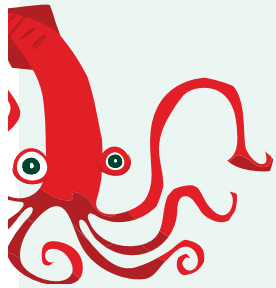




Explorers learning about **Squid**



Cephalopod Science Investigations **LEARNING ABOUT OUR FAVOURITE SQUID SPECIES**

By Cushla Dromgool-Regan
Eimear Manning & Anna Quinn



www.EXPLORERS.ie

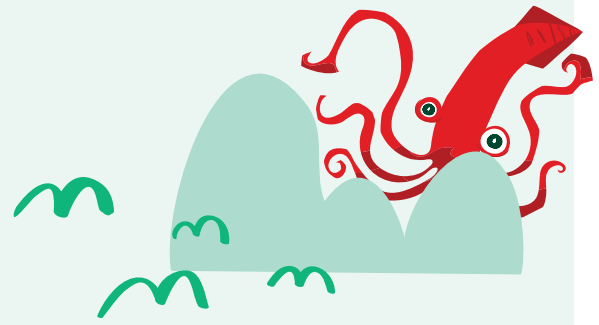
The Explorers Education Programme is funded by the Marine Institute



Foras na Mara
Marine Institute



Explorers learning about Squid



Explorers Education Programme engage with primary schools, teachers and children, creating marine leaders and ocean champions. The Explorers Education Programme team provides engaging activities, resources and support for teachers, children and the education network, delivering ocean literacy to primary schools.

We aim to inspire children and educators to learn about our marine and maritime identity and heritage, as well as making informed and responsible decisions regarding the ocean and its resources.

We communicate about the ocean in a meaningful way, increasing the awareness and understanding of our marine biodiversity, the environment, as well as the opportunities and social benefits of our ocean wealth.

To help inspire children learning about the ocean, we have developed a series of teaching materials and resources about Squid! Check out our Explorers books: Cephalopod Science Investigations – Learning about Squid 101; My CSI Squid Workbook. Also, see our interactive film: Cephalopod Science Investigations – Learning about Squid 101 and Dissection.

For more information about our Squid series see www.explorers.ie





Explorers learning about **Squid**

CEPHALOPOD SCIENCE INVESTIGATIONS

LEARNING ABOUT OUR FAVOURITE SQUID SPECIES

AUTHORS

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Design: Fiona Regan, Kraken Design & Cushla Dromgool-Regan, The Camden Education Trust

For further information about the Explorers Education Programme see: www.explorers.ie

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The authors would like to provide a special thanks to the Explorers Education Programme's outreach teams around Ireland; as well as Dr Noírin Burke from the Explorers support services team at Galway Atlantaquaria, for their inspiration in helping us produce the Explorers Learning about Squid teaching resources and materials.

The Explorers team have provided many squid dissections for teachers and children over the years, sharing their expertise in ocean sciences and marine biodiversity. To further support these fun science activities, we have produced a series of Explorers Learning about Squid – Cephalopod Science Investigations books for teachers and children; a short film involving a squid dissection; and a series of fun squid facts, which we hope you all enjoy.

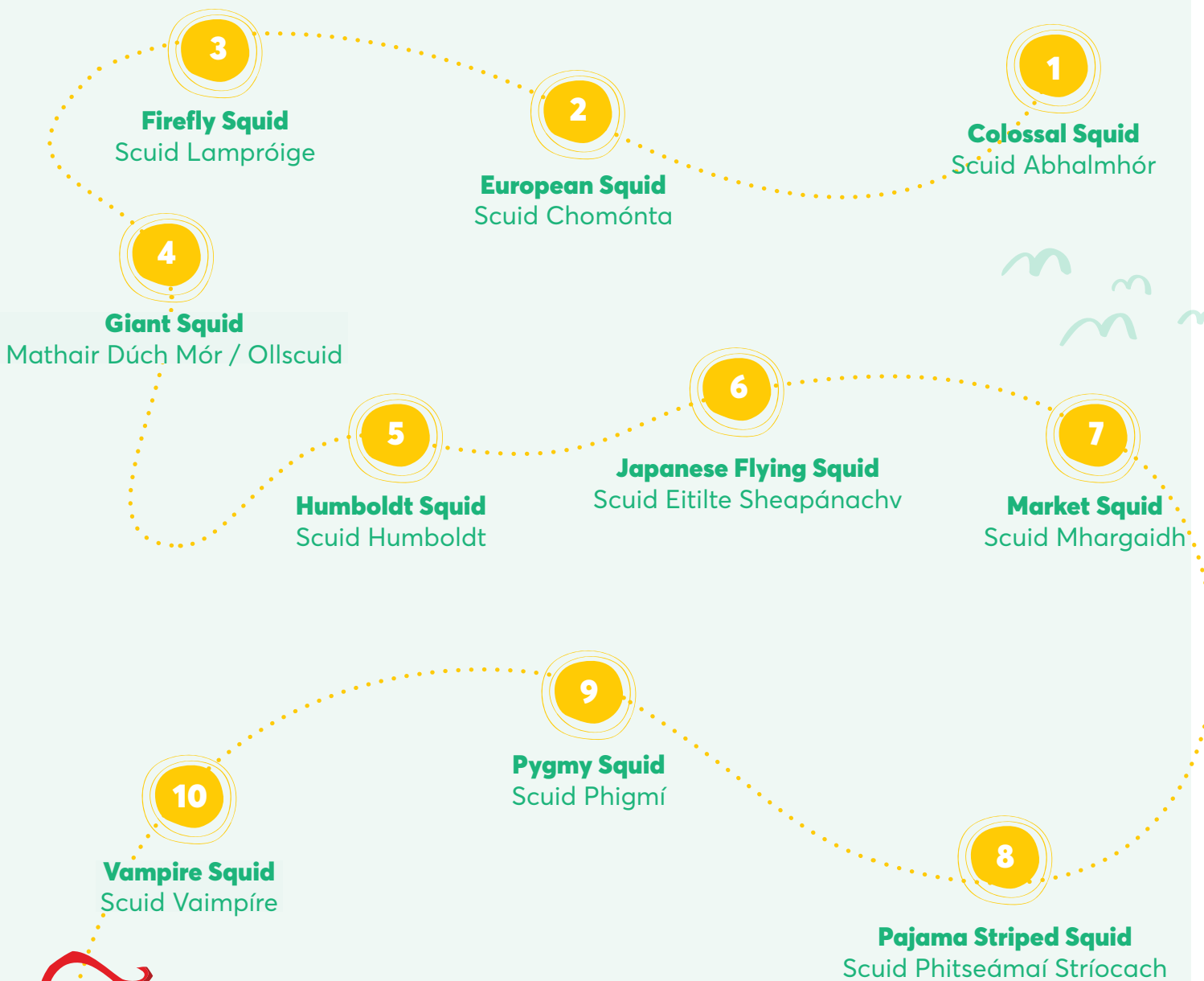
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CSI LEARNING ABOUT SQUID SPECIES

