

Polychaeta

Attention!

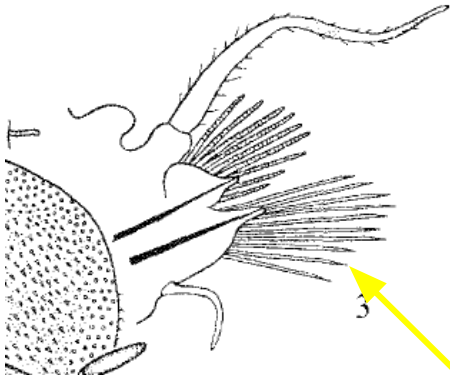
Do not try to use this document for identification of families! This is only for check yourself AFTER identification with a key.

Polynoidae

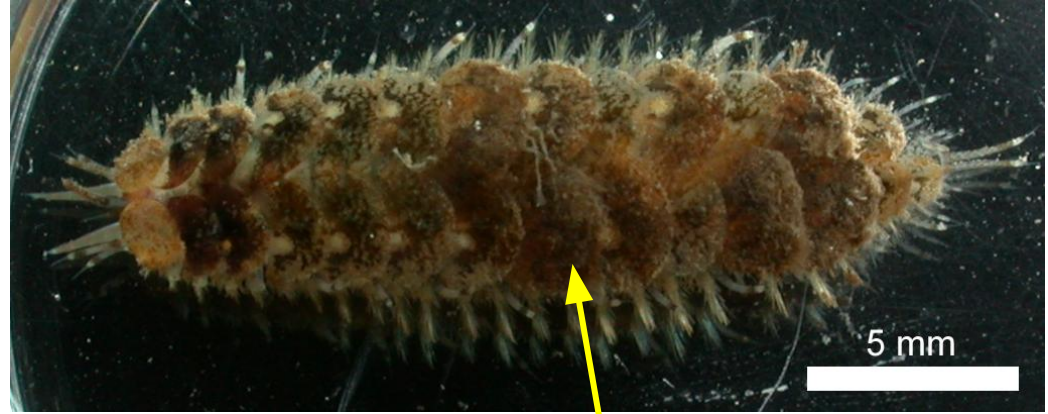
Important!

You should look at parapodia under microscope. Otherwise you could confuse this family with Sigalionidae.

You should see something like this:



Neurochaeta are NOT joined

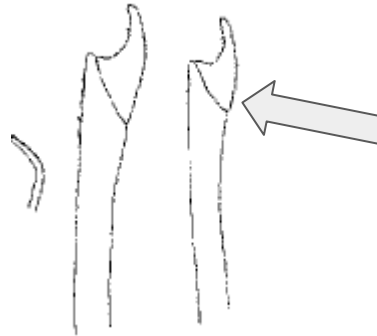


Worms are covered by scales BUT some of them (in fact all of them) could be lost. Use a stain and you will see the stumps.

Sigalionidae

Worms are very small (up to 10 mm)

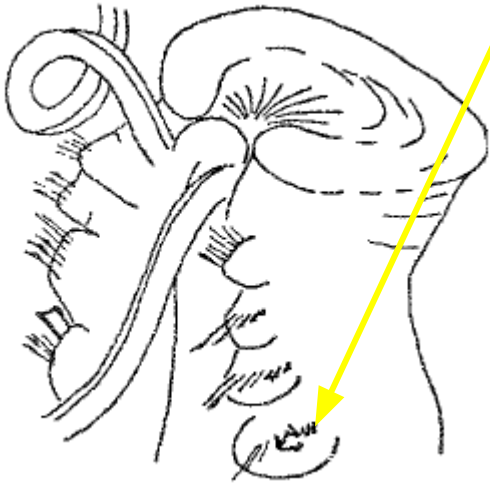
With scales. BUT the neurochaeta are joined (check under microscope)



