

Sea lamprey- rare blood sucking sea creature discovered

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In news– A rare, blood-sucking creature with rows of swirling teeth has been found on a beach in The Netherlands.

About Sea lamprey-

- **This 'vampire fish', as it is called due to its nature to extract the blood of its prey**, was discovered on the Dutch island of Texel.
- **They belong to the oldest group of vertebrates**, the Agnatha, which existed more than 400 million years ago before there were fish with jaws.
- According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a US government agency, **sea lamprey is a parasitic fish native to the northern and western Atlantic Ocean**. It is often confused with eels.
- Unlike other fish, **lampreys lack scales, fins, and gill covers** and their skeletons are made of cartilage.
- The lampreys attack fish to suck the blood out using their sucker-shaped mouth.
- **NOAA said the fish uses its rough tongue to rasp away other fish's flesh** so it can feed on its host's blood and body fluids.
- It further said that one sea lamprey kills about 40 pounds of fish every year.