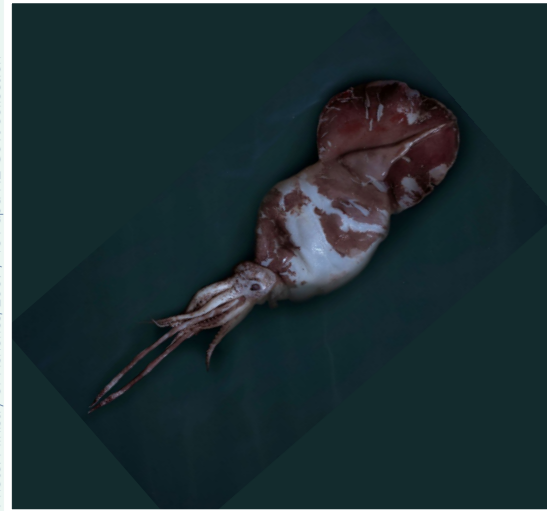
We love cephalopods - especially SQUID! They come in all shapes and sizes. Some are as small as your finger nail and others are as long as a bus. Learning about animals such as squid, help us discover some of the amazing things about marine biodiversity and adaptation; as well as exploring the ocean around the world. We hope this book **CSI: Learning about our favourite Squid**, helps inspire you to learn about these incredible creatures too.





Explorers learning about Squid

COLOSSAL SQUID SCUID ABHALMHÓR



WHERE WILL YOU FIND ME?

Colossal squid live in the waters around the Antarctic. No adult colossal squid has ever been captured alive. Scientists think the adult colossal squid lives between 1,000 and 2,500 metres deep in the ocean. That's between the twilight zone and the midnight zone!

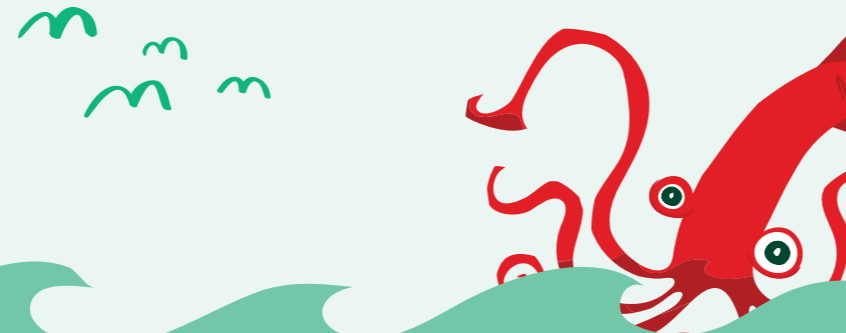
WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

Colossal squid look very similar to common squid. However, they are much fatter and have a larger body. They have a mantle (body) of up to two metres. With the feeding tentacle length included, they can reach over 14 metres long. They can also weigh over 500 kilograms – that's the same weight as a small caravan!

The eyes of the colossal squid are believed to be the largest eyes in the animal kingdom. They are 25-30 centimetres in diameter, which is the length of an average school ruler.

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

The massive eyes of the colossal squid help to protect it by absorbing more light than those of other creatures in the deep sea. This allows them to spot a lurking predator before the predator spots the squid. Their two feeding tentacles are covered in massive suckers that have sharp rotating hooks. These hooks can be used to fight off predators and to capture prey.



QUICK FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Mesonychoteuthis hamiltoni

SIZE

14 metres when combining body and tentacle lengths

COLOUR

Whitish-pink or reddish

LIFE SPAN

Adults live 1-3 years. Beyond this is unknown.



Explorers learning about Squid

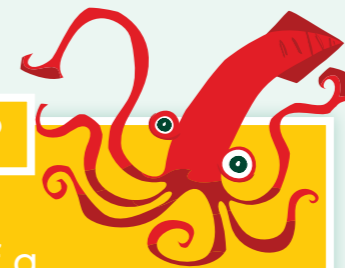
WHAT DO I EAT?

The colossal squid is an ambush predator. It hides in the darkness and uses its massive eyes to spot a meal before throwing out its feeding tentacles to quickly and silently snatch its prey. It eats fish and other squids, and it's estimated that one large fish may provide enough energy for the colossal squid to survive for up to 200 days!

WHAT LIKES TO EAT ME?

Sperm whales and elephant seals have been known to feed on colossal squid. Elephant seals have only been known to eat juvenile colossal squid, but sperm whales have been found covered in scars from colossal squid hooks. Scientists who have assessed the stomach contents of sperm whales believe that colossal squid could make up as much as 77 per cent of the sperm whale's diet.

DID YOU KNOW?