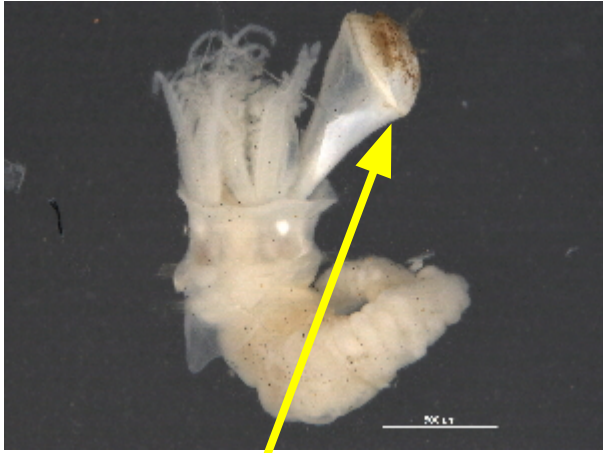
Chaetopteridae

The anterior part of the worm is white but posterior part of worm is dark

Large specialized chaeta on 4-th segment

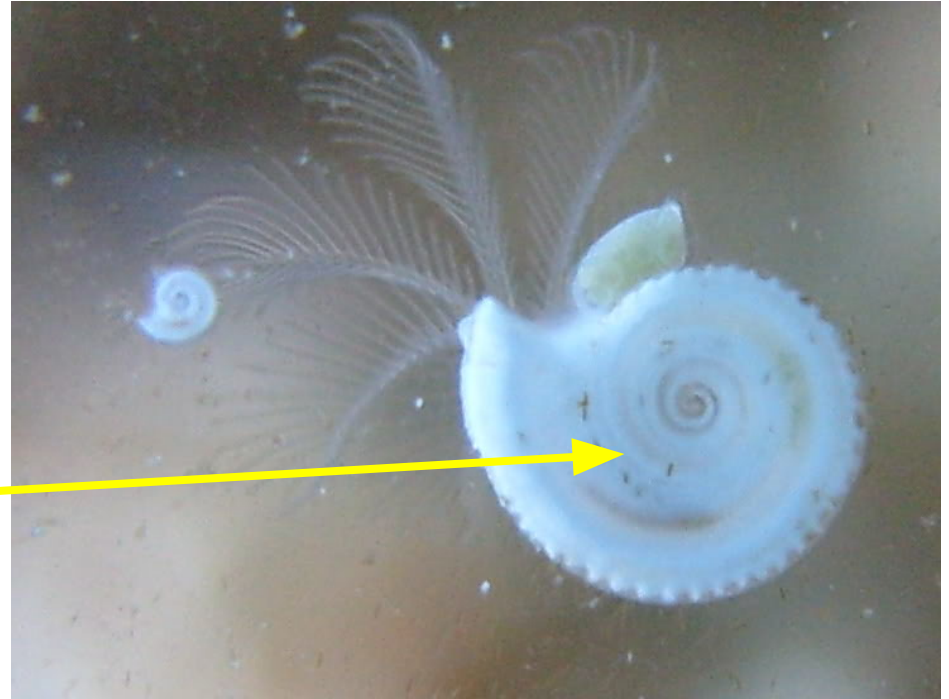


Spirorbidae



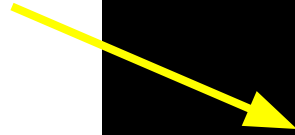
One tentacle transformed into operculum

They have spiral calcareous tubes



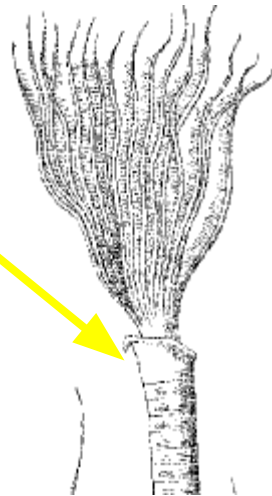
Sabellidae

Crown of radioles on
the anterior part



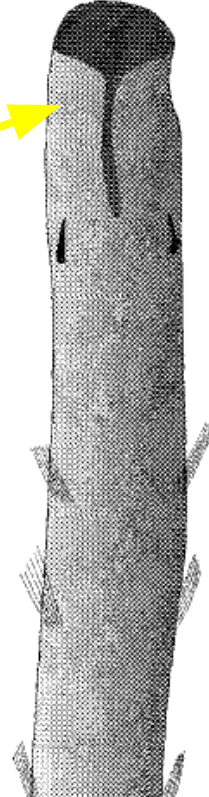
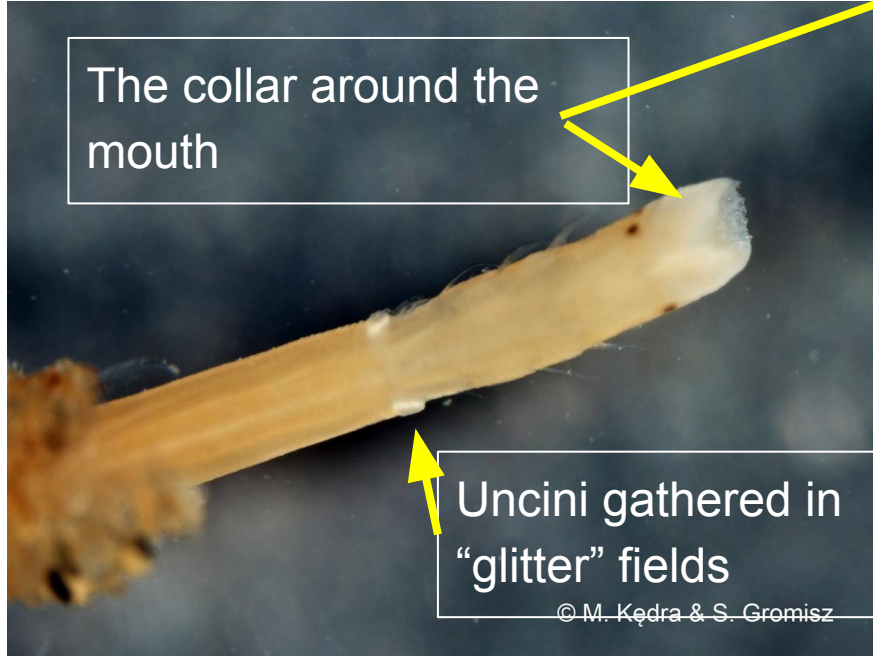
© M. Tanu

