



# The OCTOPUS

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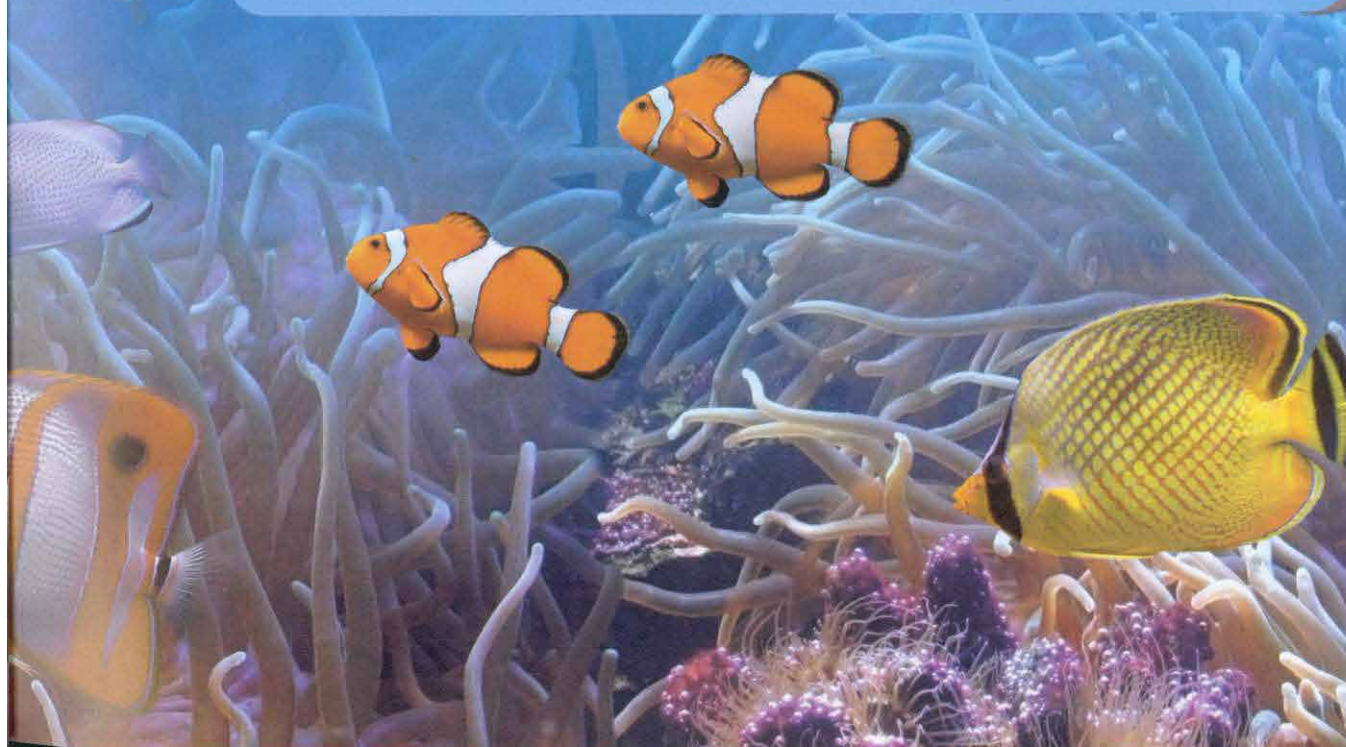
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# An Underwater Legend

Octopuses have been floating around for many thousands of years and are arguably one of the most well-recognized sea creatures. They can be found in all of the oceans across the world, but generally prefer warm tropical waters.


Sometimes called the “Monsters of the deep,” much has been written about octopuses in various myths and legends over the years. For example, in Hawaiian mythology, the octopus is the only survivor left behind from an

earlier, alien universe. In Tahitian legend, the octopus is called *Rogo-tumu*, and is a terrifying sea demon which uses its tentacles to drag sailors down to the bottom of the ocean.

Ancient stories from the Bahamas tell of a giant sea creature called the *Lusca*, which can squeeze through tiny cracks and change color in a split second. The Mediterranean people also told tales of a sea god named *Yamm*, who had many legs and heads.







An octopus has eight arms called tentacles. Each tentacle has 240 suction cups on it. If you multiply 8 by 240, you get 1,920 suction cups!

Sometimes though, truth is stranger than fiction. The octopus is indeed a weird and wonderful creature, so it's not surprising that humans have created so many myths and legends about it. With its large bulging head, huge eyes, sharp parrot-like beak, eight long tentacles with suction cups running along them and an almost entirely soft body - the octopus definitely looks like an alien creature you might see in a feature film. It also has three hearts and blue blood! But its appearance isn't the only strange thing about it.





crawling



walking



jetting



swimming

The octopus behaves like no other creature. It can move around the sea in various ways, such as crawling, walking, swimming, or by jet propulsion which is their fastest form of movement. If an octopus wants to get away from a predator in a hurry, it blasts water through a muscular tube in its body which then propels it through the water at speed. Octopuses can crawl along both soft and hard surfaces using all of their legs, or as few as two of them. Some even claim that some species of octopus can crawl out of the water completely for a small amount of time.





The octopus has many unusual skills, but one of its most useful is its ability to change color, and sometimes even texture, just like an underwater chameleon. When octopuses sense danger, they activate special skin cells to help change their color and blend in with their surroundings. Not only that, but they can also use the muscles in their skin to change their texture as well. Their skin can take on the appearance of rocks, or even plants! This incredible skill means the octopus doesn't even have to find a hiding place when a predator appears. It can hide out in the open as the sharks, dolphins, and eels swim straight past.

After years of debate, scientists have now discovered that octopuses can hear!

