infant classes?**

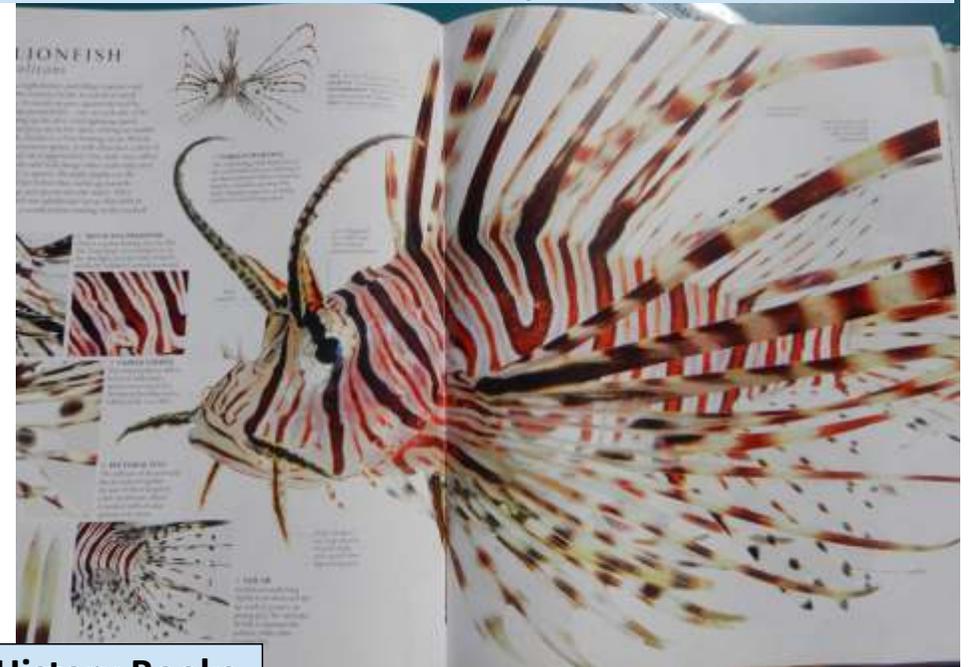
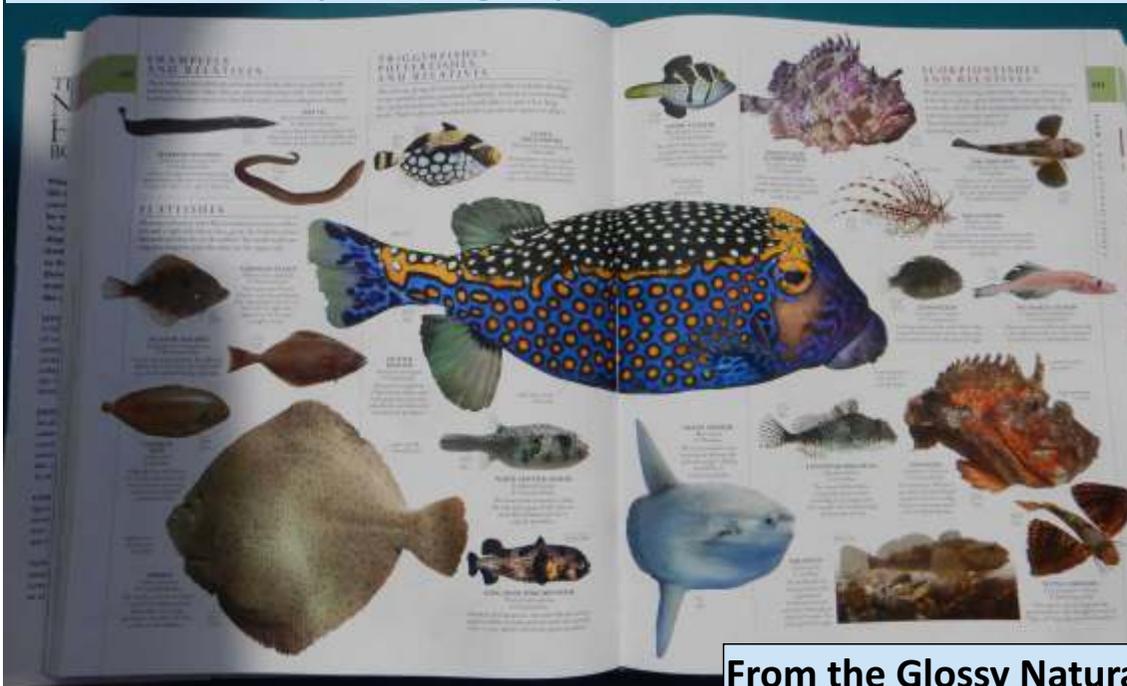
**Did anyone label the parts of the fish or label the species of fish drawn?**

