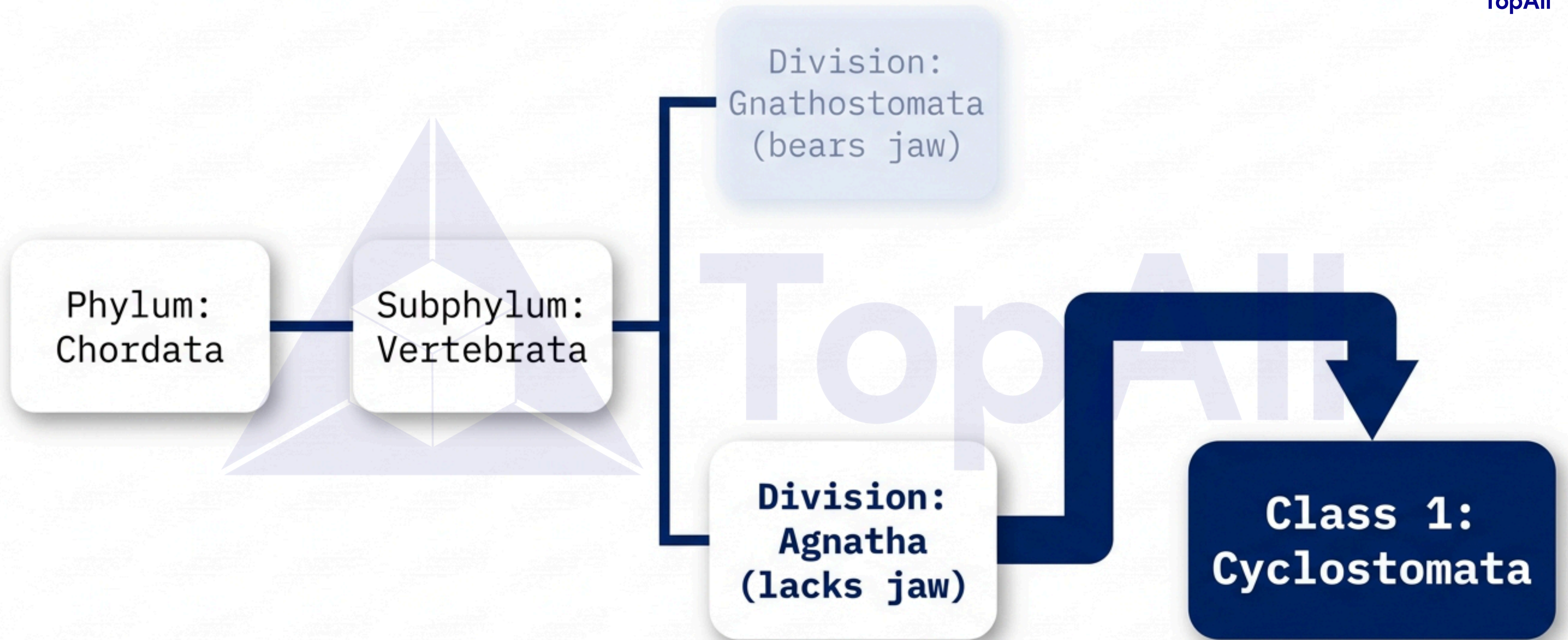




Class Cyclostomata: Jawless Vertebrates with Circular Mouths

A visual biological dossier on the primitive, parasitic pioneers of the vertebrate subphylum.



CYCLOSTOME ANATOMY: GENERAL FEATURES

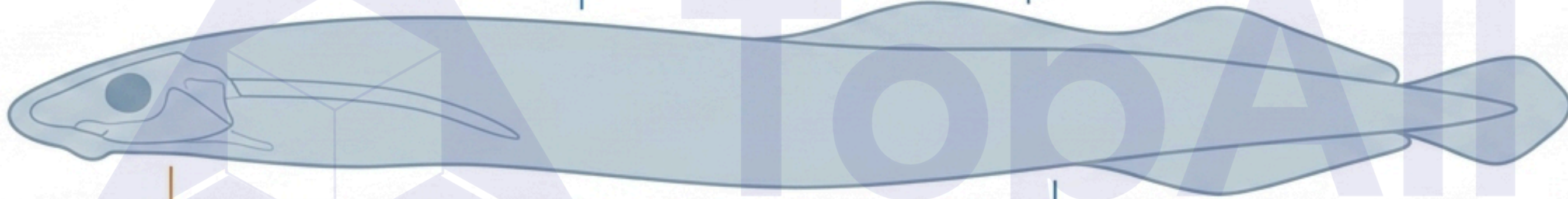


Elongated Body

Adapted for an active, aquatic lifestyle.

