

# River Glossary

<b>bank</b>	The riverbank is the land at the side of the river.
<b>basin</b>	The land water must cross to reach a river. It collects all available water from tributaries, creeks and streams in its area.
<b>bed</b>	The bed is the bottom of a river. A riverbed can be made of sand, rocks or mud depending on the river.
<b>canal</b>	A man-made waterway that is used so that boats can transport goods across the country.
<b>current</b>	The strength and speed of the river. Water always flows downhill; the steeper the ground is, the stronger the current will be.
<b>confluence</b>	The junction of two rivers, especially rivers of approximately equal width.
<b>delta</b>	A wide muddy or sandy area where some rivers meet the sea. The river slows down and drops all the sediment it was carrying.
<b>downstream</b>	The direction that the water flows, downhill towards the sea.
<b>erosion</b>	A fast flowing river can damage the riverbanks and wash bits of them downstream, making the river wider.
<b>estuary</b>	Where a river reaches the ocean and the river and ocean mix. Estuaries are normally wide and flat.
<b>floodplain</b>	The flat area around a river that often gets flooded when the level of water in the river is high.
<b>fresh water</b>	Rainwater that falls from the sky has no salt in it. We call this fresh water.
<b>meander</b>	A river that follows a winding course.
<b>mouth</b>	The end of a river where it flows into the sea, another river or a lake.
<b>salt water</b>	The type of water in seas and oceans.
<b>silt</b>	Small bits of dirt or sand that are carried along by a river.
<b>source</b>	The start of a river is its source. This could be a spring on a hillside, a lake, a bog or marsh. A river may have more than one source.
<b>stream</b>	A small river.
<b>tidal river</b>	At the end of a river, near the ocean, water from the sea flows up the river when the tide comes in. This part of the river is called 'tidal'.
<b>tributary</b>	A smaller river or stream that joins a big river.
<b>upstream</b>	The opposite direction to the way the water in a river flows.
<b>watershed</b>	Water flows down the side of hills into rivers, but water that lands on opposite sides of the same hill might flow into different rivers. The watershed is the boundary between two river basins.