

# Octopus



There are about 289 species of octopus in the world, they can be found in all of the world's oceans from the shallow coastal waters to the deep abyssal plains.

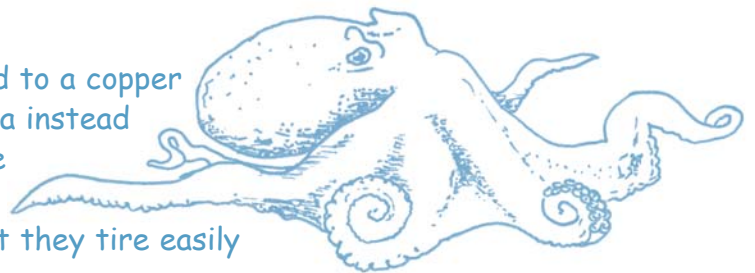
According to the Oxford English dictionary the plural for octopus is octopuses; other dictionaries do accept octopi as a possible plural, purely due to the frequency it is used within the English language, but agree that it is essentially wrong.

The largest octopus ever captured is a Giant Pacific Octopus (*Octopus dofleini*) which weighed 600 pounds and measured 9.3 metres (31 feet) from arm tip to arm tip, but they usually only weigh between 50-90 pounds and measure 4.8 metres (16 feet)

The smallest octopus is thought to be the Californian Octopus (*Enteroctopus micropyrsus*) which measured just 1cm (3/8 inch)

Octopuses have three hearts, two pump blood through the two gills and the other pumps blood around the body.

Octopuses have blue blood, the oxygen is bound to a copper based protein which is dissolved in the plasma instead of the red blood cells, which results in a blue colour to the blood. This form of carrying oxygen isn't very efficient, which means that they tire easily



They can not see colour but they can distinguish the polarisation of light, they are also deaf, but do have an excellent sense of touch, the suckers on their arms have chemoreceptors which means that they can taste what they are touching.

An octopus's brain continues to grow throughout their lifetime, three quarters of their brain is used for vision.

An octopus can squeeze through a gap no bigger than one of its eyes, their beak is the only hard object in their body but these are generally smaller than their eyes.

The most deadly octopus is the blue-ringed octopus which can be found in Australian waters, it's only the size of a golf ball but has enough poison to kill 26 adults within minutes, and there is no known antidote.

Octopuses have several forms of defence, inking, camouflage, mimicking other animals and autotomising limbs which is where they detach a limb, similar to when lizards detach their tail.

An octopus can not change the colour of their suckers or the inside of their mantle, so when hiding from predators they have to hide their suckers and hold their breath so their white bits don't show.

The Octopus *Stauroteuthis syrtensis* has suckers which glow in the dark.