

# Cyemidae

Clofnam 78

by L. Saldanha and M.-L. Bauchot

Common name: Snipe-eels (En).

Body compressed, band-like; eye small (*Cyema*) or much reduced and covered by integument (*Neocyema*); nostrils close together in front of eye (*Cyema*) or wide apart and low down on snout (*Neocyema*). Jaws moderately (*Neocyema*) or greatly elongate and delicate (*Cyema*); teeth minute (*Cyema*) to small (*Neocyema*), sharp; gill opening small, lateral. Dorsal and anal fins confined to tail region, confluent with caudal fin; pectoral fins present; pelvic fins absent.

Bathy- and abyssopelagic fishes. Carnivorous. Larva leptocephalus with a short and deep body.

Genera 2; in Clofnam area 1.

Recent revision: Castle (1979).

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**CYEMA** Günther, 1878

Clofnam 78.1

See species for diagnosis, biology, etc.

Species 1.

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***Cyema atrum*** Günther, 1878

Clofnam 78.1.1

Common synonyms: none.

Common names: none.



**Diagnosis:** body compressed, band-like; trunk and tail of same length. Anterior nostrils tubular, posterior nostrils pore-like, close together in front of small eyes. Jaws produced into a greatly elongate and delicate beak; teeth minute, sharp, close-set, rasp-like on jaws and vomer. Gill openings small, lateral. Dorsal and anal fins well developed, beginning at the same level, confined to tail region and projecting as a pair of pointed lobes beyond caudal fin, which consists of a few short rays; pectoral fins present; pelvic fins absent. Lateral line with 90 pores. Vertebrae about 80. **Colour:** violet velvet-black or dark brown. **Size:** to 131 mm.

**Habitat:** bathy- and abyssopelagic down to 5,100 m. **Food:** carnivorous. **Reproduction:** very few data; leptocephalus larva with body very short



Teeth of upper jaw

and deep, easily recognized by having the fewest myomeres of any known eel larva, around 80.

*Distribution:* eastern Atlantic, from Gibraltar southward to the Azores and Madeira; not recorded from Mediterranean. Elsewhere, southward to southern Africa and widely distributed in all oceans.

