

DEEP-SEA FROGFISH

Like the continents, the seabed is not flat and even, but is criss-crossed by trenches and large mountains. The deepest place on earth is the Mariana Trench, east of the island of Guam on the edge of the Pacific. It lies 11,034 metres below sea level.

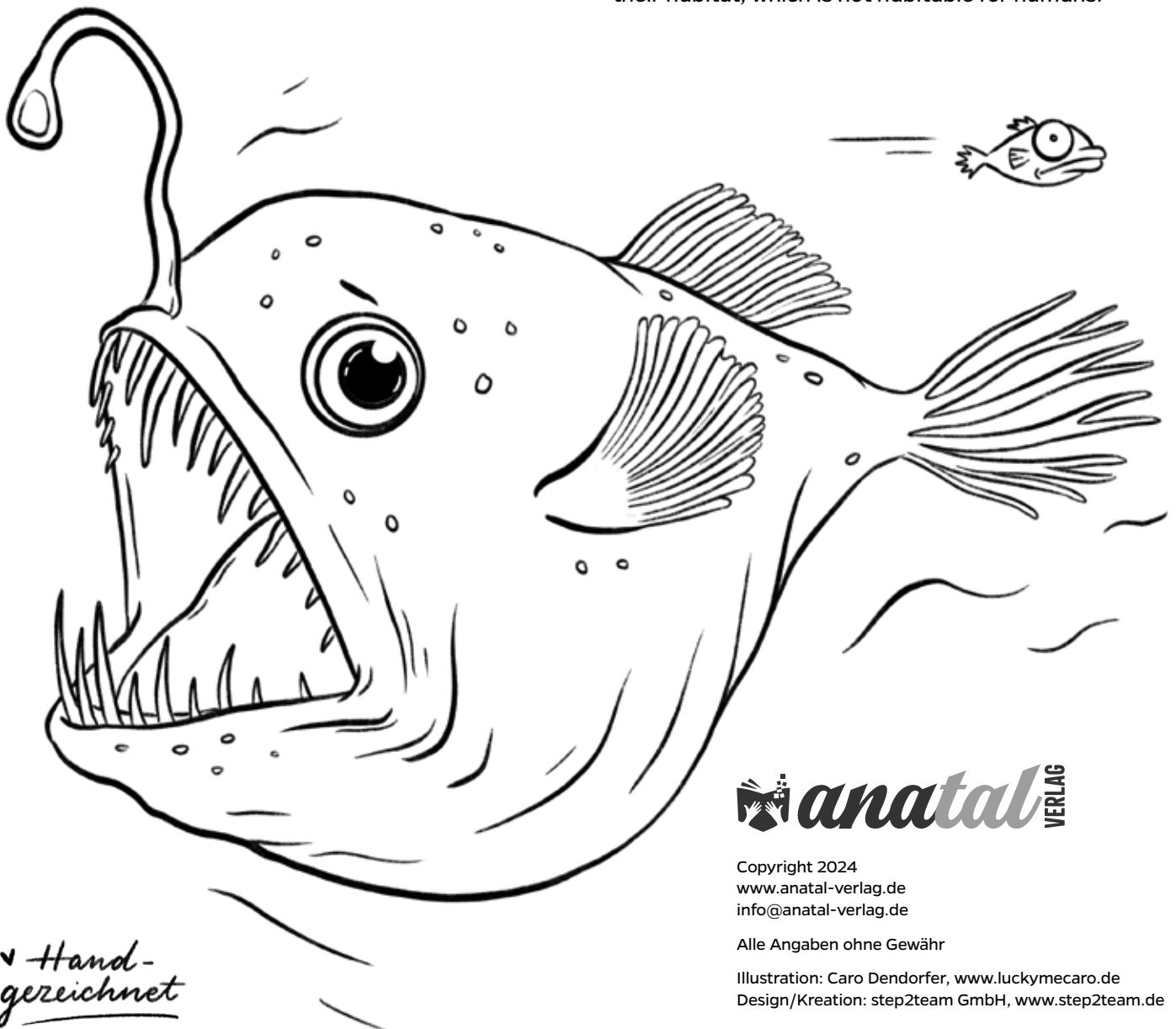
From a water depth of 200 metres, hardly any daylight can penetrate, and from a depth of around 800 metres there is complete darkness. Only the occasional deep-sea dweller lets in a little light. Without the warming sun, it is not only dark here, but also very cold. The water has a temperature of 1 to 5 degrees Celsius.

One of the deep-sea inhabitants that brings some light into the darkness is the deep-sea frogfish.

It lives in all the world's oceans and is found below a depth of 300 metres. It attracts prey with its luminous fishing rod, which only the females possess. The hook consists of many vesicles, light-conducting structures, reflective layers and pigments.

The vesicles are filled with luminescent bacteria, i.e. the bacteria have the ability to produce light. Fish and small crustaceans are magically attracted by the light from the fishing rod. As soon as they are close enough, the deep-sea frogfish simply sucks in its prey.

There are a total of around 160 different species of deep-sea frogfish. Some of these species can only be found in water depths of 6,000 metres. Researching these animals is therefore very difficult. Nevertheless, it is admirable how these animals have adapted to their habitat, which is not habitable for humans.



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