Enchelycore anatina
(Lowe, 1839)*

**SHORT DESCRIPTION**
Body very elongated. Dorsal fin originating above branchial opening, very long, together with anal fin confluent with caudal fin. Pectoral and pelvic fin absent. Head pointed with a distinctly elevated occipital region. Anterior nostril tubular. Posterior nostril round to oval opening in front of eye. Large mouth, its cleft extending back well behind eye. Jaw arched, with many fang-like teeth, which are visible even when mouth is closed. No scales on body.

**color:** body dark brown with numerous yellow blotches and dots arranged in longitudinal rows. Snout and cheeks light brown with yellow dots.

**common size:** 50 - 100 cm (max. 120 cm).

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**
- *Gymnothorax unicolor:* jaws not arched; body uniformly colored.
- *Gymnothorax reticularis:* jaws not arched; dark bands along the ventral surface.
- *Muraena helena:* jaws not arched; both posterior and anterior nostrils have tubes.

**Congridae, Muraenecosidae** and **Ophichthidae** (in part): pectoral fin present.

*Note: the year of the description of this species is often erroneously given as 1837. For further explanation, see Ben-Tuvia and Golani (1984).*
**BIOLOGY / ECOSYSTEM**
Feeds on fishes and large invertebrates. Eggs and larvae are apparently pelagic.

**Habitat:** rocky.

**DISTRIBUTION**

**Worldwide:** Eastern Atlantic. Mainly insular species from the Azores to St. Helena Island.

**Mediterranean:** recorded first from Israel (Ben-Tuvia and Golani, 1984); later, off Elafonissos Island, Greece (R. Fricke pers. comm.); more recently from Turkey (Yokes et al., 2002), Croatia (Lipej et al., 2011), Cyprus (Katsanevakis et al., 2011), Greece (Pirkenseer 2013) including Rhodos (Kalogirou et al., 2010), Southern Italy (Guidetti et al., 2012) and Malta (Deidun et al., 2015).

**MODE OF INTRODUCTION**
Via Gibraltar.

**ESTABLISHMENT SUCCESS**
Occasionally observed along the eastern Mediterranean coasts.

**Speculated reasons for success:** the long pelagic larval stage may enable the crossing of long distances.

**IMPORTANCE TO HUMANS**
None.

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**KEY REFERENCES**