If radioles were lost
the collar could be
found at the anterior
part



Oweniidae

Very dense
slim tubes



Flabelligeridae

Body is covered with numerous papilla

Numerous sand grains are frequently presented on the body surface



Ampharetidae

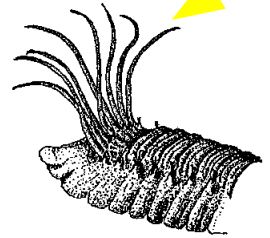
Specialized paleae at the anterior body part (may be very small or absent)

Fillamentous gills are in two groups

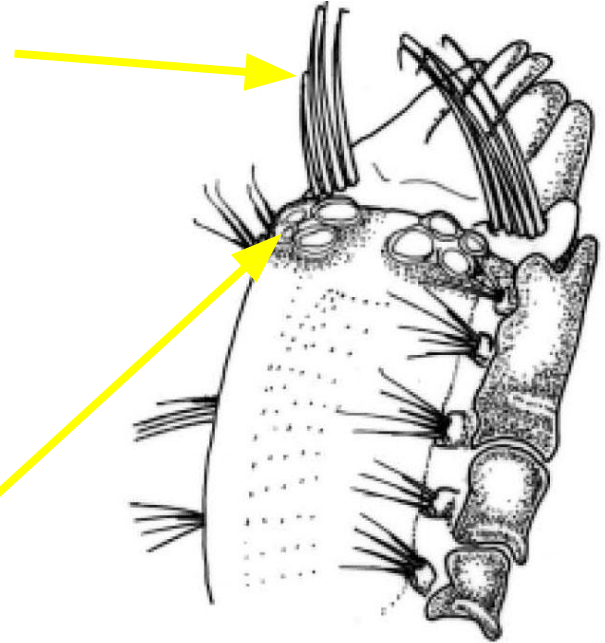
If gills are lost the stumps are presented



Tentacles in the mouth

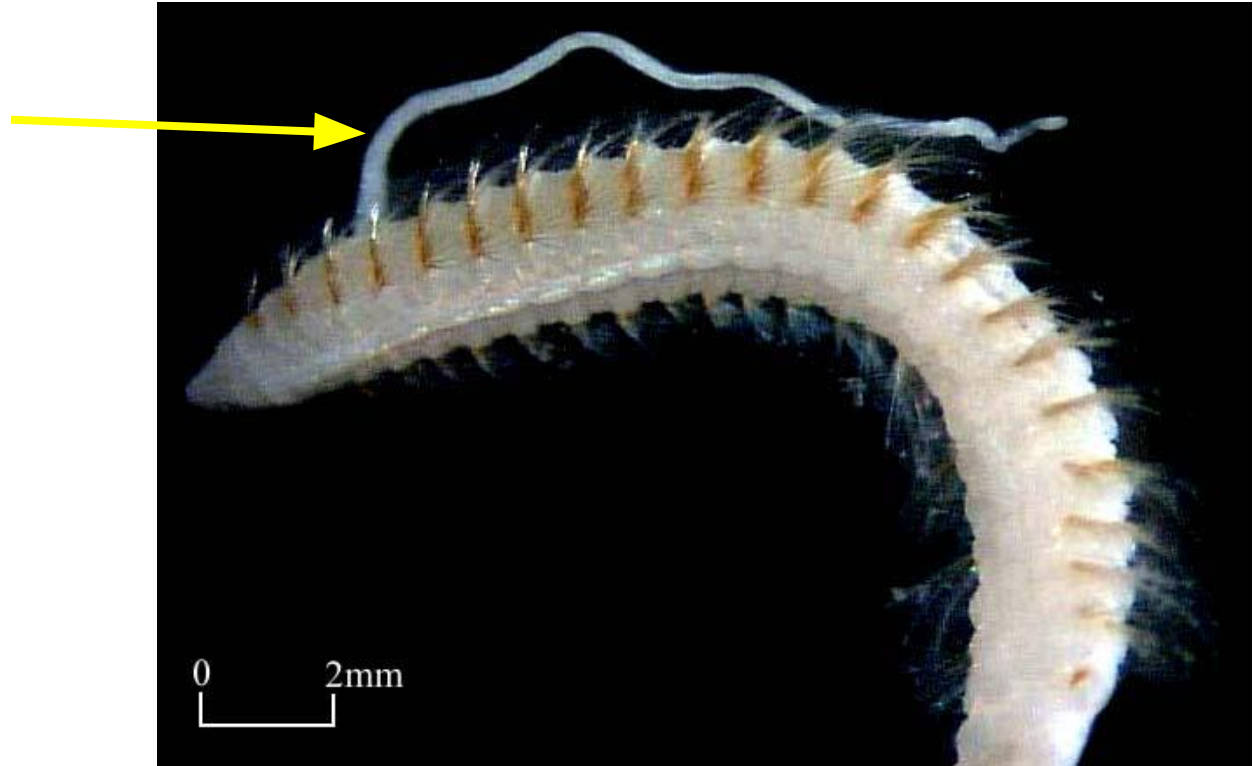


Pevellus uschakovi



Cossuridae

It looks like cirratulid but with only singular long appendage o the dorsal surface.



Cirratulidae

Numerous filamentous gills on the dorsal surface. Usually some of them are present. If they are lost completely you could confuse it with Orbiniidae BUT the latter have parapodia that situate on the lateral sides of thorax but then shifting to the dorsal surface in the abdomen.



