

***Gymnothorax moringa*** (Cuvier, 1829)

AGG

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** *Lycodontis moringa* (Cuvier, 1829) / None.

**FAO names:** En - Spotted moray; Fr - Murène tachetée; Sp - Morena pintada.

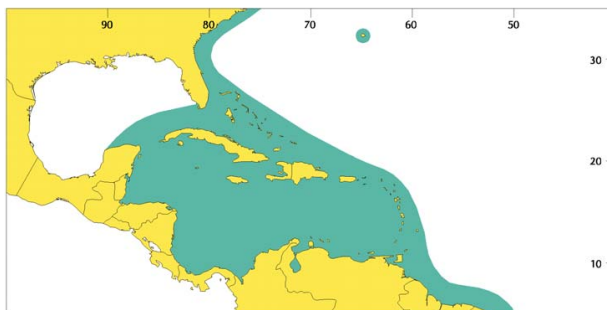


**Diagnostic characters:** **Body elongate, strong, and muscular**, moderately compressed; **anus shortly before midbody**. Head moderate, elevated posteriorly. Eye above midjaw; **posterior nostril a rimmed pore** above anterior margin of eye. Snout moderate; jaws moderate, closing completely. **Teeth smooth, some long canines**; teeth in both jaws uniserial in adults; 3 long fang-like median intermaxillary teeth; **vomerine teeth uniserial**. Dorsal fin beginning on head between corner of mouth and gill opening. **Colour:** head, body, and tail **patterned with small overlapping dark spots giving mottled appearance on pale background** (yellow with brown to purplish black spots in life); pattern variable in size of blotches and intensity of pigmentation. Dorsal fin often with black margin anteriorly, and white margin far posteriorly on combined dorsal-caudal-anal fins. Young without spotted pattern and with white lower jaw, closely resembling young of *G. vicinus*.

**Size:** Maximum 100 cm (questionably reported from 200 to 300 cm at Ascension Island).

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Very common on shallow coral reef, rock, and seagrass habitats, found at depths to 50 m. Reported to be aggressive without provocation; dangerous when handled alive. Used as food in some areas, large individuals reported to be ciguatoxic. Occasionally caught by trawl, seine, trap, and hook-and-line; of no commercial importance.

**Distribution:** Widespread in the western Atlantic, from Bermuda, the Bahamas, off the Carolinas, the Florida Keys, throughout the Caribbean Islands, off coastal Mexico, and central and northern South America. Also off Brazil (Area 41), and taken at the south eastern Atlantic islands of St. Helena and Ascension (Area 34). Not found in the eastern central Atlantic.

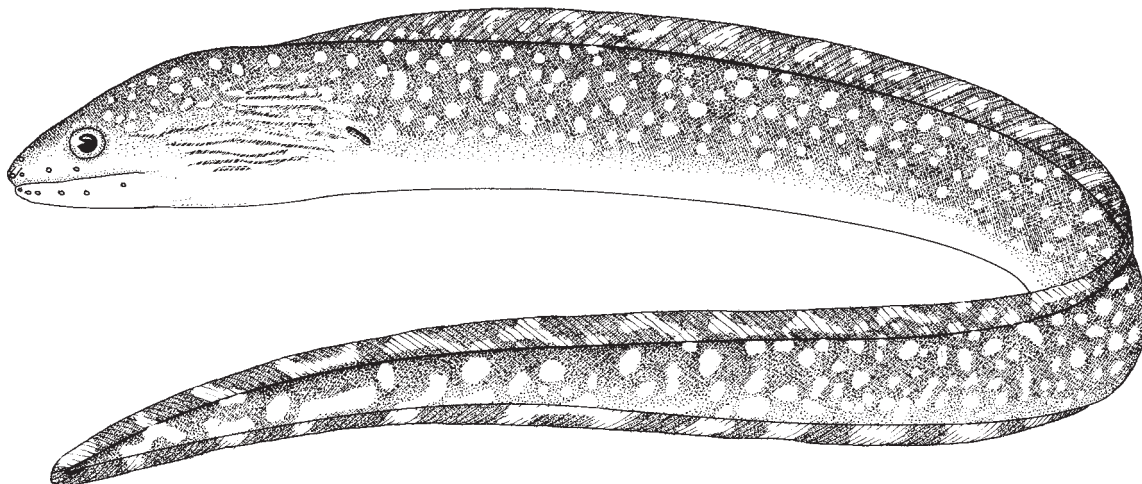


***Gymnothorax ocellatus* Agassiz, 1828**

AMW

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / *Gymnothorax saxicola* Jordan and Davis, 1891.

