



State of Maine MARINE BAITWORM FISHERY

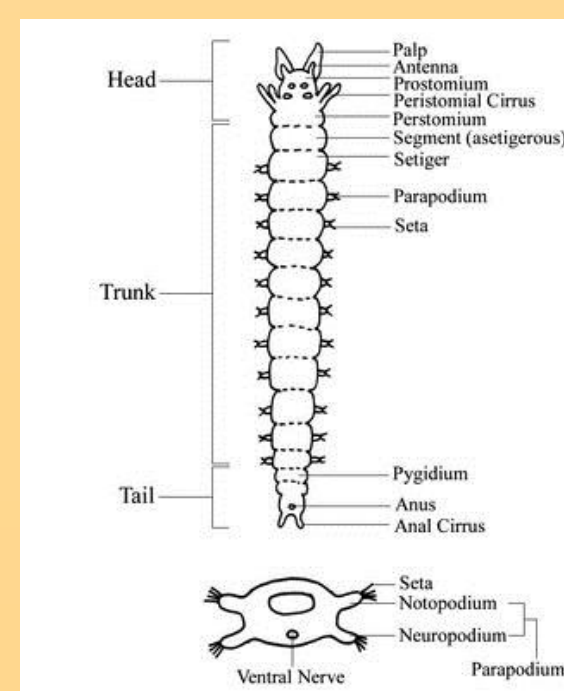
- Maine is one of the only states that has an active marine baitworm fishery.
- Marine worms are used as bait for recreational fisherman all over the world.
- Bloodworms (*Glycera dibranchiata*) and Sandworms (*Nereis virens*) are shipped by dealers in seaweed packed boxes to bait shops all over the U.S. and are highly prized.
- Annual revenue for the fishery is \$5.6 million per year and comprises 90% of baitworm fisheries in the U.S.
- In Maine baitworm diggers remove two species of polychaetes (marine worm) from the intertidal flats at low tide. All of this is done by hand with rakes and pails.



Gulf of Maine Marine Worms Class Polychaeta



Sandworm (*Nereis virens*)



Bloodworm (*Glycera dibranchiata*)

- Polychaetes are segmented worms that specialize in burrowing in marine sediments
- Polychaete worms are in the Kingdom: animalia, Phylum: annelida, and Class: polychaete.
- The word polychaete itself means “many brushes”.
- Polychaetes have a pair of appendages protruding on each side called parapodia.
- Polychaetes are mostly marine and are found in nearly any depth or temperature.
- These worms help marine bacteria by aerating sediments and in turn help to decompose sediments and organic material. They are extremely important to the oceanic nitrogen cycle
- Polychaetes are ecosystem engineers.
- The Gulf of Maine has well over 250 species of marine worms living in it's the sediments.
- Polychaetes are also an important food source to many fish species in the Gulf of Maine.