Devoid of Scales

Smooth, scale-less exterior unlike typical fishes.



Cartilaginous Framework

Internal structure relies on cartilage, not bone. Both the Cranium and the Vertebral Column are strictly cartilaginous.

Devoid of Paired Fins

Lacks the paired pectoral and pelvic appendages found in gnathostomes.



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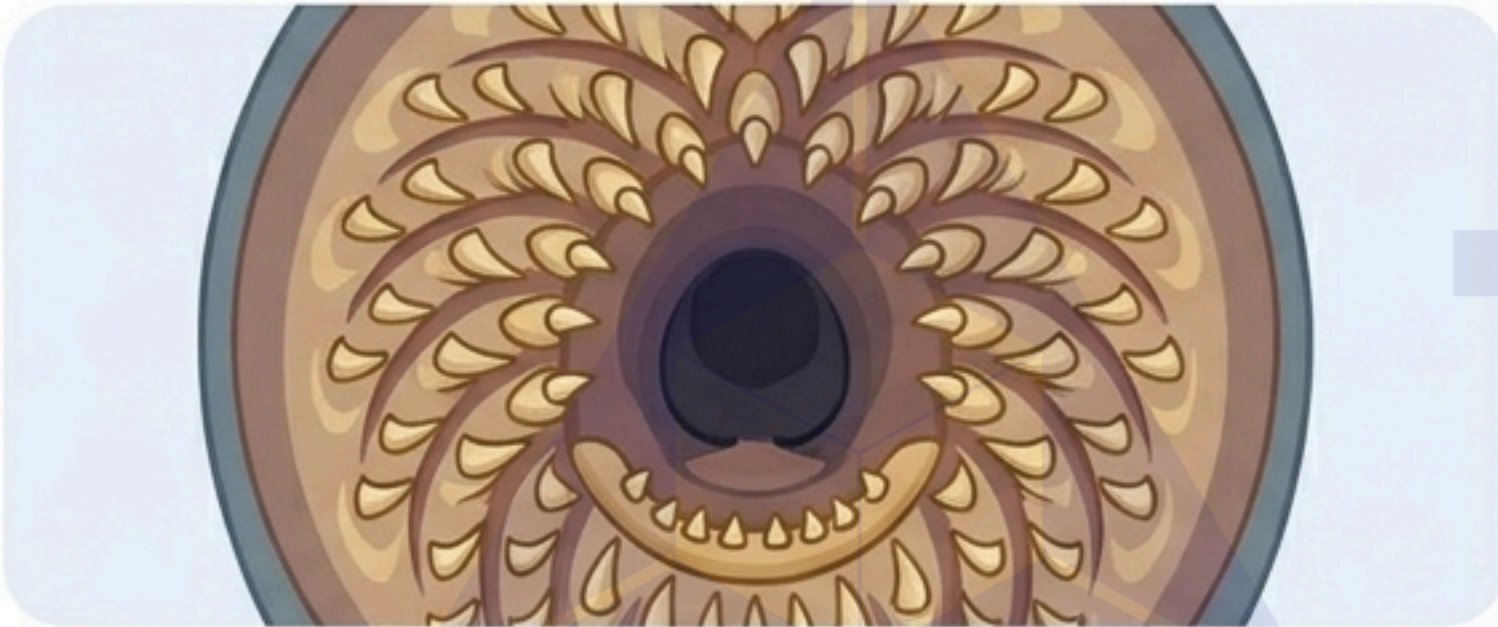
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CYCLOSTOME ANATOMY: FEEDING, RESPIRATION & CIRCULATION