The first report of a colossal squid was in 1925 when the head and arms were found in a sperm whale's stomach. Since then only eight colossal squid have been reported!



Photo: Neil Manning





Explorers learning about Squid



Photo: JATYMX Alamy

QUICK FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Loligo vulgaris

SIZE

15-40 cm

COLOUR

Varies from cream to pink, with reddish-brown patches

LIFE SPAN

Females live up to 2 years.
Males live up to 3 and a half years

EUROPEAN SQUID SCUID CHOMÓNTA

WHERE WILL YOU FIND ME?

The common squid, also known as the European squid, can be found in the Atlantic and Mediterranean waters: from Noway in the North Sea to southwest Africa and the Mediterranean. They live in the twilight zone, 500 metres deep in the ocean.

WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

Common squid vary in colour from cream to pink. They usually have reddish-brown patches along their slender backs. They have two fins on opposite sides of their mantle (body), eight suckered arms, and two long feeding tentacles.

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

The common squid's arms are lined with two rows of suckers that are ringed with 20 teeth per sucker. These teeth enable it to fight off predators as well as latch on to prey.

The common squid is also able to alter its colour and body markings with chromatophores. This can help it to camouflage into its surroundings or confuse predators. If it flashes its chromatophores fast enough, it can even stun other fish species.

Common squid also have an ink sac that they can use to squirt a black inky substance into the water. This confuses the predators and gives the common squid time to escape.



Explorers learning about Squid

WHAT DO I EAT?

Common squid eat small fish, shrimp, crabs, and, sometimes, other smaller squid.

WHAT LIKES TO EAT ME?

Many species feed on common squid, such as birds, sharks, large fish, toothed whales, crabs, other squid, and humans.

HOW DO I REPRODUCE?

The males will use their chromatophores to change into beautiful colours and will make unusual shapes with their tentacles to attract a female squid.

After mating, she will then lay up to 20,000 eggs inside jelly-like tubes and attach these tubes to solid objects on the sea floor. After the eggs hatch, the juvenile squid enter the food chain as plankton before slowly growing into adult squid.

Adult squids usually die shortly after mating!



Photo: David Featherbe-Alamy

DID YOU KNOW?

It's common in Ireland to find squid eggs washed ashore! Your best chance to find them is the day after a storm. Keep an eye out for long white jelly-like eggs on the beach.





Explorers learning about Squid



Photo: cdascher & iStock

QUICK FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Watasenia scintillans

SIZE

8cm

COLOUR

Cream with a bluish-orange hue

LIFE SPAN

1 year

FIREFLY SQUID SCUID LAMPRÓIGE

WHERE WILL YOU FIND ME?

Firefly squid are found in the Pacific Ocean. They live between the sunlight zone and the twilight zone which is a depth range of 200 – 1000 metres. At night they swim to the surface of the ocean to look for food. They also rise to the surface when they mate, creating huge areas of twinkling light-blue water.

WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

The firefly squid gets its name from the flashing lights that resemble those of a firefly. Sea creatures that are able to glow is caused by a chemical reaction in their body and is called bioluminescence. Of all the bioluminescent creatures in the ocean, the firefly squid is the most impressive.

During the day, the firefly squid looks cream, and sometimes it has a bluish-orange hue when it catches the light. At night, however, the firefly squid's thousands of photophores glow and create dazzling flashes of light. In Toyama Bay, Japan, the firefly squid famously give beach onlookers an incredible light show once a year when millions of these squid gather to spawn.

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

The firefly squid can flash its photophores quickly to scare or confuse predators, allowing it to escape.



Explorers learning about Squid

WHAT DO I EAT?

Firefly squid use their bioluminescence to attract prey. They can lure small, curious fish, shrimp and crabs closer to them by slowly blinking their lights on and off. Once their prey is close enough, they pounce and use their tentacles to trap their meal.

WHAT LIKES TO EAT ME?

Firefly squid are eaten by northern fur seals. They are also eaten by fish and crustaceans.

HOW DO I REPRODUCE?

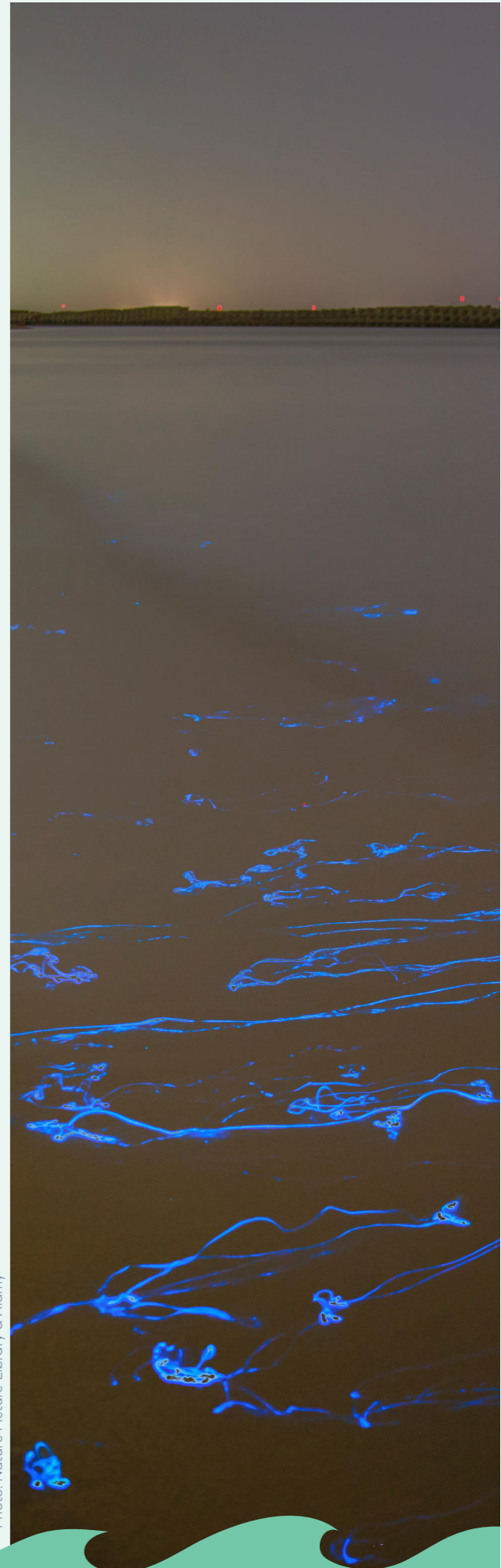
Firefly squid spawn between March and May. Millions (sometimes billions) of firefly squid come together to lay their eggs. Once the fertilised eggs are laid, the parent squid begin to die. The new firefly squid will hatch from their eggs in 1-2 weeks.