Maldanidae



Frequently (but not allways!) they have a skinny fold around the prostomium.

They are “bamboo worms” and it is the best description :)



Frequently (but not allways!) their anus is surrounded by numerous cirries (like a flower ...)



© Greg Rouse

Trichobranchidae (*Terebellides stroemi*)

“Sausage-like” gill

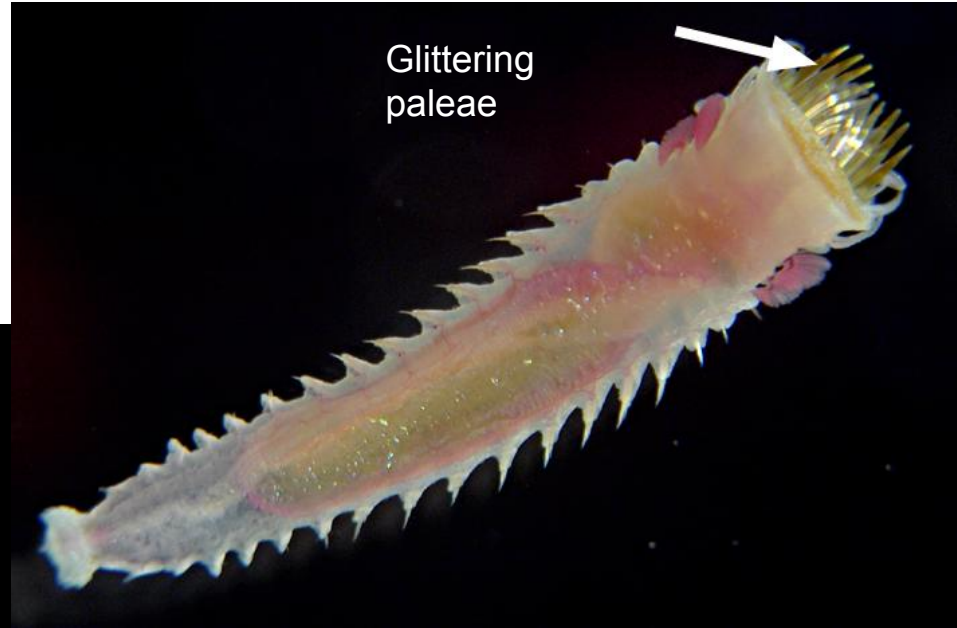
Frequently dead
worm is hook-like



Pectiniridae

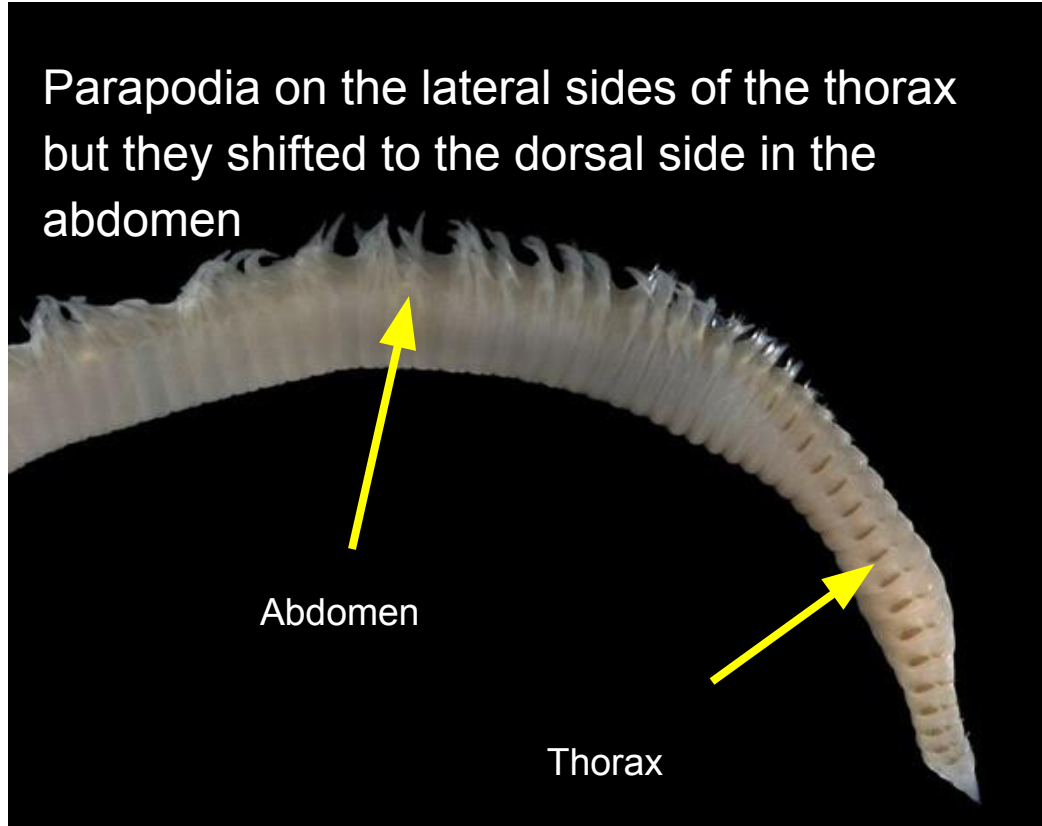
You will never be confused!