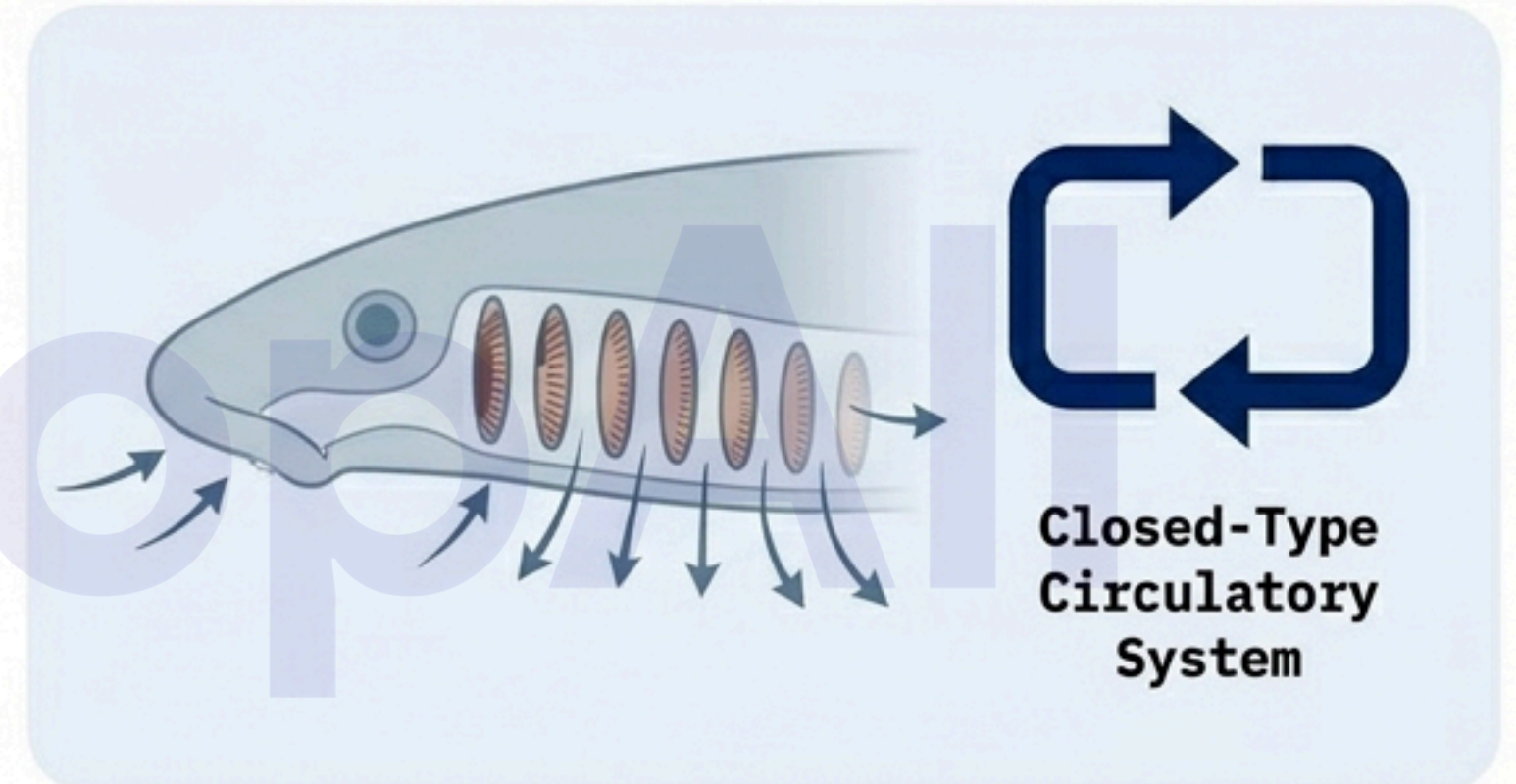
The Sucking Mouth



ECOLOGICAL ROLE: ECTOPARASITE

Cyclostomes possess a circular, sucking mouth completely devoid of jaws. All living members are ectoparasites, attaching themselves to the bodies of other fishes to feed.