**FAO names:** En - Mottlemargin moray; Fr - Murène ocellée; Sp - Morena de charco.



**Diagnostic characters:** Body strong and muscular with tapering tail; anus shortly before midbody. Head moderate. Eye above midjaw; **posterior nostril a rimmed pore** above anterior margin of eye. Snout short and rounded; jaws closing completely; **3 pores along upper jaw. Teeth strong, triangular, and shark-like, serrated** on anterior and posterior margins; jaw teeth uniserial; 0 to 3 median intermaxillary teeth (absent in large specimens); vomerine teeth uniserial or absent. Dorsal fin beginning on head between mouth angle and gill opening. **Colour: body grey-brown, darker dorsally and paler ventrally, with distinct, well-separated white spots** of varying sizes and shapes; tail patterned, not dark; head brown with smaller white spots. **Margin of dorsal fin with pattern of undulating black and white marks, anal fin with similar coloration.**

**Size:** Maximum about 60 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Adults common on the continental shelf over sand and mud bottoms to depths of 90 m; habitat of young not known. Usually taken by trawl, occasionally by line. Possibly consumed locally but not of commercial importance.

**Distribution:** Found throughout the Antillean Chain, and off the central and northern South American coast from [Nicaragua](#) south to Venezuela. Present off the coast of Brazil (southwestern Atlantic, Area 41).

**Note:** Three very similar species, *G. ocellatus*, *G. nigromarginatus*, and *G. saxicola*, have sometimes been synonymized, but are now considered to be valid species; they might also be confused with 2 other spotted species, *G. conspersus* and *G. kolpos*, which inhabit deeper waters and which have more vertebrae; all 5 exhibit subtle colour differences and are separated geographically.



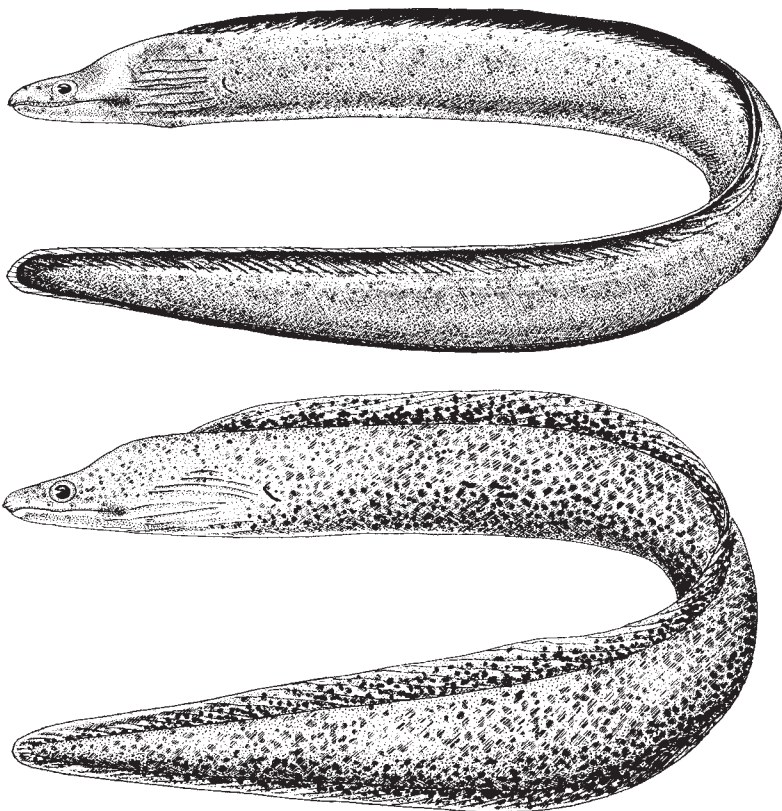
***Gymnothorax vicinus*** (Castelnau, 1855)

AMT

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** *Lycodontis vicinus* (Castelnau, 1855) / None.