**Name your fish ..Brain storming session...  
to reveal how many species of fish are known to the class..will it be 20, 30 or more ??**

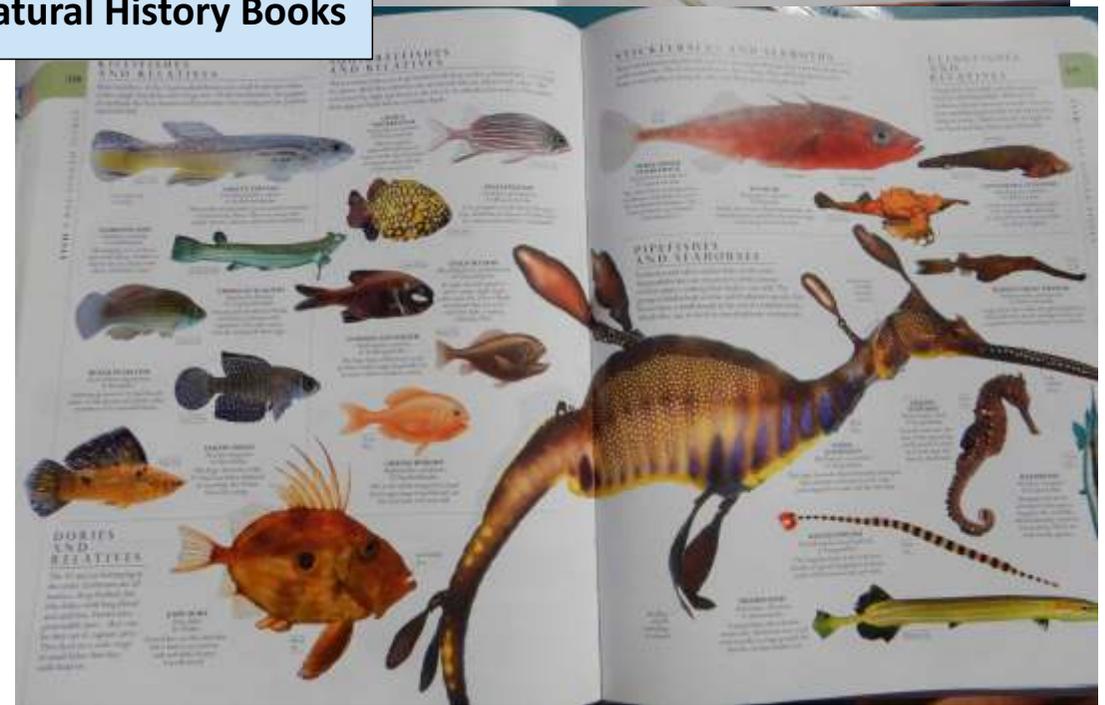
**Make a close study of the lines and shapes of each fish species in the following pages. Consider the varying shapes in relation to each other. Fill in the missing labels on the diagrams. The first one is fully labelled.**

**Also read and learn new fish terms..including the various kind of fins and unusual features.**

Some of the amazing fish of the ocean captured by ocean divers, ocean photographers and ocean scientists. Time to draw a species!



