
Derichthyidae

(including Nessorhamphidae, Clofnam 85)

Clofnam 83

by M.-L. Bauchot and L. Saldanha

Common name: Oceanic eels (En).

Body elongate, scaleless, compressed posteriorly, constricted between head and pectoral fins in *Derichthys*; anus behind midpoint of body. Snout blunt or long; eyes well developed. Mouth reaching to or almost to posterior eye margin. Dorsal fin beginning behind pectoral fin tip; pectoral fins well developed; caudal fin truncate, confluent with dorsal and anal fins. Lateral line present, with 80–132 pores.

Epi- to bathypelagic fishes down to 2,000 m. Feeding mainly on crustaceans. Reproduction in warm hydrological season. Transparent larval stage (leptocephalus) with metamorphosis.

Genera 2, both in area.

Recent revision: Castle (1970).

KEY TO GENERA AND SPECIES

- 1a Snout short and blunt, jaws equal or upper only slightly longer than lower; 80–90 pores in lateral line *Derichthys serpentinus* (p. 575)
- 1b Snout elongate and pointed, upper jaw markedly longer than lower; 132 pores in lateral line *Nessorhamphus ingolfianus* (p. 576)

DERICHTHYS Schmidt, 1930

Clofnam 83.1

See species for diagnosis, biology, etc.

Species 1.

Recent revision: Castle (1970).

Derichthys serpentinus Gill, 1884

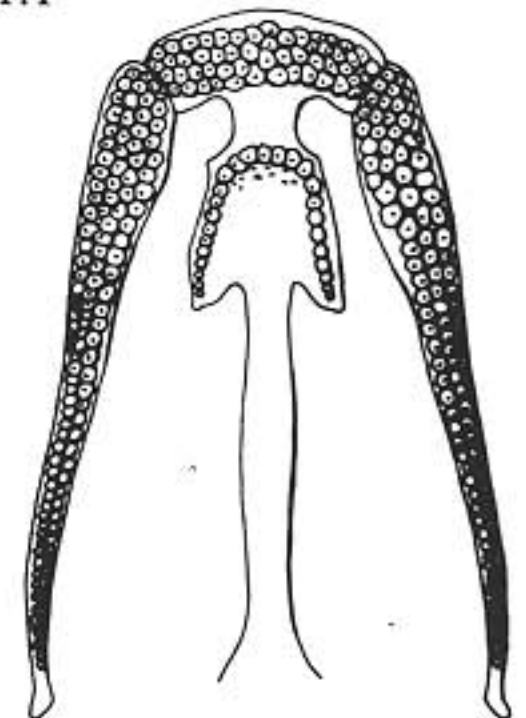
Clofnam 83.1.1

Common synonyms: none.

Common name: Narrownecked oceanic eel (En).



Diagnosis: body elongate, scaleless, constricted between head and pectoral fins; anus slightly behind midpoint of body. Eyes well developed. Nostrils pore-like, dorsolateral, dividing snout into almost equal thirds. Mouth reaching or almost to posterior eye margin. Teeth small and conical, jaws with 3–5 irregular rows, diminishing posteriorly;

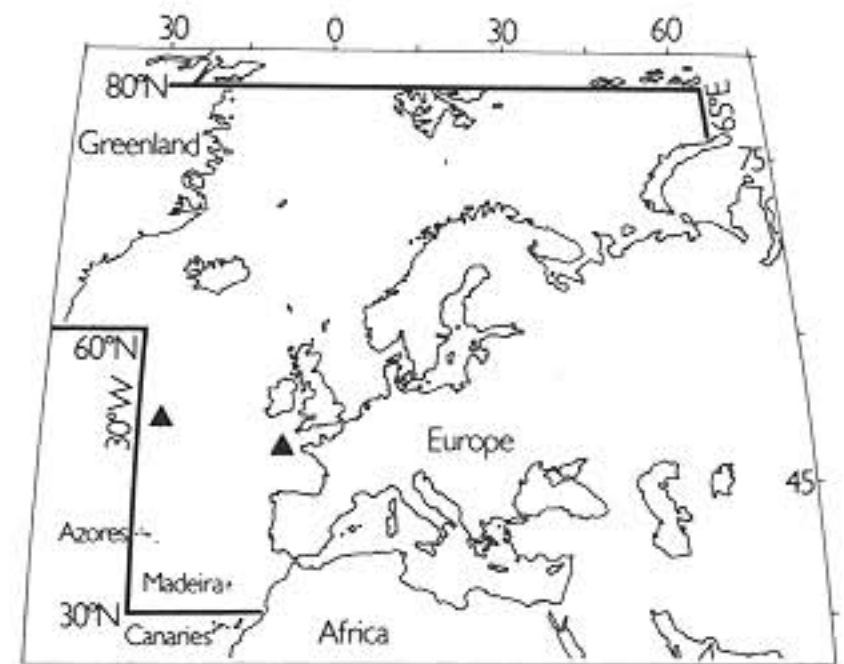


Teeth of upper jaw

a transverse band with 3–5 rows on premaxillae, continuous with those of maxillae; a horseshoe-shaped patch on vomer, separated from premaxillary teeth, sometimes with inner rudimentary teeth. Gill openings small, ventrolateral, well separated. Dorsal and anal fins confluent with caudal fin; dorsal fin origin far behind pectoral fins; dorsal fin markedly lower in about last third of caudal region. Lateral line: 80–90 pores; 3 supra-temporal pores; tubular ethmoidal pores at tip of snout. Vertebrae: total 126–134; abdominal 59–61. *Colour*: tawny olive to mouse grey with glints of bluish sheen on neck; fins slightly pigmented but almost transparent. *Size*: to 31.5 cm.

Habitat: bathypelagic, down to 2,000 m. *Food*: carnivorous (Natantia crustaceans among other prey). *Reproduction*: warm hydrological season. Leptocephali (*L. anguilloides* Schmidt, 1916) with metamorphic stages, length of larval life unknown.

Distribution: eastern North Atlantic. Elsewhere, Central and South Atlantic, also Indian and Pacific Oceans.



NESSORHAMPHUS Schmidt, 1930

Clofnam 85.1

See species for diagnosis, biology, etc.

Species 2; in Clofnam area 1.

Nessorhamphus ingolfianus (Schmidt, 1912)

Clofnam 85.1.1

Common synonyms: none.

Common name: Duckbill oceanic eel (En).



Diagnosis: body elongate, scaleless, compressed in caudal region; anus behind midpoint of body. Snout very long, flattened, spatulate, projecting far beyond narrow lower jaw. Anterior nostril terminal, posterior nostril dorsolateral in the narrowest part of snout. Mouth reaching nearly to level of posterior eye margin, cardiform teeth on maxillae, dentaries and vomer; a patch of conical and stronger teeth on premaxillae; vomerine tooth patch separated from that of premaxillae. Gill openings small, latero-ventral. Dorsal and anal fins confluent with truncate caudal fin; dorsal fin origin close behind pectoral fin tips; pectoral fins well developed; pelvic fins absent. Lateral line 132 pores. Vertebrae: total 150–159; abdominal 98. *Colour*: larger specimens extensively black pigmented. *Size*: to 30 cm.

Habitat: epi- to bathypelagic, down to 1,800 m. *Food*: carnivorous (mainly crustaceans). *Reproduction*: early hydrological warm season.

Distribution: eastern North Atlantic. Elsewhere, very wide distribution in temperate, tropical and subtropical regions of Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans.



Teeth of upper jaw