**FAO names:** En - Purplemouth moray; Fr - Murène jaune; Sp - Morena amarilla.

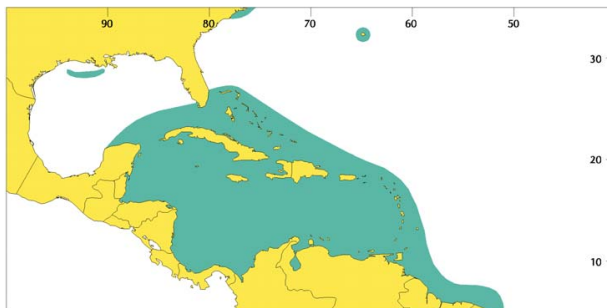
**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, strong and muscular, laterally compressed; anus shortly before midbody. Head elongate. Eye above midjaw; posterior nostril a rimmed pore above anterior margin of eye. Snout moderate; jaws elongate, closing completely. Teeth smooth, some long canines; teeth in both jaws uniserial in adults; 3 fang-like median intermaxillary teeth; vomerine teeth uniserial. Dorsal fin beginning on head between corner of mouth and gill opening. **Colour:** variably patterned, 2 extreme patterns of adults shown below. May be highly patterned with overlapping dark spots, the pattern extending onto fins; or almost uniformly brown colour with faint freckles of darker colour, fins dark basally and with pale margins. Corner of mouth with a characteristic small dark spot. In life, dark colour purplish brown, pale areas white, not yellow. Young uniformly brown with pale lower jaw, closely resembling young of *G. moringa*.



**Size:** Maximum 122 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Inhabits shallow rock and coral reef areas and seagrass beds; found at depths to 40 m. Can be aggressive, dangerous when handled alive. May be consumed locally; large specimens possibly ciguatoxic. Occasionally caught by trawl, trap, and hook-and-line; of no commercial importance.

**Distribution:** Widespread in the western Atlantic, from Bermuda, the Bahamas, off North Carolina, the Florida Keys, and the northern Gulf of Mexico, throughout the Caribbean Islands, and off the central and northern South American coast. In the eastern central Atlantic off Madeira, the Cape Verde Archipelago, and the Bight of Biafra (Area 34). Taken off Brazil (Area 41) and in the southeastern Atlantic off Ascension Island (Area 47).



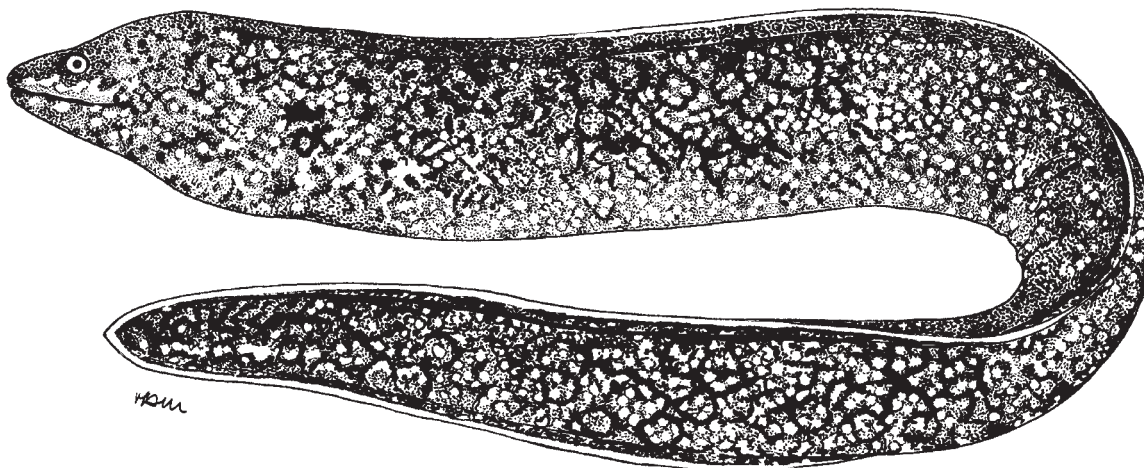


*Muraena retifera* Goode and Bean, 1882

MMR

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Reticulate moray.