It is really ice-cream cone worms.



Orbiniidae (*Scoloplos armiger*)

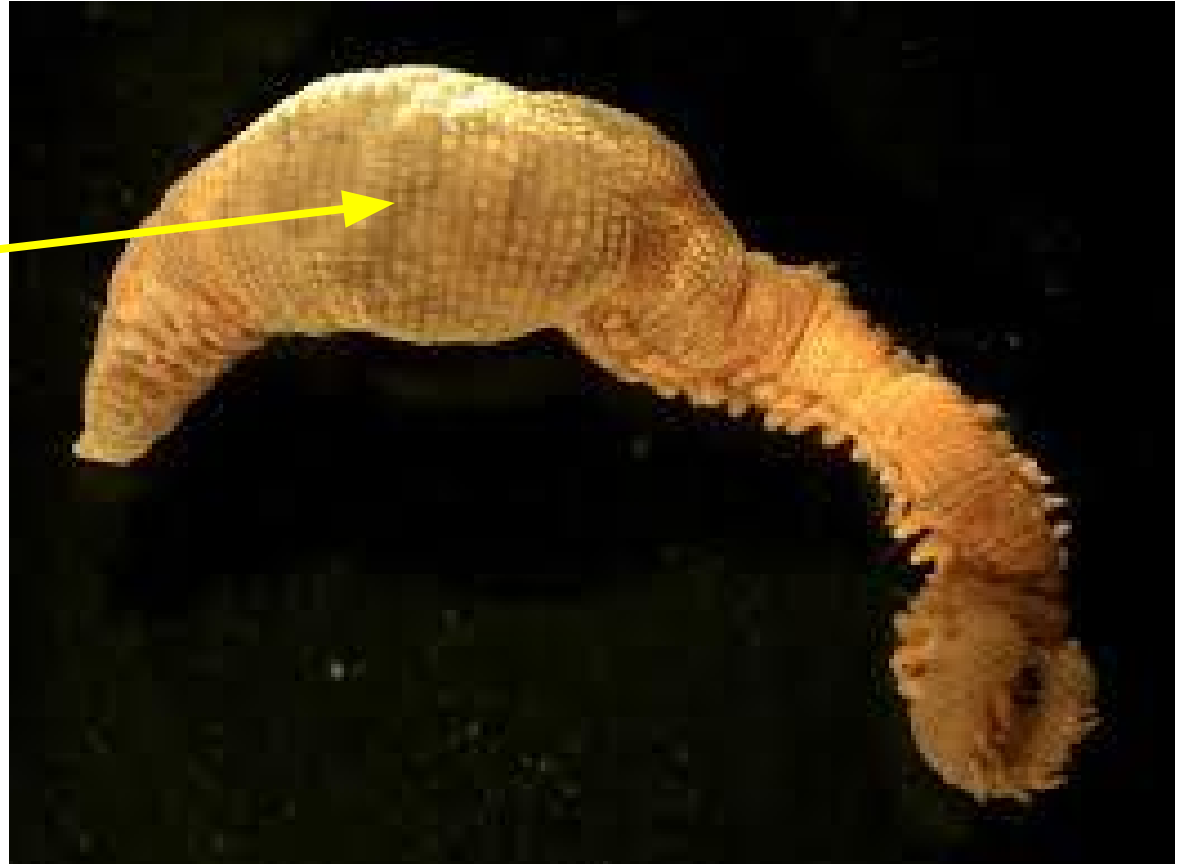
Parapodia on the lateral sides of the thorax
but they shifted to the dorsal side in the
abdomen



