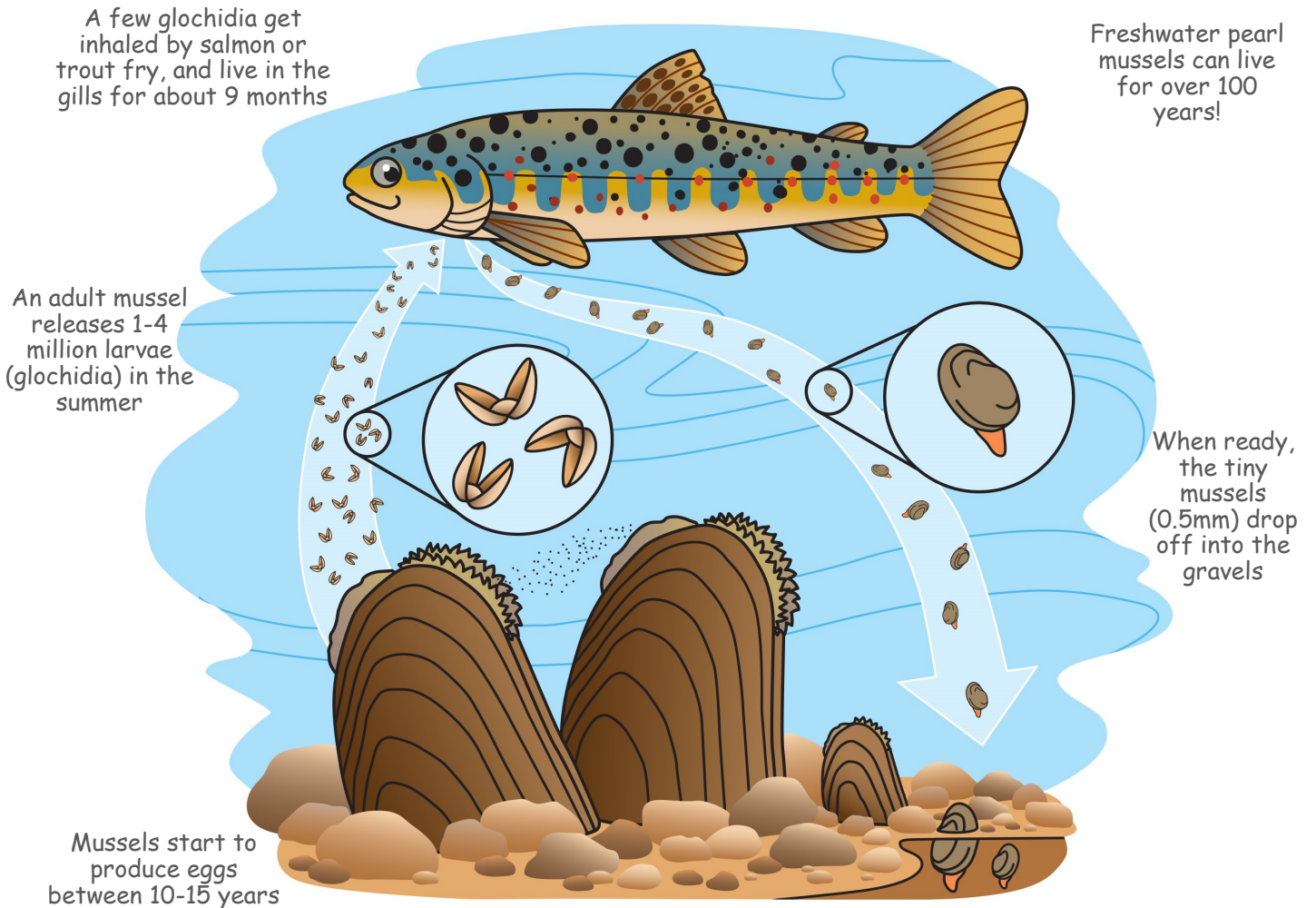


# Freshwater Pearl Mussel



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- \* The scientific name for Freshwater pearl mussel is *Margaritifera margaritifera*
- \* Freshwater pearl mussels are critically endangered, which means they could go extinct from our rivers
- \* They have declined by 90% in the last 100 years
- \* There are just a handful of sites in Cumbria where these mussels are found
- \* An adult mussel will filter 50 litres of water a day so they are great at helping to clean our rivers
- \* However, pearl mussels need to live in well oxygenated, healthy rivers so pollution is bad for them

## All mixed up!

Can you work out these words?