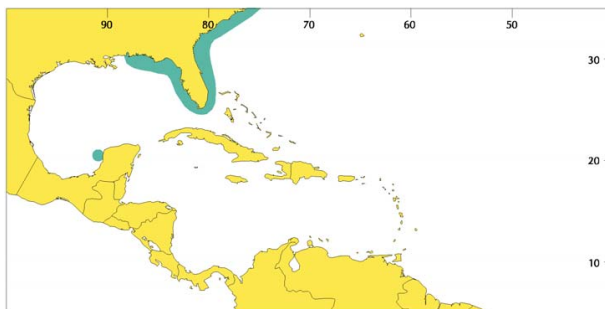


**Diagnostic characters:** Body strong, elongate, and tapering; anus at or before midbody. Head moderate, elevated posteriorly. Eye above midjaw; **posterior nostril in a tube** above anterior margin of eye. Snout moderate, jaws moderate, closing completely. **Teeth smooth, large, and strong;** teeth of adults uniserial; 2 or 3 long median intermaxillary teeth; vomerine teeth uniserial. Dorsal fin beginning on head between corner of mouth and gill opening. **Colour:** brown to **dark brown background with close-set, pale rosettes which are peppered with bright white dots;** head brown with small white spots, the rosette pattern beginning near gill opening. **Gill opening in prominent black blotch.** Margins of fins pale. Small eels appear dark with large pale spots; rosette pattern sometimes inconspicuous in adults, which then appear dark brown overall with small white dots.

**Size:** Maximum to 90 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Lives in continental coastal waters over mud or sand bottoms at depths from 20 to 90 m; not common. Taken by trawl, occasionally by trap or hook-and-line. Possibly consumed locally; could be ciguatoxic; of no commercial importance.

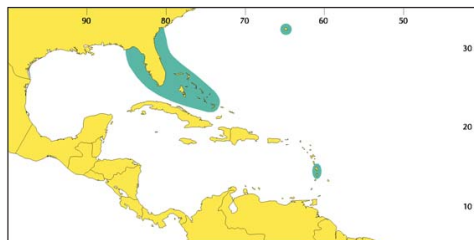
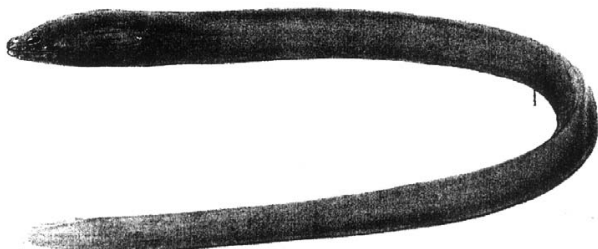
**Distribution:** A coastal species, found off the Atlantic coast of the United States from North Carolina to Florida and in the eastern Gulf of Mexico off the west coast of Florida; also taken in the Bay of Campeche, Mexico, and off northern Venezuela. Also present off Brazil (southwestern Atlantic, Area 41).



***Anarchias similis* (Lea, 1913)**

**En** - Pygmy moray.

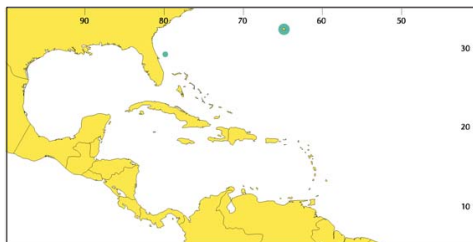
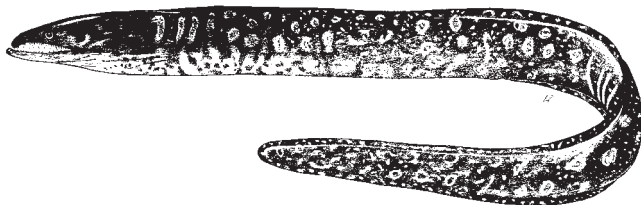
Maximum size to 20 cm. Inhabits moderately deep waters, living on or near the bottom from 30 to 100 m. Uncommon, taken by dredge. Too small to be consumed or of commercial importance. Bermuda, coastal United States (Georgia to Florida), the Bahamas, southern Antilles, and Nicaragua coast. Also off Brazil (southwestern Atlantic, Area 41).



