

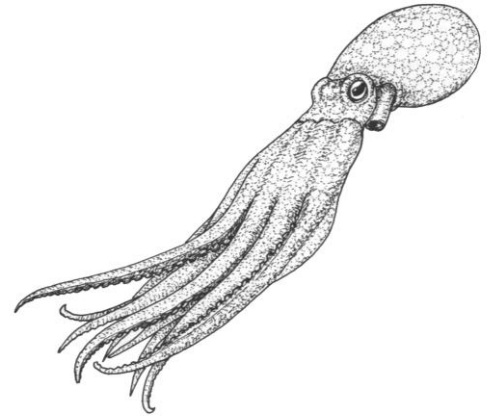
# OCTOPUS

## Habitat

Found throughout the world in tropical, warm and cold temperate waters - the octopus is a bottom dweller, spending much of its life in hiding, usually in a hole among rocks.

## Description

- All octopus species have eight arms, each with a row of suckers.
- They lack a shell.
- They have a well-developed brain.
- The two large complex eyes are similar to human eyes and their vision is acute.
- The animals can change colour and texture of their skin rapidly.

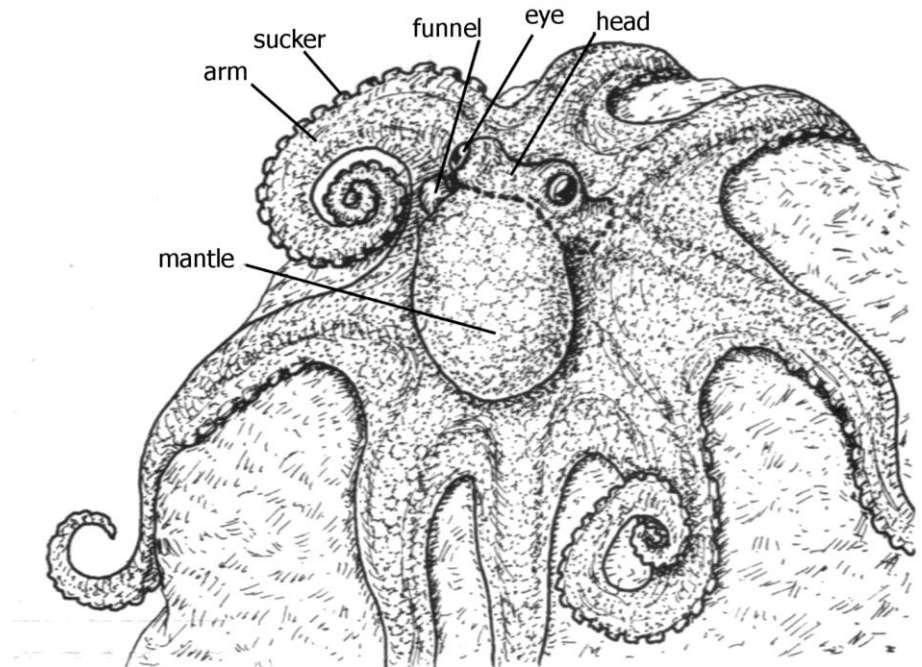


## Feeding

When an octopus emerges to find food such as crabs, lobster and shellfish, it often lures its victim by wiggling the tip of an arm like a worm; or it glides near and pounces on a crab, sinking its beak into the shell and injecting a poison that kills.

## Predators

An octopus is preyed upon in turn by a number of fishes, including the moray.



