



# “Jawless Fishes of the World” – a new book dealing with various aspects of lampreys and hagfishes worldwide



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## BACKGROUND

Living jawless fishes are elongate eel-like animals lacking paired fins, represented by hagfishes and lampreys. These animals are the only living representatives of ancient creatures that gave rise to the fish and eventually humans.

Hagfishes are marine animals that are widely distributed in the world's oceans and are among most abundant demersal fishes in many areas. They represent a very diverse group of fishes whose taxonomy is poorly understood and documented. It is widely believed that hagfishes damage commercial catches of other species. However, some of them have commercial importance in, for example, Japan and Korea. Fisheries for hagfish have developed over the last few decades off both coasts of Canada and the US, as well as off Mexico. Despite wide distribution, high abundance and the importance of these fisheries many issues related to taxonomy, distribution, phylogeny and life cycle of hagfishes are still poorly understood.

Lampreys inhabit freshwater, brackish and marine environments and are represented by over 40 parasitic and non-parasitic species. They are widely distributed and most abundant in the Northern hemisphere but some species occur also in the southern part of the world. These animals have specific life cycle characterized by a long larval stage (ammocete) in freshwater with subsequent radical metamorphosis. Lampreys play significant role in freshwater and marine ecosystems as prey and parasites or predators for variety of aquatic animals. On the one hand, some species are commercially important. On the other, they may damage fish in commercial catches. Despite a long history of research lampreys still remain insufficiently studied.

The main purpose of this book is to provide an overview of the current status of knowledge on the variety of topics related to jawless fishes including their taxonomy, zoogeography, phylogeny, molecular biology, evolution, life history, role in the ecosystem, stock assessment, fisheries and management of hagfishes and lampreys worldwide. Also, the research needs and perspectives for further advancement in this field are identified. This will be the first book dealing exclusively with different aspects of ecology, life history, stock assessment and fisheries of different jawless fish species in various areas of the world.

The book comprises collected papers, the majority of which provide new (unpublished) data. Some of them contain data published previously in the “grey” literature. Until now, data on different aspects of the biology and fisheries of hagfishes and some lampreys are scarce and, if published, are difficult to access.

This book will give readers the opportunity to find a lot of useful information on jawless fishes in a single reference.

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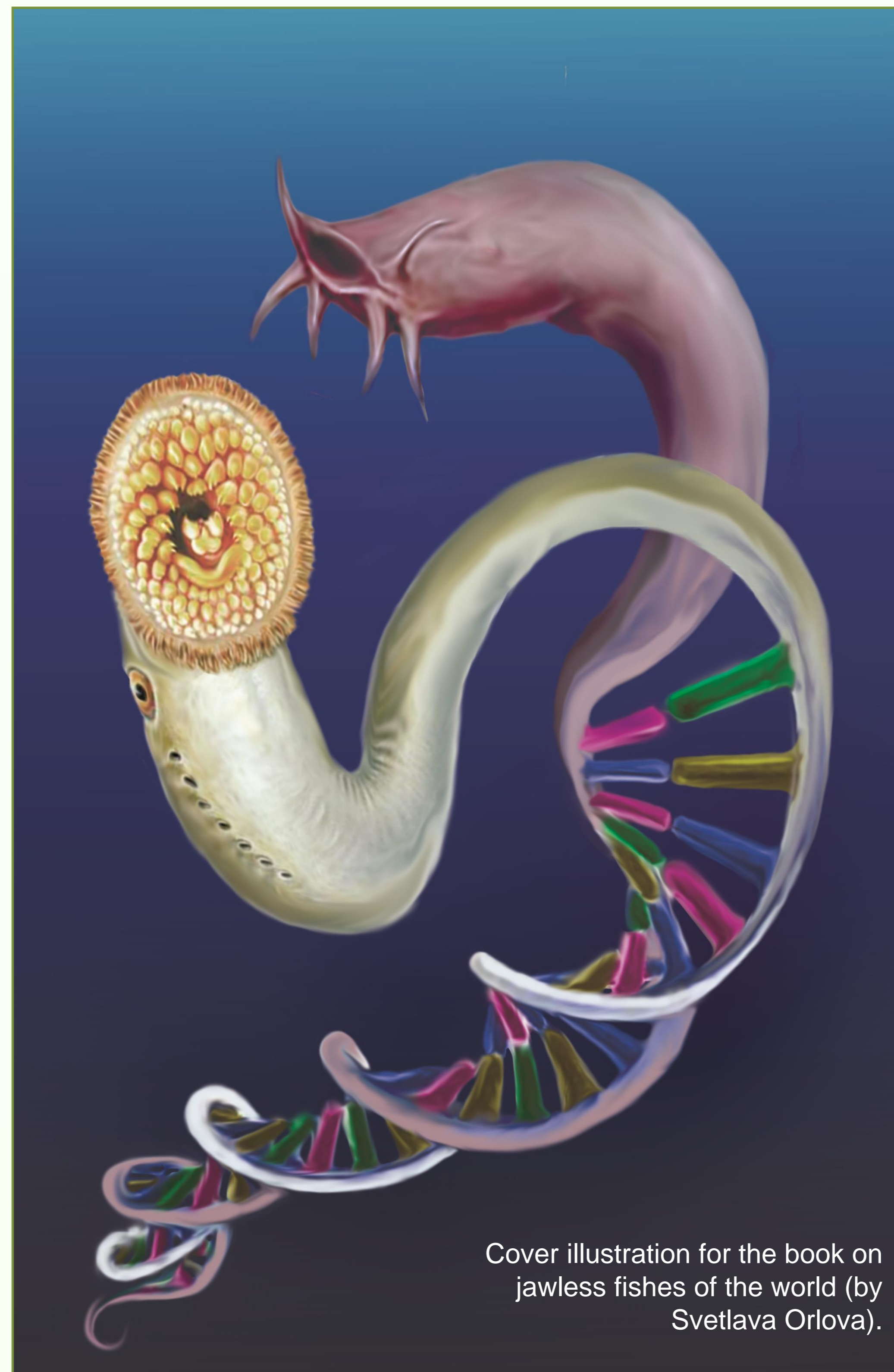