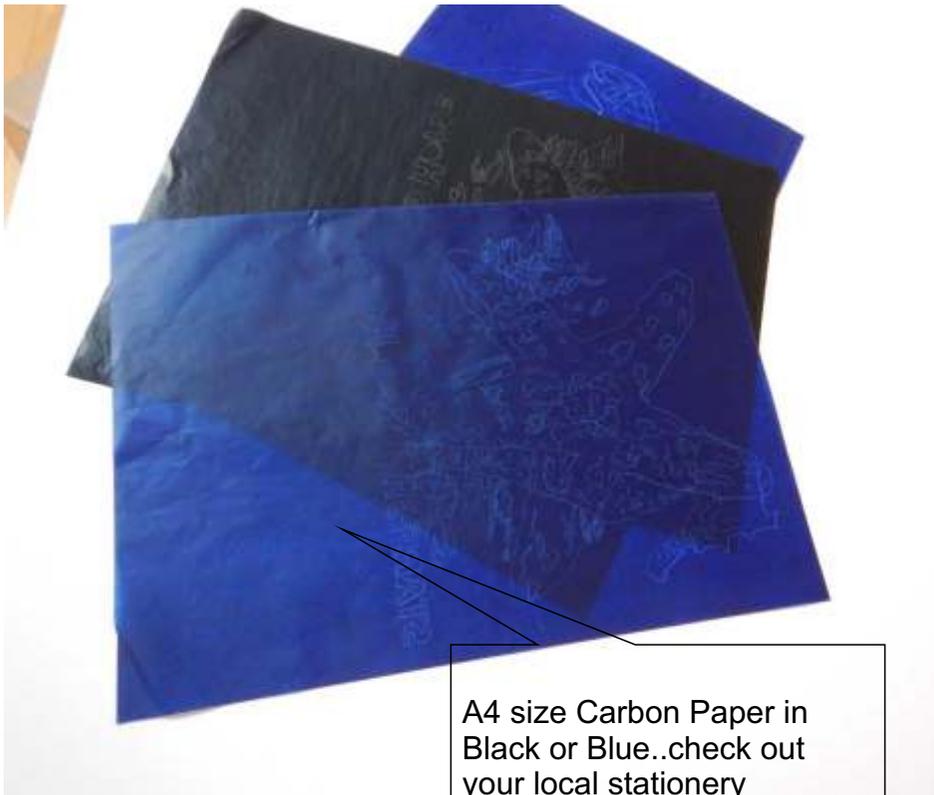
From the Glossy Natural History Books



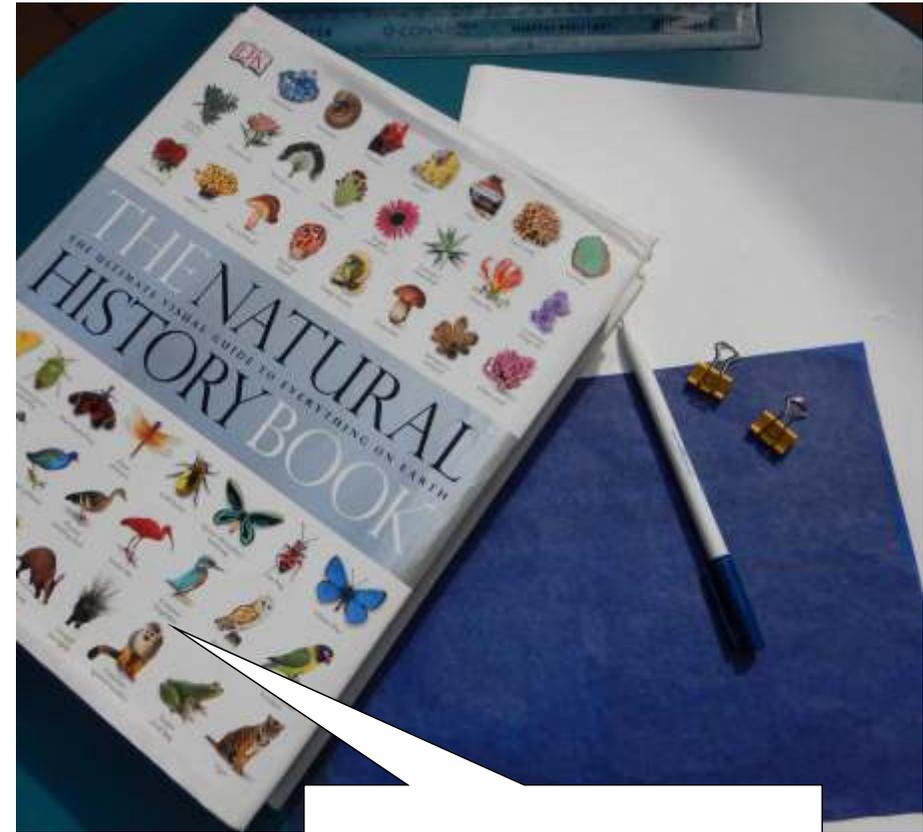
# Drawing a species specific fish, with some carbon assistance!



Materials needed:



A4 size Carbon Paper in Black or Blue..check out your local stationery supplier.



Access to large and interesting fish species images from books or internet (printed). A4 or larger high quality drawing paper (can be coloured), a pen and clips to hold the image, paper and carbon in place. A pencil or biro.

## To draw a species specific fish (like shown)

1

Select your fish species to draw. Make sure you know the name of the species.

Place the carbon sheet (dull side up - shiny side down) behind your image and then place your sheet of paper below the carbon sheet.