Respiration & Blood Flow



They utilize 6 to 15 pairs of gill slits dedicated entirely to respiration. Circulation is highly organized, operating as a closed-type circulatory system.

HABITAT: FRESHWATER

2. Migration

Adults migrate from the ocean into freshwater specifically for spawning.

3. Post-Spawning Death

Within a few days after spawning, the adult cyclostomes die.

1. Marine Adulthood

Cyclostomes spend their adult lives thriving in marine environments.

4. Metamorphosis & Return

The surviving larvae undergo metamorphosis and migrate back down to the ocean to begin the cycle anew.

HABITAT: MARINE

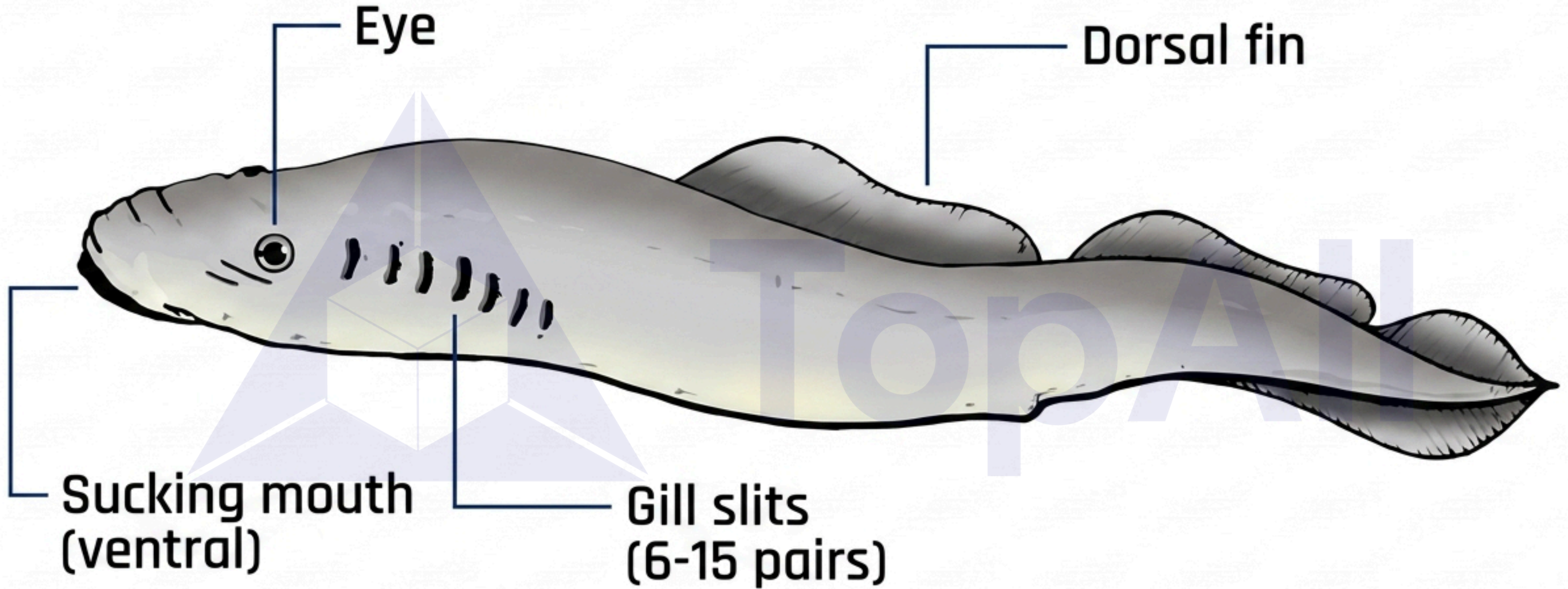


Figure 4.18: A jawless vertebrate - Petromyzon.

Petromyzon



Common Name: Lamprey

Myxine



Common Name: Hagfish

The Biological Significance: Class Cyclostomata represents the most primitive living chordates within the vertebrate subphylum. Their unique combination of a cartilaginous framework, a jawless circular mouth, and an ectoparasitic lifestyle highlights a crucial evolutionary stepping stone in the animal kingdom.



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