DID YOU KNOW?

The firefly squid is the only squid that scientists believe has colour vision! Most cephalopods have only one visual pigment but the firefly squid has three. This means the firefly squid can decode the patterns of light that are created by other squid.

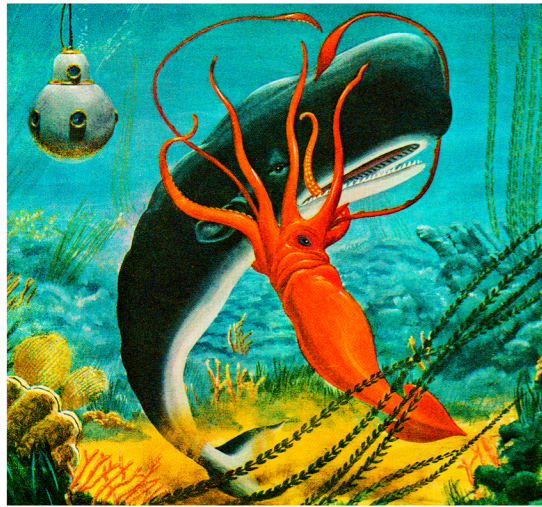


Photo: Nature Picture Library & Alamy





Explorers learning about Squid



GIANT SQUID MATHAIR DÚCH MÓR / OLLSCUID

WHERE WILL YOU FIND ME?

Although the giant squid is huge, they have an elusive nature making them very difficult to find. Based on recovered specimens of giant squid, it is likely that they are located in all of the ocean basins around the world. This includes the Arctic, Atlantic, Pacific, Indian and Southern ocean. It is also thought that based on the giant squid's main predator the sperm whale, it is likely that the giant squid lives at depths between the twilight zone and the midnight zone. That's a region between one and four thousand metres under the ocean!

WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

A giant squid's body looks very similar to other squids – but of course the giant squid is much larger! They have two eyes, a beak, eight arms, two feeding tentacles, and a siphon also called a funnel. They are reddish-orange, fading to whitish on the inside of their arms and tentacles.

Giant squid (and their close relative, the colossal squid) have the largest eyes in the animal kingdom. Each eye is the size of a football! These massive eyes can absorb much more light than those of most other deep-sea fish. This allows them to see bioluminescent prey or spot predators lurking nearby.

The siphon is a large tube on the underside of the giant squid's body and is what allows it to move. The giant squid sucks water into the siphon and pushes the water out to propel itself forward. This is called jet propulsion. The squid also uses this siphon to lay eggs, squirt ink, and get rid of its waste.

QUICK FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Architeuthis dux

SIZE

18m

COLOUR

Reddish-orange, fading to whitish on the inside of the arms and tentacles

LIFE SPAN

5 years



Explorers learning about Squid

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

A giant squid's tentacles are tipped with hundreds of toothy suckers that help it to latch on to its prey and to deter predators. Additionally, the massive eyes of the giant squid allow it to see much more clearly in the dark depths than other fish.

WHAT DO I EAT?

The giant squid's main food source is likely to be other squid, fish, and shrimp. They have also been known to attack small whales, but it is unknown if this is for food or defence. They use their eight arms and two extra-long feeding tentacles to bring their food up to their beak-like mouths. Fully grown giant squid can snatch prey up to 10 metres away!

WHAT LIKES TO EAT ME?

The only creatures known to attack giant squid are whales, such as the deep-diving sperm whale and the orca.

DID YOU KNOW?

The giant squid's brain is shaped like a doughnut! Even stranger – the squid's oesophagus (throat) runs through the hole of its doughnut-shaped brain!

When giant squid are born, they are so small that they can fit onto a one cent coin!

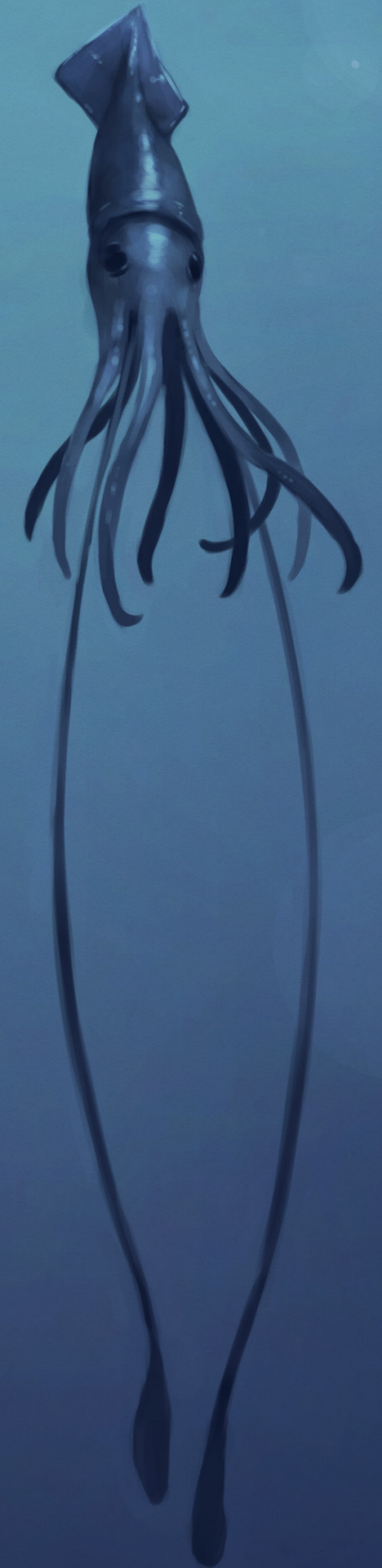


Photo: Neil Manning





Explorers learning about Squid

HUMBOLDT SQUID SCUID HUMBOLDT



WHERE WILL YOU FIND ME?