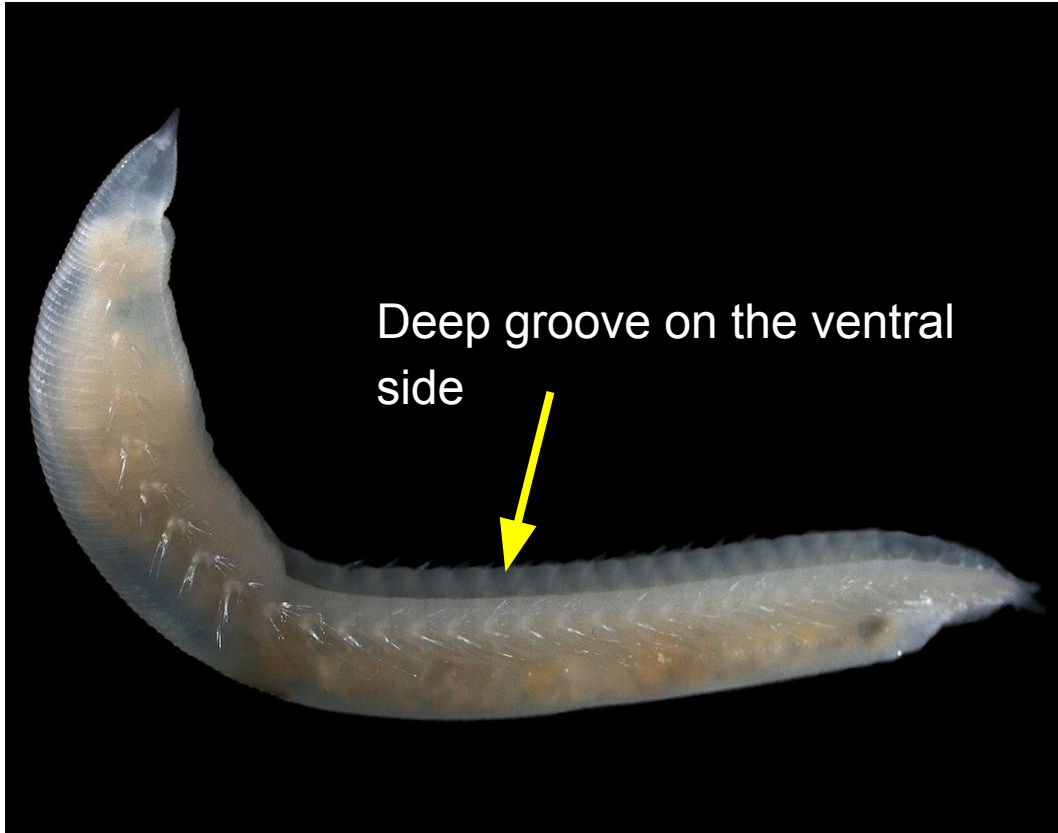
Scalibregmatidae

The anterior part of body is swollen.