***Enchelycore anatina* (Lowe, 1838)**

**En** - Fangtooth moray; **Fr** - Murène de Iles; **Sp** - Morena isleña.

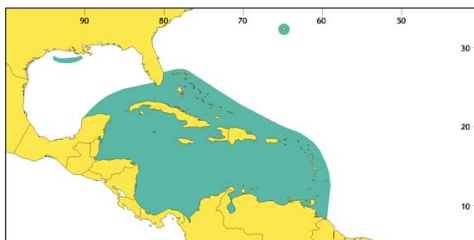
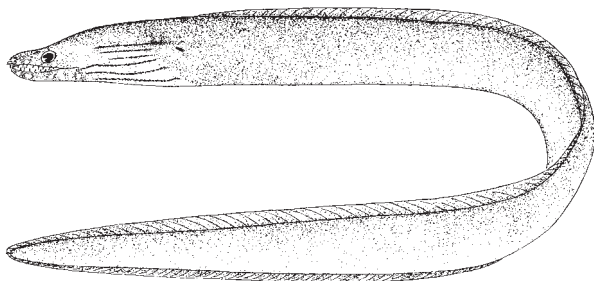
Maximum size to over 110 cm. Inhabits deep waters, below 50 m. Uncommon, taken by trap and hook-and-line. Possibly consumed locally; of no commercial importance. From scattered localities of Bermuda and Florida in the western central Atlantic; Brazil (south western Atlantic, Area 41); St. Helena (southeastern Atlantic, Area 47); Madeira, Azores, Canaries, and Cape Verde (eastern central Atlantic, Area 34); and in the eastern Mediterranean (Area 37).



***Enchelycore carychroa* Böhlke and Böhlke, 1976**

**En** - Chestnut moray.

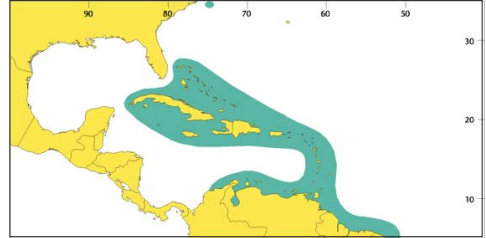
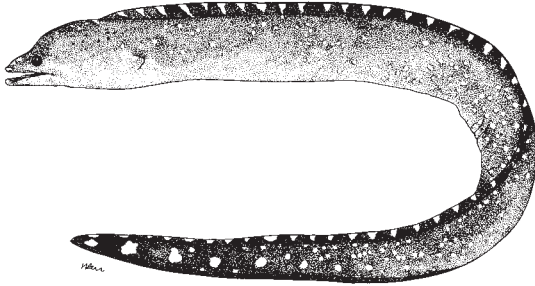
Maximum size 34 cm. Common inhabitant of shallow coral reefs and rocks to depths of 15 m, occasional to 60 m. Infrequently taken by dredge; too small to be consumed or of commercial importance. Widespread in the western Atlantic, from Bermuda, the Bahamas, Florida Keys, northwestern Gulf of Mexico, and coastal central and northern South America. Also off northern Brazil (southwestern Atlantic, Area 41); and Ascension Island and St. Helena (southeastern Atlantic, Area 47).



***Gymnothorax conspersus* Poey, 1867**

**En** - Saddled moray.

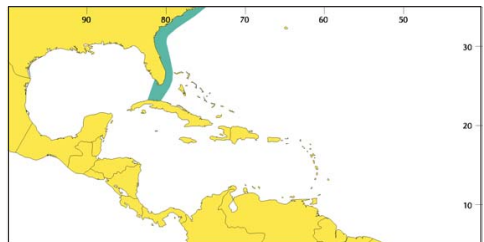
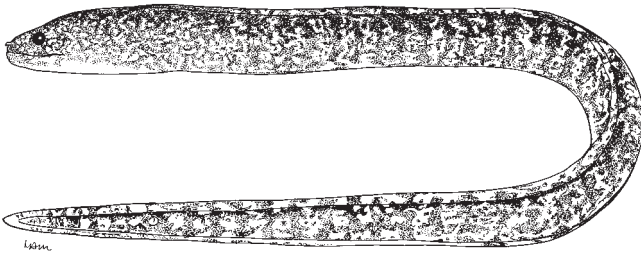
Maximum size to 110 cm. Inhabits deep waters, usually below 200 m. Taken by trawl, occasionally in deep traps. Might be consumed locally; of no commercial importance. Tropical western Atlantic from Florida Straits south to Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (Area 41).



***Gymnothorax hubbsi* Böhlke and Böhlke, 1977**

**En** - Lichen moray.

Maximum size 35 cm. Inhabits coastal waters at depths from 60 to 90 m. Rare, taken by trawl, occasionally by dredge. Too small to be consumed; of no commercial importance. Atlantic coast of USA from North Carolina to Florida, the western Bahamas, and north coast of Cuba.