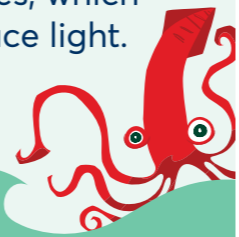
The Humboldt squid is found in the Pacific Ocean. It was once only found between Peru and Mexico, but in recent years, with warming waters caused by climate change, it can now be found from Chile to Alaska!

Humboldt squid 'vertically migrate' every night. This means that each night they come up from the depths of the ocean to the surface waters to feed. They then swim back down deeper than 1,000 metres as the sun is rising. This means the Humboldt squid can be found in three zones: the sunlight, twilight, and midnight zones.

WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

The Humboldt squid is the largest of the 'flying squids'. It has a thick mantle (body) that can grow up to two metres long. It has eight suckered arms and two longer feeding tentacles that add an extra metre to its length. The Humboldt squid can weigh over 50 kilograms and is also named the 'jumbo squid'.

Humboldt squid also have very impressive control of their chromatophores, which allow them to change colour. Their base colour can vary from whitish to pinkish to reddish. Scientists have discovered that the Humboldt squid has 28 different 'flashing patterns'. Scientists believe that these flashing patterns could have different meanings and could be a way for Humboldt squid to communicate with one another. Humboldt squid also have photophores, which are bioluminescent organs that produce light.



QUICK FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Dosidicus gigas

SIZE

Mantle up to 2 metres; arms and feeding tentacles up to 1 metre

COLOUR

Whitish, pinkish or reddish; can use chromatophores to change colour

LIFE SPAN

1-2 years



Explorers learning about Squid

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

Humboldt squid can use their quick-changing colours to scare anything that's trying to eat them. Being one of the 'flying squids', it can leap out of the water to escape from predators. They also have an ink sac to deter predators if they get too close.

WHAT DO I EAT?

Humboldt squid have a huge appetite! To grow so large in just one year they need to eat a lot! They eat any small fish they can grab, and they have also been known to eat smaller squid, including younger Humboldt squid.

WHAT LIKES TO EAT ME?

Sperm whales and large predatory fishes, such as swordfish and marlin, love eating Humboldt squid.

HOW DO I REPRODUCE?

Humboldt squid lay the most eggs of any known cephalopod. Females will lay over one million eggs at a time, and may lay as many as 20 million eggs in her short lifetime. Males will die shortly after mating, and females will die shortly after they lay their final mass of eggs. Juvenile Humboldt squid grow incredibly quickly; from one millimetre to over one metre in a single year!

DID YOU KNOW?

The beak of the Humboldt squid is harder to dent, scratch or bend than almost all known metals!



Photo: Mark Conlin & Alamy





Explorers

learning about

Squid



Photo: Andrey Nekrasov & Alamy

QUICK FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Todarodes pacificus

SIZE

Up to 50 cm (males are smaller)

COLOUR

Pale brown but often changes to whites, blues, and yellows when out of water.

LIFE SPAN

1 year

JAPANESE FLYING SQUID

SCUID EITILTE SHEAPÁNACH

WHERE WILL YOU FIND ME?

Japanese flying squid live in both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. They migrate to their spawning grounds around Japan each year. Typically, they stay near the surface of the water above 100 metres depth in the sunlight zone. They have sometimes been found as deep as 500 metres in the twilight zone. This means they live between the sunlight and twilight zones.

WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

Japanese flying squid have a long mantle with wide fins. They can change their skin colour to match their environment, but their base colour is pale brown. When they propel themselves out of the water they have been photographed in stunning blue and yellow colours. This perhaps helps them camouflage to match the sun and sea.

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

Similar to other squid species, Japanese flying squid can change their colour and use ink to protect themselves from predators. However, this species has another trick up its mantle!

Japanese flying squid get their name because they can use their siphon to forcefully propel themselves out of the water, where they can 'fly' for more than 30 metres at a time. This is done through jet propulsion. They suck water into their siphon and powerfully push the water out again, launching above the surface of the water. They then extend their fins and arms to remain in the air for longer.



Explorers

learning about

Squid

WHAT DO I EAT?

Japanese flying squid feed mainly on small fish such as anchovies and lantern fish. They also eat crustaceans, gastropod larvae, worms, and sometimes smaller squid.

WHAT LIKES TO EAT ME?

Many species eat the Japanese flying squid. The most common are larger fish and marine mammals such as dolphins, whales, and seals. It is also possible that this squid is a source of food for sea birds when they launch themselves out of the water.

HOW DO I REPRODUCE?

Males perform a type of dance and colour show with their skin to attract females. The males hand over their fertiliser to the female, which she will use to fertilise the eggs in her mantle. The female will lay her eggs in large masses under the water. Depending on the temperature of the water, the eggs will develop for between a few days to many months. Once the eggs hatch, the juveniles need to fend for themselves.

Similarly to other cephalopods, the male Japanese flying squid will die shortly after mating, and the female will die shortly after her young hatch.

DID YOU KNOW?



Researchers originally thought that flying squid only leapt from the water to escape predators, but there may be another reason - transport! Japanese flying squid move faster through the air than they do through the water, so this could reduce the energy these squid use on their long migrations.