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Cover illustration for the book on jawless fishes of the world (by Svetlana Orlova).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	M. Docker
<b>PART 1: EVOLUTION, PHYLOGENY, DIVERSITY, AND TAXONOMY</b>	
CHAPTER 1. MOLECULAR EVOLUTION IN THE LAMPREY GENOMES AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE TIMING OF WHOLE GENOME DUPLICATIONS	T. Manousaki, H. Qiu, M. Noro, F. Hildebrand, A. Meyer & S. Kuraku
CHAPTER 2. MOLECULAR PHYLOGENY AND SPECIATION OF EAST ASIAN LAMPREYS (GENUS <i>LETHENTERON</i> ) WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR LIFE-HISTORY DIVERSIFICATION	Y. YAMAZAKI & A. GOTO
CHAPTER 3. UKRAINIAN BROOK LAMPREY <i>EUDONTOMYZON MARIAE</i> (BERG): PHYLOGENETIC POSITION, GENETIC DIVERSITY, DISTRIBUTION, AND SOME DATA ON BIOLOGY	B. LEVIN, A. ERMAKOV, O. ERMAKOV, M. LEVINA, O. SARYCHEVA & V. SARYCHEV
CHAPTER 4. DIVERSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE HAGFISHES AND LAMPREYS FROM CHILEAN WATERS	G. PEQUEÑO & S. SÁEZ
CHAPTER 5. HAGFISHES OF MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA: ANNOTATED CATALOG AND IDENTIFICATION KEY	A. ANGULO & L. DEL MORAL-FLORES
CHAPTER 6. THE STRUCTURE AND TAXONOMY OF THE GILL PORE IN LAMPREYS OF THE GENUS <i>ENTOSPHEMUS</i>	R. BEAMISH
CHAPTER 7. REVIEW OF WESTERN TRANSCAUCASIAN BROOK LAMPREY, <i>LETHENTERON NINAE</i> NASEKA, TUNIEV & RENAUD, 2009 (PETROMYZONTIDAE)	S. TUNIEV, A. NASEKA & C. RENAUD
CHAPTER 8. A NONPARASITIC LAMPREY PRODUCES A PARASITIC LIFE HISTORY TYPE – THE MORRISON CREEK LAMPREY ENIGMA	R. BEAMISH, R. WITTLER, J. WADE & T. BEACHAM
CHAPTER 9. DESCRIPTION OF THE LARVAL STAGE OF THE ALASKAN BROOK LAMPREY, <i>LETHENTERON ALASKENSE</i> VLADYKOV AND KOTT 1978	C. RENAUD, A. NASEKA & N. ALFONSO
CHAPTER 10. THE NEED FOR A NEW TAXONOMY FOR LAMPREYS	A. Kucheryavyi, I. Tsimbalov, E. Kirillova, D. Nazarov & D. Pavlov
<b>PART 2: ECOLOGY AND LIFE HISTORY</b>	
CHAPTER 11. DISTRIBUTION AND HABITAT TYPES OF THE LAMPREY LARVAE IN RIVERS ACROSS EURASIA	D. NAZAROV, A. KUCHERYAVY & D. PAVLOV
CHAPTER 12. THE POTENTIAL ROLES OF RIVER ENVIRONMENTS IN SELECTING FOR STREAM- AND OCEAN-MATURING PACIFIC LAMPREY, <i>ENTOSPHEMUS TRIDENTATUS</i> (GARDNER, 1836)	B. CLEMENS, C. SCHRECK, S. SOWER & S. VAN DE WETERING
CHAPTER 13. THE FORMATION OF FECUNDITY IN ONTOGENY OF LAMPREYS	YU. KUZNETSOV, M. MOSYAGINA & O. ZELENNIKOV
CHAPTER 14. ADVANCES IN THE STUDY OF SEA LAMPREY <i>PETROMYZON MARINUS</i> LINNAEUS, 1758 IN THE NW OF THE IBERIAN PENINSULA	S. SILVA, S. BARCA & F. COBO