The skin is very wrinkled



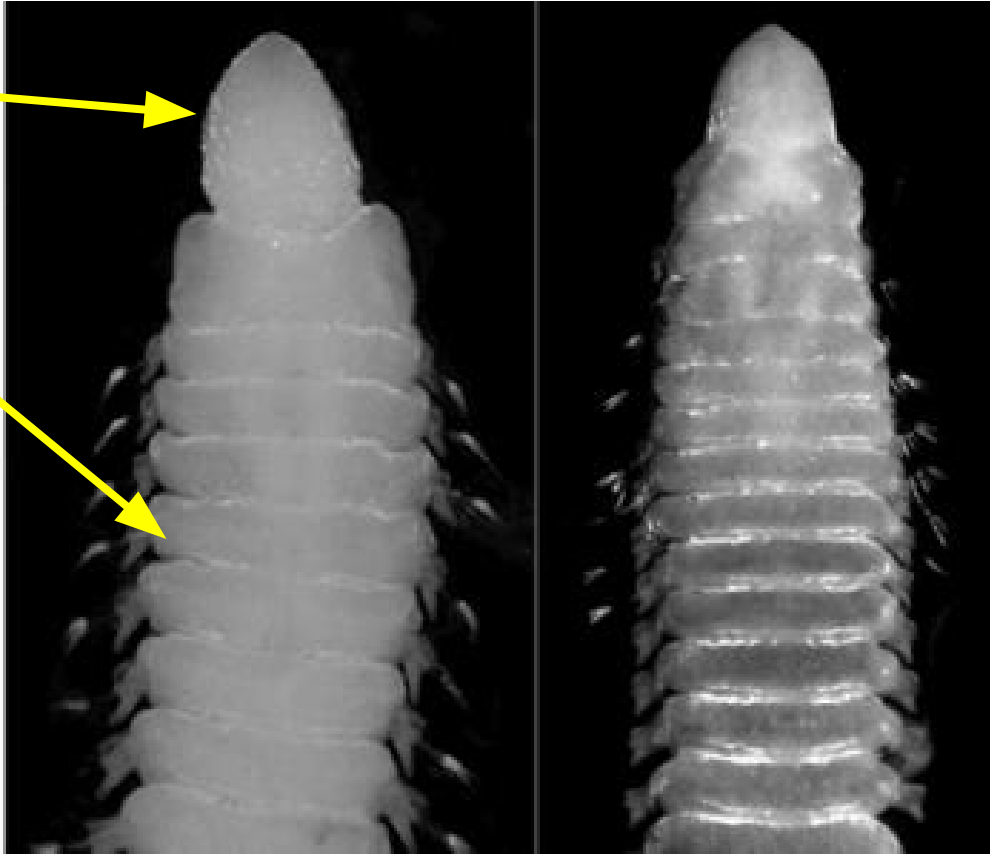
Opheliidae



Lumbrineridae

Large oviform prostomium

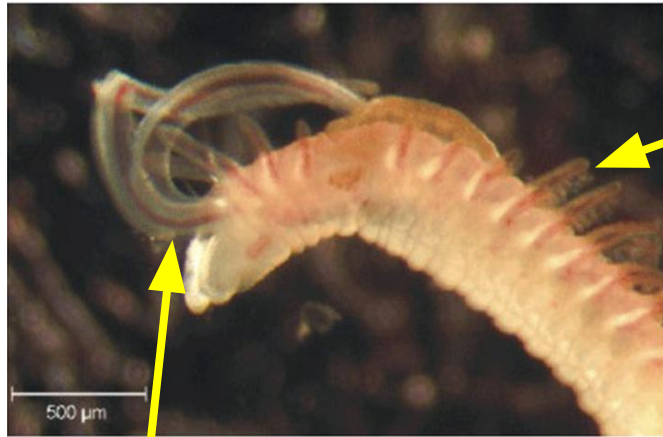
Homonomous segments



Spionidae and Paraonidae

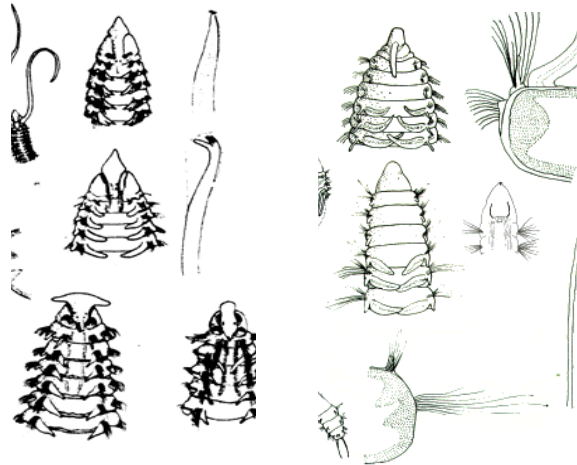
Frequently one confuse spionids with paraonids

Spionidae



Paired appendages
(they could be lost)

Gills



Paraonidae



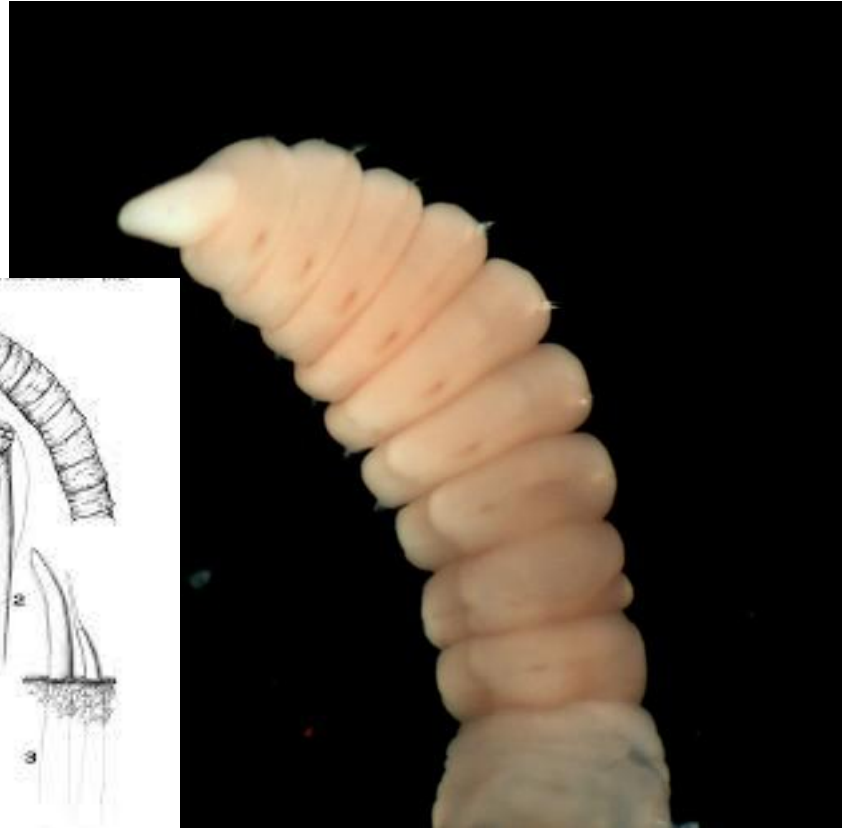
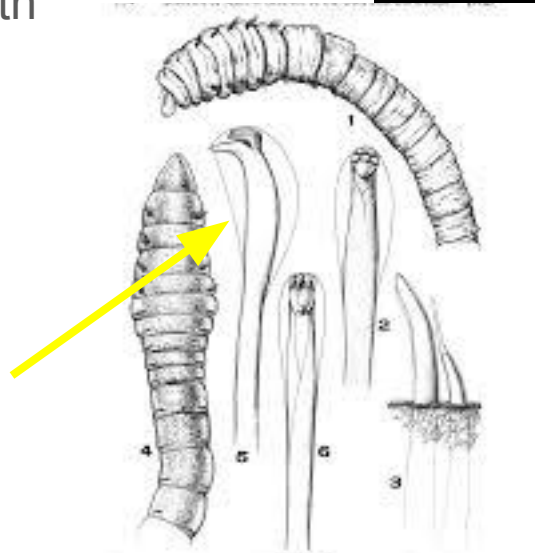
Unpaired
appendage (or no
appendages at all)

Capitellidae

They are the most earth-worm-like animals between polychaetes :)

Many peoples confuse them with oligochaetes...

The only way to check yourself is to look at their abdominal uncini. They have a special structure denoted as hood.