Photo: Michael Greenfelder & Alamy





Explorers learning about Squid



Photo: Hudson Fleece & Alamy

QUICK FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Doryteuthis (Loligo) opalescens

SIZE

30 cm including arms

COLOUR

Cream or pale pink; can change to much darker tones

LIFE SPAN

4-9 months

MARKET SQUID SCUID MHARGAIDH

WHERE WILL YOU FIND ME?

The market squid (also known as the Californian squid or the opalescent squid) is found from Alaska to Mexico in the Pacific Ocean. They live mostly 15-30 metres below the surface of the ocean, but they have been found as deep as 500 metres. This means the market squid lives between the sunlight zone and the twilight zone.

Market squid migrate from Alaska to Mexico every year in enormous schools of hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals in a swarm.

WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

Market squid are like other squid in that they have a mantle (body) with eight short arms and two longer feeding tentacles, all equipped with rows of toothed suckers. Their skin can change colour but when relaxed is cream or pale pink. They also have a triangular fin that stretches from the tip of the mantle to halfway down their body. Males are, on average, larger than the females.

Market squid get their secondary name 'opalescent squid' from their ever-changing chromatophores. They alter their pigments rapidly and can even use this colour change to communicate with other market squid.



Explorers learning about Squid

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

The market squid is pale when it is relaxed and darker when it is frightened or alert. This signalling could help other market squid be on the lookout for danger. As market squid often school together, they protect themselves by being surrounded by many other individuals. This makes it difficult for predators to single-out their prey. Market squid also have ink sacs, and they can squirt the inky contents into the water around them to make a quick escape if they need to.

WHAT DO I EAT?

Adult squid feed on krill, small fish, crustaceans, and even other squid. Juvenile squid feed on plankton.

WHAT LIKES TO EAT ME?

Market squid are a very important source of food for many marine species. They are eaten by a huge variety of fish, marine mammals, and sea birds.

DID YOU KNOW?



The female market squid can lay up to 4,000 eggs on the sandy sea floor and cement them together with a sticky substance. They often lay their eggs beside other laid eggs, which can lead to massive fields of squid eggs covering huge patches of the sea floor. These eggs will hatch at 3-5 weeks, and the juvenile squid will look like tiny replicas of their parent squid.



Photo: Michael Zeigler & iStock





Explorers

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Squid



Photo: Whitepointer & iStock

QUICK FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Sepioloidea lineolata

SIZE

7 cm

COLOUR

White with thin black stripes.
Can change colour.

LIFE SPAN

Between 8 months to 2 years.

PAJAMA STRIPED SQUID

SCUID PHITSEÁMAÍ STRÍOCACH

WHERE WILL YOU FIND ME?

The pyjama striped squid lives in shallow coastal waters around Australia. They spend all of their time in the sunlight zone, hiding in sandy and muddy sea floors.

Pyjama striped squid are nocturnal, meaning they are only active at night. During the day they will bury themselves in sand and shells so that only their yellow eyes poke out.

WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

Despite having 'squid' in its name, the striped pyjama squid is actually not a squid, but a cuttlefish! Cuttlefish are very similar to squid in that they have eight arms and two tentacles, and can change their skin colour. Cuttlefish have stubby bodies, however, in comparison to the squid's torpedo-like shape. One of the main differences between squid and cuttlefish is that cuttlefish have a bone inside their body called the cuttlebone. Interestingly, the pyjama striped squid does not have this cuttlebone, which may have been where the confusion arose from when naming the species.

The pyjama striped squid has a white body with thin black stripes. It can change its colour and can often be seen with orange or yellow hues to blend into sand, or black, purple, and grey colours to blend into rocks.



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Squid

WHAT DO I EAT?

Pyjama striped squid eat mainly shrimp and small fish.

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

Similarly to its other cephalopod cousins, the pyjama striped squid can change colour using its chromatophores, and squirt ink to confuse predators. It has another interesting defence feature, though. The pyjama striped squid is one of the few known poisonous and venomous cephalopods! If they feel threatened, they can activate a small gland under their body that will release a toxic slime into the surrounding water.

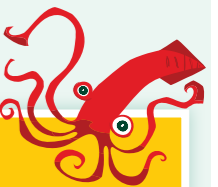
WHAT LIKES TO EAT ME?

Many crustaceans and fish species will try to take a bite out of a pyjama striped squid - but very few will go in for a second bite! The toxins within the body of the pyjama striped squid are very effective at chasing away hungry predators.

HOW DO I REPRODUCE?