Fix the three sheets - image, carbon and paper together so that they do not move. Use paper clips or small bulldog clips to do this.

2

Slowly move your hand and pencil around the outer lines of the image, really carefully. There is no need to apply too much pressure, something like your normal pencil pressure (unless you write faintly..in which case..more pressure than usual).

Do not move the paper or look under the top sheet. Make sure you capture all lines, all patterns and all markings of the image.

3

Make sure you have every line drawn, before you take a look at the bottom sheet of paper.

When you are happy that you have captured all the lines of the image, you can separate all three layers and take a good look at your species specific image.

Now you can label it and put the fish name on it. Take a good look at the lines and try to memorise this fish, for the next time you are asked to draw a fish!

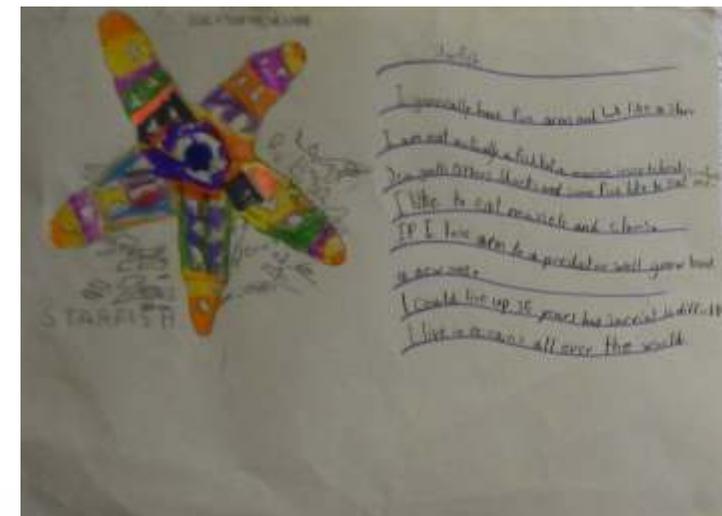
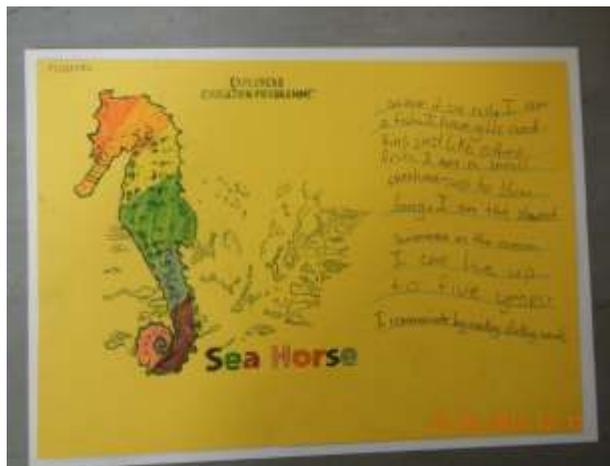
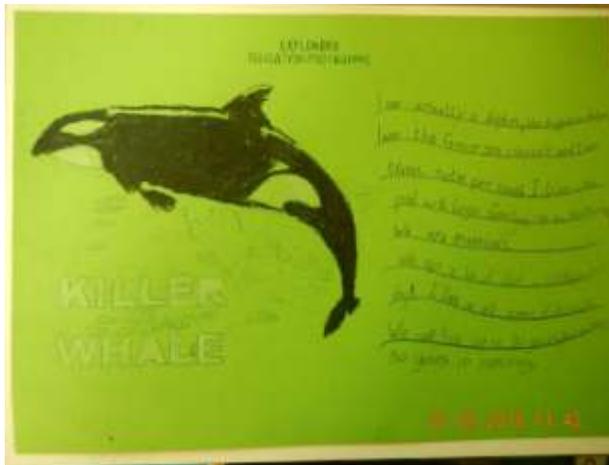


The Spotted Box Fish is an incredible tropical fish full of line colour and pattern. Who could have drawn a shape like this for a quick fish drawing!

Drawing is a powerful learning tool..it shows us all the lines of the Universe!



Let your imagination roll..having drawn perfect lines  
you can make perfect projects! These ones are by 3rd and 4th classes





## Design and Draw your own Fish Species..be imaginative & Name it!

A large, empty rectangular box with a blue border, intended for drawing a fish species.

Where will your fish live tropical or temperate?  
What depth

What will its prey be?  
What will its main strategy be to catch prey?

What will its dimensions be, how many fins, what shape?  
Which fish will inspire your creation the most?