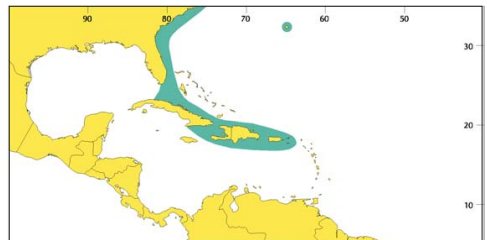
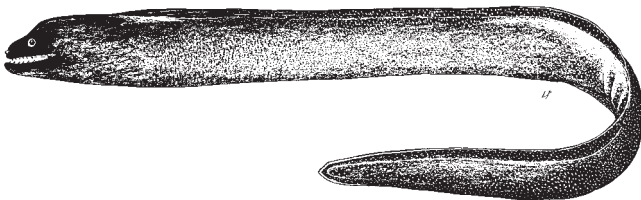


***Gymnothorax maderensis* (Johnson, 1862)**

AGD

**En** - Sharktooth moray; **Fr** - Murène de Madère; **Sp** - Morena de Madeira.

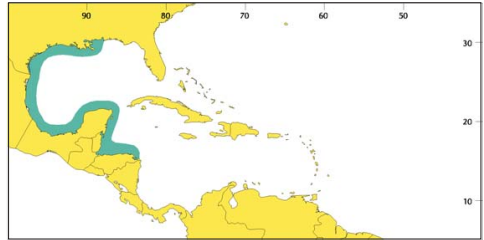
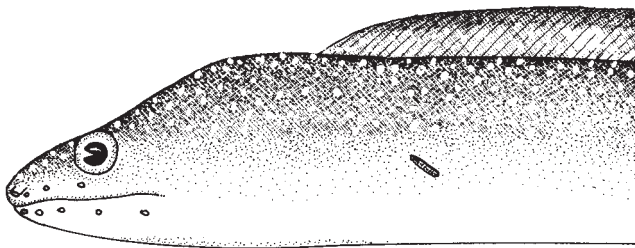
Maximum size to 105 cm. Inhabits deep waters from 150 to 280 m. Rare, taken by hook-and-line or trap. Might be consumed locally; of no commercial importance. Western Atlantic from Bermuda, North Carolina, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; eastern central Atlantic from Madeira, Canary Islands, and Dahomey (Area 34).



***Gymnothorax nigromarginatus* (Girard, 1858)**

**En** - Blackedge moray.

Maximum size to 53 cm. A common continental coast species inhabiting waters of 10 to 91 m. Taken by trawl, a frequent byproduct of Gulf coast shrimp fisheries. May be consumed locally, but not of commercial importance. Northern Gulf of Mexico from Mobile Bay area west to Texas, and off Yucatán and Honduras.

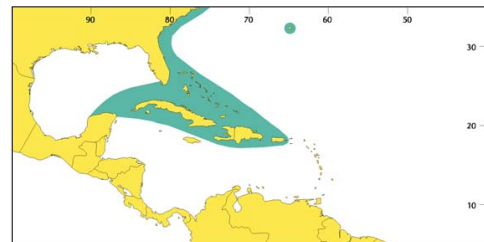
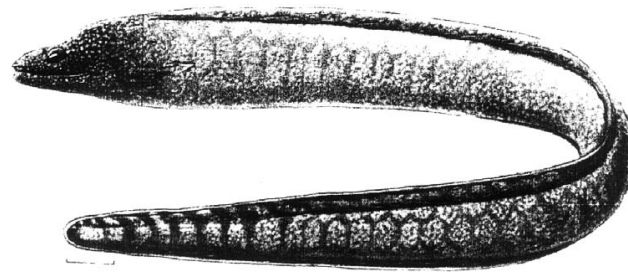


***Gymnothorax polygonius* Poey, 1876**

AGI

**En** - Polygon moray.

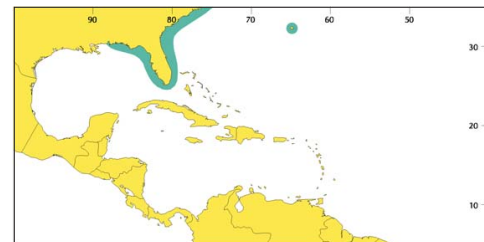
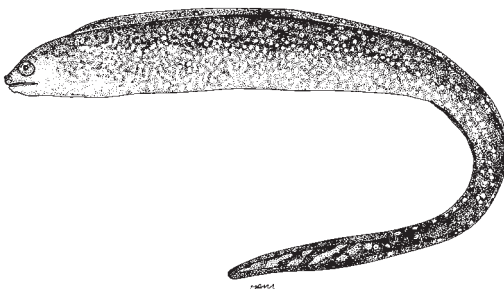
Maximum size to 84 cm. Lives in moderately deep waters of 90 to 256 m. Uncommon, taken by trawl, trap, and hook-and-line. Might be consumed locally; of no commercial importance. Western Atlantic from scattered localities from North Carolina to Brazil (Area 41). Also eastern central Atlantic from Cape Verde Archipelago and Madeira (Area 34) and south eastern Atlantic island of St. Helena (Area 47).