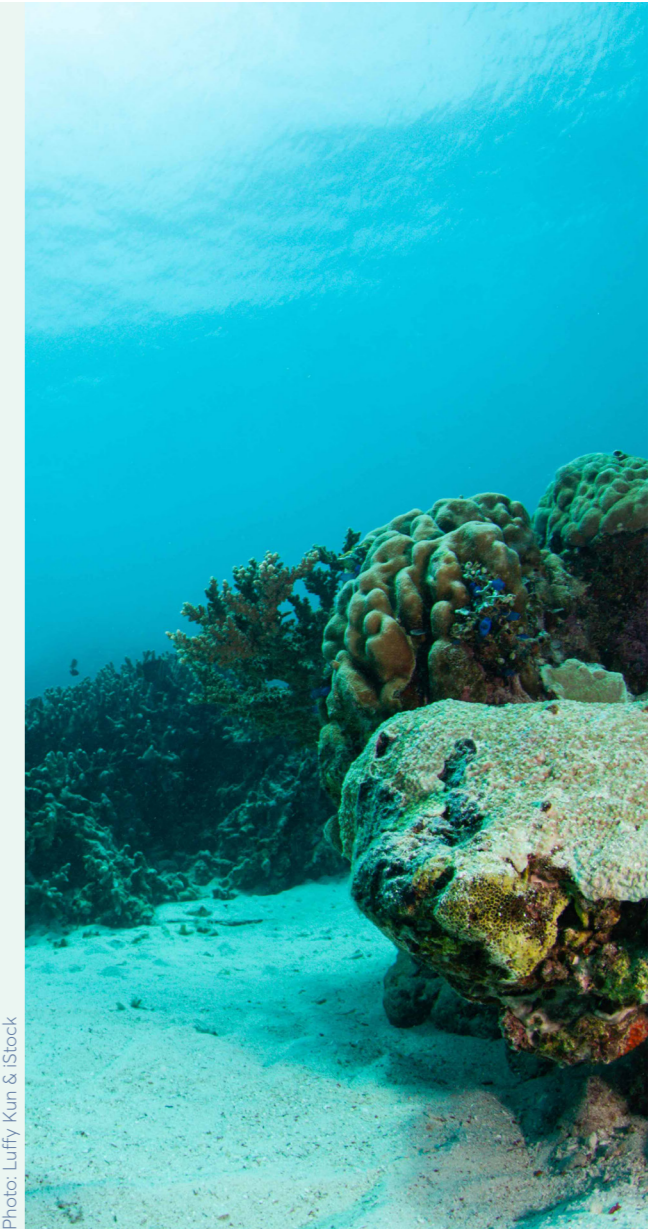
The pyjama striped squid mate head-to-head. The male gives the female his fertiliser and the female uses it to fertilise her eggs. The female will lay round white eggs in clumps on the sea floor or under rocks. The babies will hatch and look like miniature versions of their parents, and will quickly settle into the sand to start their new life.

DID YOU KNOW?



All octopuses, cuttlefish, and most squids are venomous - meaning they can inject a toxin into predators or their prey. However, very few are poisonous - meaning they are toxic to eat. The pyjama striped squid is both! It's black stripes could be used to warn predators that they are dangerous to eat.

Photo: Luffy Kum & iStock





Explorers learning about Squid



Photo: Blue Planet Archive & Alamy

QUICK FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Idiosepius paradoxus

SIZE

1.6 cm

COLOUR

Varies from translucent with brown spots to cream or brown

LIFE SPAN

Only 150 days!

PYGMY SQUID SCUID PHIGMÍ

WHERE WILL YOU FIND ME?

The pygmy squid is found in the Pacific Ocean near Japan, Australia, and South Korea. They live in the sunlight zone, in shallow in-shore waters. They are often found hiding among algae or sea grass.

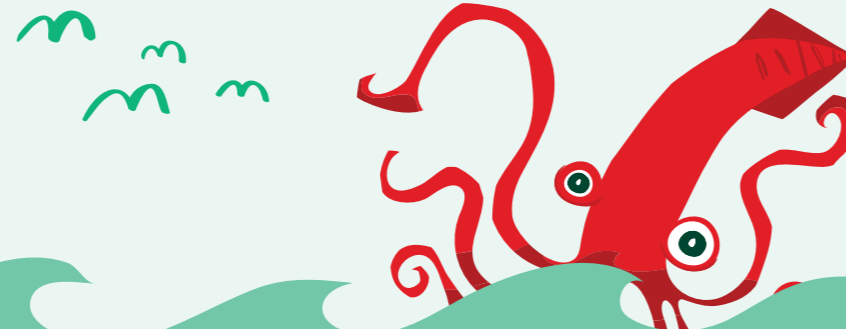
WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

Pygmy squid vary in colour from translucent with brown spots to cream or brown. By using their chromatophores, they can also drastically change their base colour to greens, yellows, and blacks. They are the smallest of all cephalopods - about the size of a finger nail. The females are slightly larger than the males.

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

Pygmy squid are masters of hiding. Their small size and ability to camouflage makes them very difficult to spot. They have also been known to use their ink not only for defence but also to catch their prey. Pygmy squid have been seen releasing ink to confuse their prey and then attacking them through the ink. They have been seen attacking prey twice their size this way, which is very brave for such a tiny creature!

The pygmy squid also has a 'cephalotoxin', which is a toxic substance that it can inject into predators or prey to paralyse it.



Explorers learning about Squid

WHAT DO I EAT?

Pygmy squid feed on tiny crustaceans such as grass shrimp. They have also been known to attack small fish. Since they are so small and cannot eat the fish whole, they have been seen taking bites out of fish very quickly as they swim by.

WHAT LIKES TO EAT ME?

Many creatures eat pygmy squid, such as fish, birds, marine mammals, and other cephalopods.

HOW DO I REPRODUCE?

Male pygmy squid perform a special dance to attract a female. During this dance, they will change colour and shape their arms in unusual ways. After mating, the female will then lay 30-80 eggs every few days for over a month. The male will die soon after mating, and the female will die soon after laying her last brood of eggs. Once the new pygmy squid hatch, they will mature and be ready to mate in just two months.

DID YOU KNOW?

Pygmy squid can stick themselves to rocks or blades of seaweed by using a special adhesive organ on their head. This organ produces a glue-like substance that allows the tiny pygmy squid to not be washed away by strong currents.



Photo: agefotostock & Alamy





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Photo: Adisha Pramod & Alamy

QUICK FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Vampyroteuthis infernalis

SIZE

28 cm

COLOUR

Blood-red to black

LIFE SPAN

8 years

VAMPIRE SQUID SCUID VAIMPÍRE

WHERE WILL YOU FIND ME?

Vampire squid can be found in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans. They live where there is little light penetrating the water between the twilight and midnight zones. They are typically found at depths between 600–1,200 metres. They swim in the open ocean as well as near the sea floor.

Vampire squid love very cold waters between 2 and 6 degrees Celsius, and they tend to live where there is very little oxygen. All the processes inside the vampire squid's body are very slow, which means it only needs a small amount of oxygen to survive.

WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

Individual vampire squid can vary in colour from blood-red to jet-black. Vampire squid are unusual because they cannot change colour using their chromatophores. They have a similar texture to a jellyfish, and have eight long arms connected with webbing that creates an umbrella shape. The vampire squid is roughly the size of a rugby ball, but the females tend to be larger than the males.

Although the colossal squid has the largest eye in the animal kingdom, the vampire squid has the largest eye in the animal kingdom compared to its body size.

Additionally, the vampire squid has photophores across its body. Photophores are large circular organs that produce luminescent light and allow it to glow in the dark!



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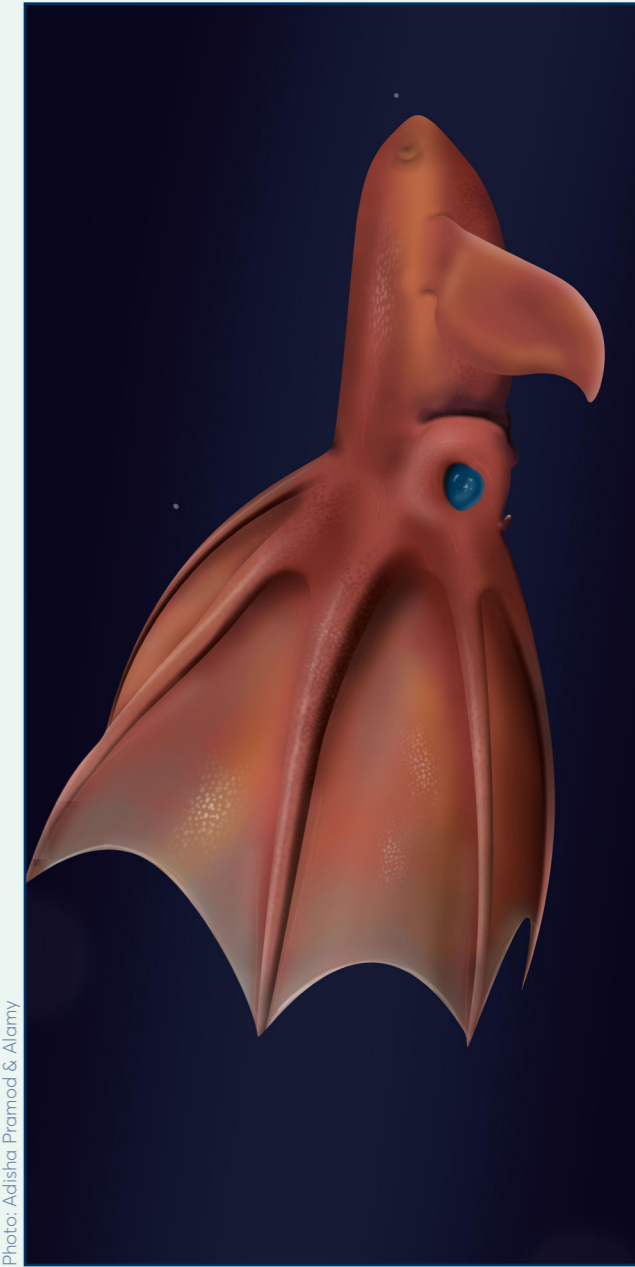


Photo: Adisha Pramod & Alamy

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

The vampire squid does not have an ink sac like most other squid species. Instead, the tips of its feeding tentacles can squirt a cloud of bioluminescent sticky mucus. This mucus can glow for up to 10 minutes, giving the vampire squid more than enough time to escape any hungry predators trying to catch it. Another interesting defence technique is called the 'pineapple posture'. If the vampire squid wants to change its appearance to hide from predators, it lifts all its arms above its head. The underside of the vampire squid's arms and webbing is very spiky and can make the vampire squid look like a dark-coloured pineapple!

WHAT DO I EAT?

Vampire squid are the only known cephalopod that does not catch and eat live animals for food. They are detritivores, meaning they eat dead plankton and floating waste that drifts down from higher up in the ocean. This food that drifts from the upper ocean zones to the lower zones is called 'marine snow'. The vampire squid will very slowly drift along with one of its feeding tentacles stretched outwards. When its tentacle finds a piece of food, the vampire squid will swim around the food in a circle while covering its meal with a mucus that it produces from its suckers. Once the meal is caught and coated in mucus, it will then move it to its beak and eat it.

WHAT LIKES TO EAT ME?

The main predators of the vampire squid are toothed whales, large fish, and sea lions.

DID YOU KNOW?



Vampire squids don't actually suck blood! They get their name because they are often a blood-red colour. They also have what look like toothy spines on their tentacles, which made people think that they sucked blood out of their victims.

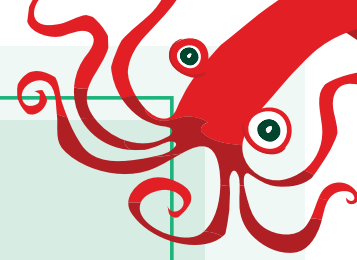
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VAMPIRE SQUID • SCUID VAIMPÍRE

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COMMON SQUID • SCUID CHOITIANTA

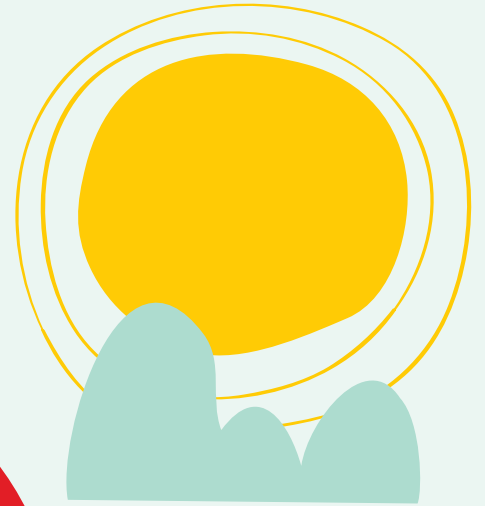
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