[http://www.aquarium.co.za/blog/entry/breaking\\_news\\_jabulani\\_the\\_octopus\\_gives\\_spain\\_the\\_psychic\\_edge/](http://www.aquarium.co.za/blog/entry/breaking_news_jabulani_the_octopus_gives_spain_the_psychic_edge/)

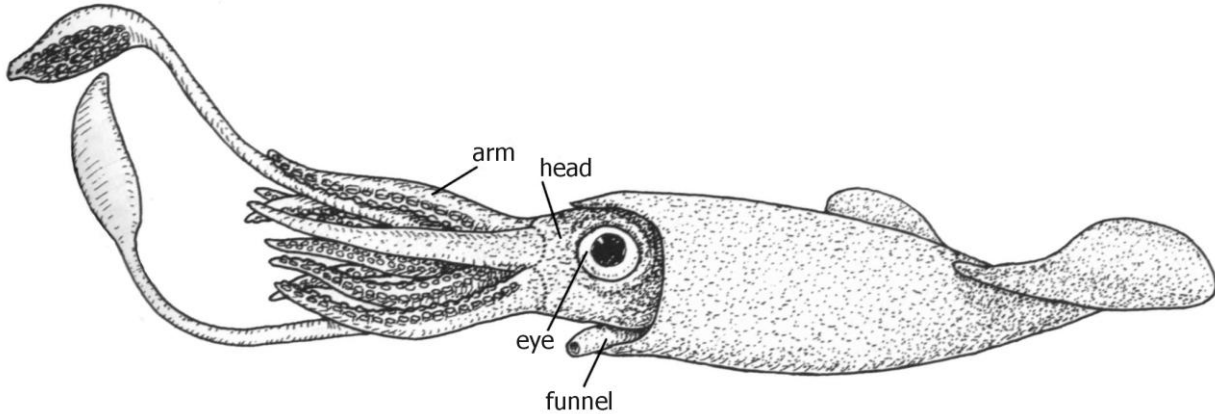
### Did you know?

- The poison of the Blue-ringed octopus from Australia is dangerous to human beings.
- Many people either eat octopus or use them as bait.
- Octopus can recognise and respond to humans, clearly showing their intelligence.
- The colour changing ability is in cup-shaped cells called **chromatophores** which, when opened, show their colour.

## SQUID (Chokka)

### Habitat

Along the South African coast they are found in the open sea off the West and South Coasts. They aggregate or form large shoals in bays between Cape Point and Port Elizabeth in summer to breed.



### Description

- All squid are more slender and delicate than cuttlefish.
- They have eight short arms and two very long retractable tentacles round the mouth. All tentacles have suckers.
- Their shells are reduced to a transparent “pen” that lies just under the skin of the dorsal surface – unlike the cuttlefish, which has a large internal shell.
- They have relatively long diamond-shaped fins.

### Feeding

Squids are very active predators that feed mainly on small fish.

### Predators

Squid forms an important food source for fish, several shark species, sea birds and marine mammals.

#### Did you know?

- The diamond squid is one of the largest squid in our waters, with a body length of 1m and a mass of 20 kg.
- Squid used to be caught only for bait but are now popular for human consumption and are sold as **calamari**.

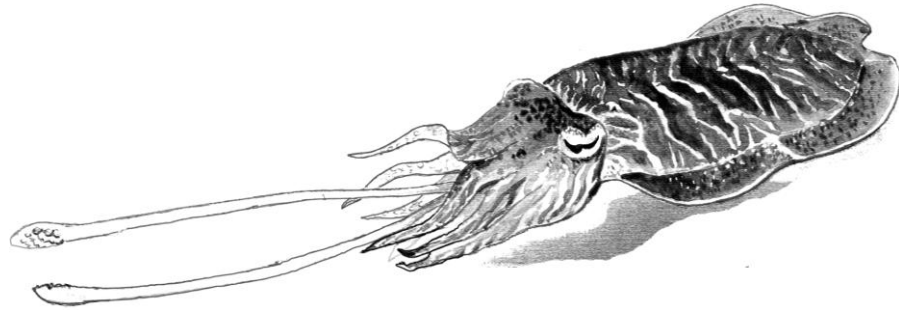


## CUTTLEFISH

About 100 species of cuttlefish are known. **Note** : the name *cuttlefish* is sometimes given in error to the squid.

### Habitat

Some live in shallow water on a sandy bottom of e.g. sheltered lagoons and estuaries. Others live in intertidal pools or gullies and reefs.



### Description

- Body elongate with a fin running down each side.
- Head has eight arms and two very long retractable tentacles, all with suckers.
- The cuttle bone is used to regulate buoyancy by modifying its gas and liquid content.

