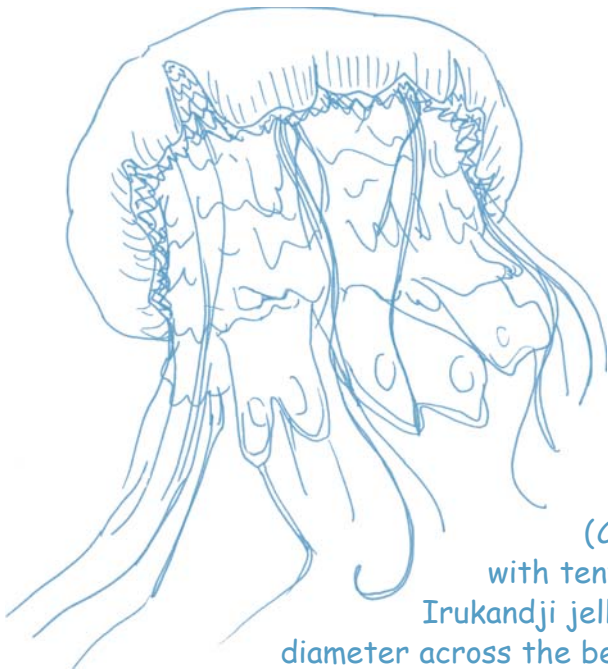


Jellyfish Facts



Jellyfish are thought to have been around for about 650 million years. 200 different types (or species) have been described to date and some scientists believe that there may be as many as 2000 other species out there which we have yet to find!

Jellyfish are made up of 97% water! The body of a jellyfish is called the bell because of its shape.

They can be found in seas all over the world & also in some freshwater habitats.

The largest jellyfish is the Lion's Mane jellyfish (*Cyanea capillata*), the bell of which is over 2m across, with tentacles reaching over 40m (130ft)! The smallest is the Irukandji jellyfish (*Carukia barnesi*) which is only 2cm (0.8") in diameter across the bell and has a single retractable tentacle, 5-50cm (2-20") in length on each of the four corners of the bell.

Of the 200 described species of jellyfish only 70 are venomous!

Venom is sent out through stinging cells called nematocysts which can be found on the arms around their mouths (called oral arms) Their stinging cells are one of the most complicated cells found in any animal.

The venom from a single sea wasp, also called a box jellyfish (*Chironex fleckeri*), can kill up to 60 adults. They have about 60 tentacles, which can measure up to 4.5m (15 ft) in length and can move at speeds of up to 5mph (roughly human walking pace) by pulsing their body! Jellyfish in general are dependent on water currents to move.

The Portuguese Man O' War jellyfish, which is thought to be one of most deadly jellyfish in the world, is not actually a jellyfish but a group (or colony) of a type of animal called hydroids living together (they are a bit like cousins of the jellyfish.)

Even if a jellyfish has been washed up on the shore, the tentacles can still be dangerous and sting you, (because the toxin remains potent for quite a while.)

You can stop jellyfish from stinging you by wearing tights as they act as a barrier between your skin and the jellyfish's tentacles!

Some jellyfish can glow in the dark!

The collective name for a group of jellyfish is either a brood, smuck or a smack!

If there is not a lot of food around, jellyfish can shrink in size so they need less food. They can then re-grow when food is more easily available.