

WATER CREATURE IDIOMS AND EXPRESSIONS

idiom	meaning	example
a big fish in a small pond	someone who is important in a small area	Joe was a big fish in a small pond. When he went to uni, that all changed.
as slippery as an eel	cunning/devious and impossible to catch	He robbed a number of businesses then disappeared. He's as Slippery as an eel.
clam up	suddenly become quiet and stop talking	Whenever I ask him if he's being bullied, he just clams up.
crocodile tears	you cry but are not really upset or sorry	I'm sick of Leela's crocodile tears, she is only doing it for attention.
different kettle of fish	something is different from the thing you have been talking about	I said I'd spend an afternoon with him, a week is a different kettle of fish.
drink like a fish	drink too much alcohol	I think Tara has a problem; she drinks like a fish.
fish for compliments	try and elicit compliments from someone	Kirsty always fishes for compliments; she is so annoying.
have a frog in one's throat	someone can't speak as their mouth is dry and they need to cough	The presentation went badly. He had a frog in his throat so couldn't get the words out.
have a whale of a time	have a really good time	The kids had a whale of a time at the water park yesterday.
have bigger fish to fry	have more important/interesting things to do	I can't help you look for a new bike. I've got bigger fish to fry.

idiom	meaning	example
like a fish out of water	feel uncomfortable in a certain situation	I felt like a fish out of water at Oxford university, everyone was posh but I'm not.
loan shark	a person who lends money but charges extremely high interest rates	Barry is in trouble, he borrowed £200 from a loan shark, and they want £500 back.
packed in like sardines	lots of people or objects close together with little room	I went to a hen farm. It was horrible, all the chickens were packed in like sardines.
plenty more fish in the sea	when a relationship fails, there are more people to have relationships with	Everyone is telling me there's plenty more fish in the sea, but I only want Hugh.
red herring	a misleading clue	There are so many red herrings in the film. You will never guess who the murderer is.
smell fishy	seem suspicious	The car I want to buy is way too cheap, something smells fishy.
warm the cockles of one's heart	a warm and happy feeling	I'll tell you a story about a little girl and a homeless man. It'll warm the cockles of your heart.