### Feeding

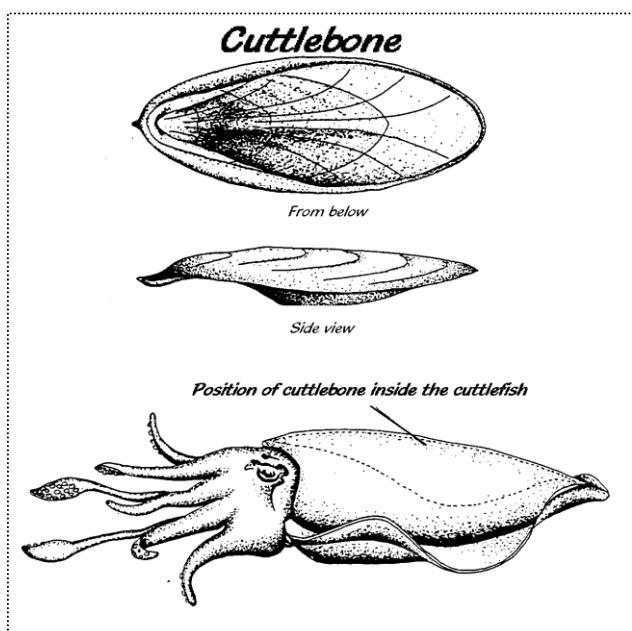
Some cuttlefish capture fish by shooting out their tentacles with speed. Others swim over the bottom and feed, which are caught in the same manner, on invertebrates especially shrimps and crabs.

### Predators

They are a major food source for fishes, including the fast swimming tunny.

### Did you know?

- The white internal skeletons of cuttlefish are often found washed up on our beaches. People collect these cuttlebones to put in bird cages, so that their birds can sharpen their beaks on them
- The dried, powdered cuttlebone is used in polishing and other industrial processes.
- The dried ink sacs of the animals yield a brown pigment called sepia (See species named above).



## **PAPER NAUTILUS (*Argonauta argo*)**

### **Habitat**

Open water at varying depths. Sometimes close to the surface.

### **Description**

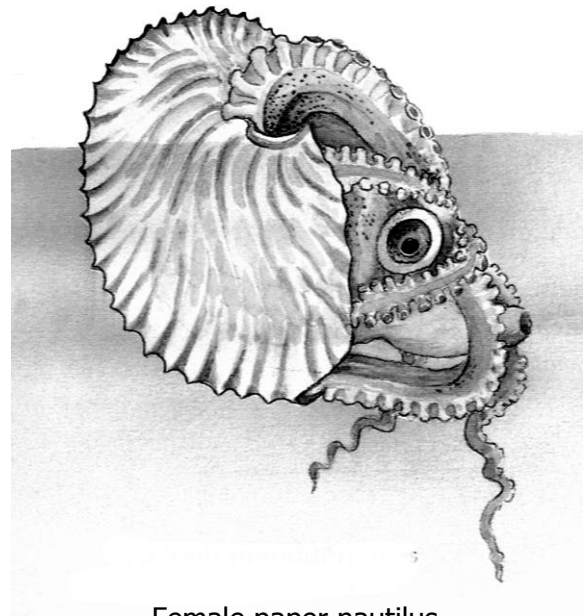
- Body with eight arms. Two of which are flattened and responsible for holding the shell.
- Only the female produces an unusual, semi-transparent floating shell.
- The naked male is much smaller than the female and often lives parasitically in the female's shell.
- The shell serves as a float, but its main function is to provide an egg chamber in which the female lays her eggs.
- Females normally die after reproducing.

### **Feeding**

The paper nautilus is an active hunter feeding on anir

### **Predators**

Some species of fish.



Female paper nautilus

### **Did you know?**

- The shell of the paper nautilus is not formed by the mantle, as in other molluscs, but is formed by glands in two of the arms.
- The very pretty coiled white shell is much sought-after by shell collectors.
- It is found on beaches along the south coast after storms at certain times of the year.