PLARE      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

SMLOAN    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

VLAAER    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

VEGLAR    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

# Freshwater Pearl Mussel

- \* A lack of salmon and trout in many of our rivers mean that any adults mussels living there don't have a host for the glochidia, so the tiny larvae will not survive
- \* Only a few mussels produce a pearl which can vary in colour and shape
- \* A pearl is created when the inner "mother of pearl" shell grows in layers over a parasite in its shell, so it's a bit like a scab!
- \* Out of 1 million glochidia released it is thought that just one or two will develop into an adult mussel

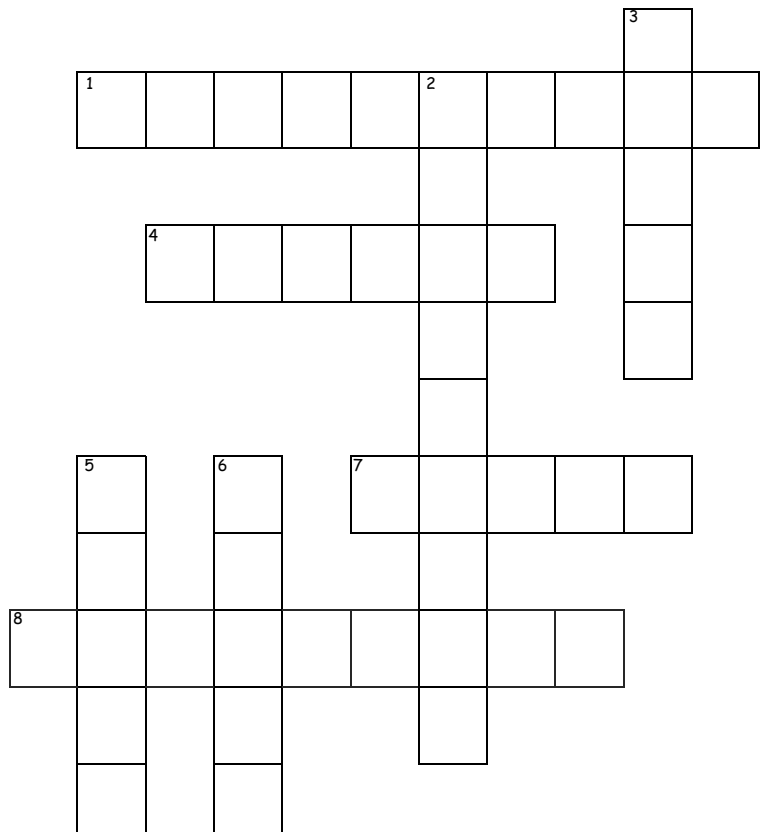
## Crossword

### Across

- To be at risk from going extinct
- A leaping fish that mussels need
- The amount of water mussels filter per day
- What we and wildlife do not want in our rivers

### Down

- What mussel larvae are called
- What may be found in a mussel
- Another fish the mussels need
- Where glochidia live for 9 months



## Why don't you...

- Write a poem about freshwater pearl mussels
- Draw a picture of mussels and fish in a river, or make your own mussel
- With an adult go for a walk along a river to see if you can spot any salmon, trout or freshwater invertebrates

## LifeR4Ever Kent project is

- Improving the rivers to make them better for freshwater pearl mussels as well as lots of other wildlife
- Planting trees, removing barriers to fish migration and tackling invasive plant species
- Breeding lots of freshwater pearl mussels to release into the rivers