***Gymnothorax saxicola* Jordan and Davis, 1891**

**En** - Honeycomb moray.

Maximum size to 62 cm. Lives along the continental coast at depths of 2 to 86 m. Common, usually taken by trawl, a frequent byproduct of shrimp fisheries. Possibly consumed locally; of no commercial importance. Atlantic coast of the USA from North Carolina to Florida, and eastern Gulf of Mexico off Florida west to Mobile Bay drainage.



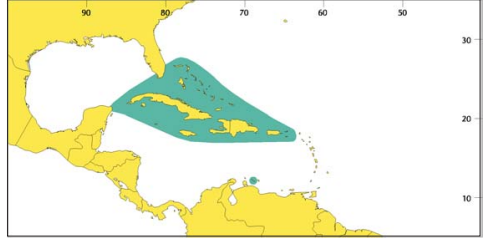
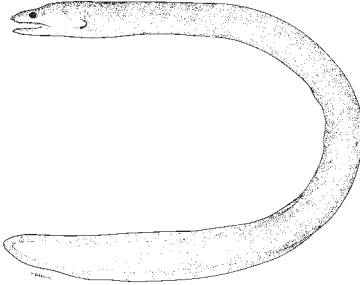


***Monopenchelys acuta* (Parr, 1930)**

MMA

**En** - Redface eel.

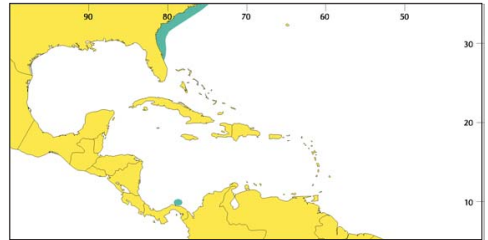
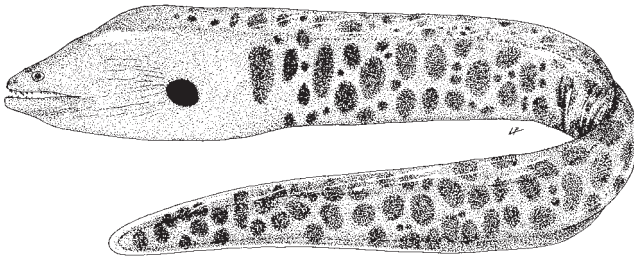
Maximum size to 21 cm. Lives on coral heads and rocky ledges at moderate depths of 13 to 45 m. Rare; taken once by dredge. Too small to be consumed; of no commercial importance. Circumtropical distribution; western Atlantic islands of the Bahamas, Lesser Antilles, Grand Cayman, and off Mexico; also from Ascension Island (south eastern Atlantic, Area 47); in the Indo-Pacific from Hawaii, Fiji, Seychelles, Comoros, and Agalega Islands.

***Muraena robusta* Osório, 1909**

MMO

**En** - Stout moray; **Fr** - Murène robuste; **Sp** - Morena robusta.

Maximum size to 186 cm. Young inhabit shallow rock and coral areas; adults inhabit moderately deep waters of 30 to 68 m. Adults caught by hook-and-line. Possibly consumed locally, but ciguatera poisoning should be considered; not commercially important. Uncommon off North Carolina, Florida, and Panama; common in the eastern central Atlantic off the west coast of Africa and islands of Cape Verde and Bay of Biafra (Area 34).

***Uropterygius macularius* (Lesueur, 1825)**

MUH

**En** - Marbled moray.

Maximum size to 29 cm. Inhabits coral and rocky areas at depths to 137 m. Rarely taken by dredge. Too small to be consumed; not of commercial importance. An insular species, found in Bermuda, the Bahamas, Florida Keys, throughout the islands of the Caribbean, and off northern South America.