Terebellidae

Tangle of numerous tentacles

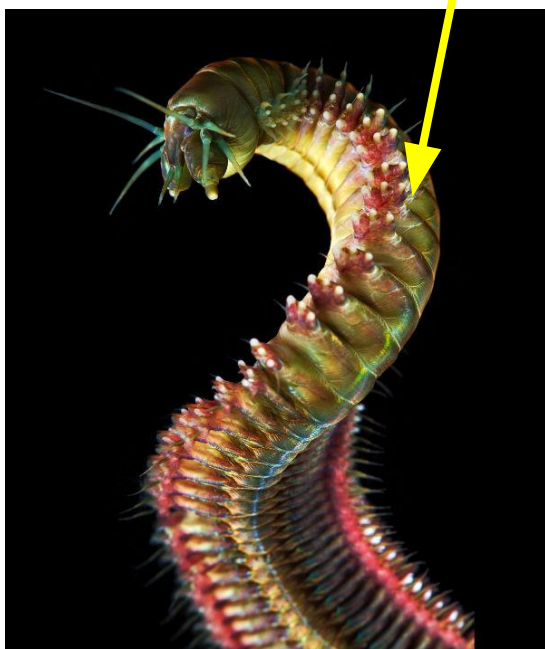


Gills (if present) are filamentous or arborescent, but usually gathered in tufts

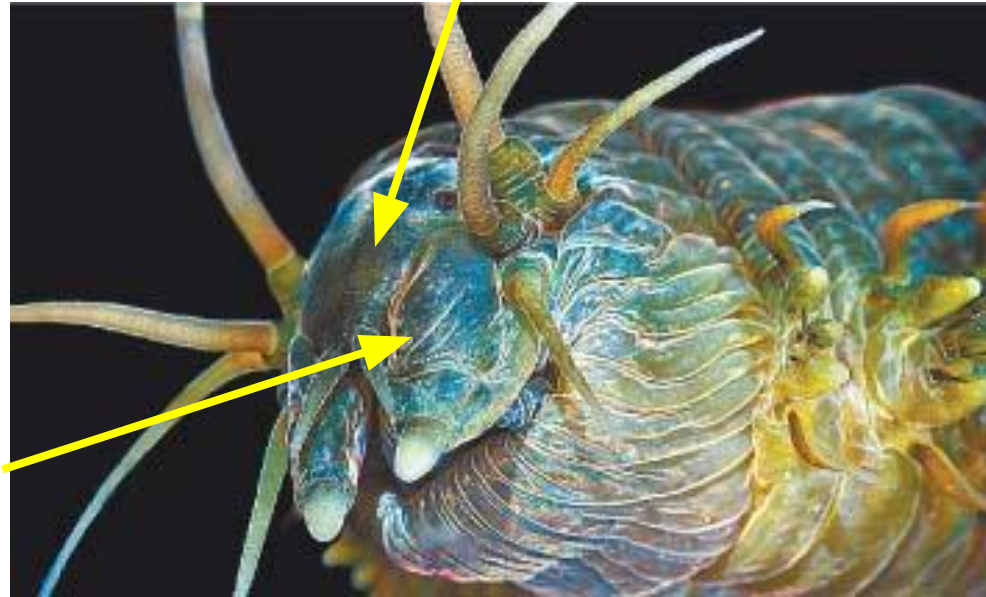


Nereidae

Homonomous body with
biarmous parapodia



Prostomium rather
large, with eyes.

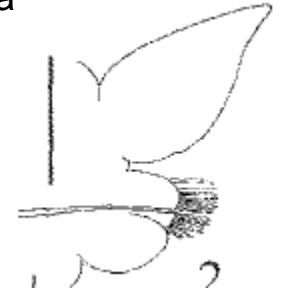
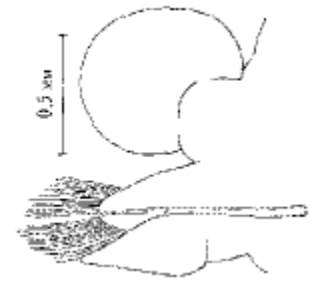


Large palps

Phyllodocidae

Triangular prostomium with eyes

Uniarious parapodia



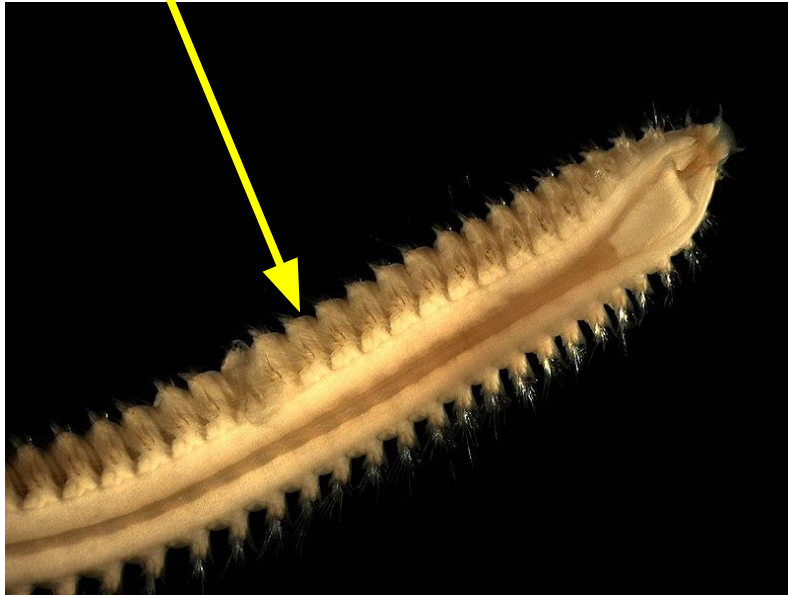
Notopodial cirri is paddle-like (but may be lancet-like and hart-like)

Long homonomous slim body



Nephtyidae

Homonomous body with
biarmous parapodia



Prostomium is
VERY small,
without eyes,
but with small
appendages