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His research interests have included the discovery of acid rain in North America, new methods of ageing fish that included the discovery that many species of fish were much older than previously thought and discovery of a new lamprey species. He has authored or co-authored a number of papers on the effects of climate on fish populations and was one of the first scientists to write about climate regimes and regime shifts. He has published over 350 articles and recently was an editor and contributor to the book “The Sea Among Us - The Amazing Strait of Georgia”. He is an Editor for the “Transactions of the American Fisheries Society” and a member of the editorial board of “Izvestiya TINRO”.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)

<b>PART 3: DEMOGRAPHY, STOCK ASSESSMENT, FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION</b>	
CHAPTER 15. LAMPREYS IN CENTRAL EUROPE – HISTORY AND PRESENT STATE	L. HANEL & J. ANDRESKA
CHAPTER 16. DISTRIBUTION OF ARCTIC AND PACIFIC LAMPREYS IN THE NORTH PACIFIC	A. ORLOV & A. BAITALIUK
CHAPTER 17. TRENDS IN THE CATCHES OF RIVER AND PACIFIC LAMPREYS IN THE STRAIT OF GEORGIA	J. Wade & R. Beamish
CHAPTER 18. TRENDS OF PACIFIC LAMPREY POPULATIONS ACROSS A BROAD GEOGRAPHIC RANGE IN THE NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN, 1939-2014	J. Murasukas, L. Schultz & A. Orlov
CHAPTER 19. OBSERVATIONS ON THE CATCH AND BIOLOGY OF HAGFISH ( <i>EPTATRETUS STOUTII</i> ) FROM AN EXPLORATORY FISHERY IN NORTHWEST MEXICO	F. Márquez-Farías, R. Lara-Mendoza, O. Zamora-García & E. Ramírez-Félix
	M. Araújo, S. Silva, Y. Stratoudakis, M. Gonçalves, R. Lopez, M. Carneiro, R. Martins, F. Cobo & C. Antunes
CHAPTER 20. SEA LAMPREY FISHERIES IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA	
CHAPTER 21. INSIGHTS GAINED THROUGH RECENT TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS FOR CONSERVATION GENETICS OF PACIFIC LAMPREY <i>ENTOSPHEMUS TRIDENTATUS</i>	J. Hess
CHAPTER 22. DEVELOPING TECHNIQUES FOR ARTIFICIAL PROPAGATION AND EARLY REARING OF PACIFIC LAMPREY <i>ENTOSPHEMUS TRIDENTATUS</i> FOR SPECIES RECOVERY AND RESTORATION	R. Lampman, M. Moser, A. Jackson, R. Rose, A. Gannam & J. Barron
<b>PART 4: SPECIES INTERACTIONS</b>	
CHAPTER 23. COMMON BEHAVIORAL ADAPTATIONS IN LAMPREY AND SALMONIDS	E. Kirillova, P. Kirillov, A. Kucheryavyi & D. Pavlov
CHAPTER 24. THE SILVER LAMPREY AND THE PADDLEFISH	P. Cochran & J. Lyons
CHAPTER 25. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PACIFIC LAMPREY AND THEIR PREY	A. Orlov
IN MEMORIAM: DR. PHILIP A. COCHRAN (1955-2015)	J. Lyons
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LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS	
LIST OF REVIEWERS	