



BLUE RINGED OCTOPUS

HAPLOCHLAENA SP.

DID YOU KNOW?

They're small but strong! Blue ringed octopuses are usually less than 20cm in size yet they can lift things 20 times their own weight!

WHERE AT AQWA?

The blue ringed octopus is part of the dangerous and deadly lineup of creatures found in the DANGERZONE!

SIZE: < 20CM

DIET: CRABS, FISH

**MAIN PREDATOR:
EELS, BIRDS**

**HABITAT: TIDE
POOLS, ROCKY
REEFS**

**FOUND: INDO-
PACIFIC (JAPAN TO
AUSTRALIA)**

BONELESS BODIES

There are two species of blue ringed octopus commonly found in WA; the 'greater blue ringed octopus' lives in the warm northern reefs, while the 'southern blue ringed octopus' is found along the shores and rock pools of the southern beaches.

They share the genus *Haplochlana* which is Greek and means 'soft cloak', describing their soft, boneless bodies. Having no bones and elastic limbs allows octopuses to squeeze through tiny crevices in reefs and rockpools.

BLUE IS BEST

Blue ringed octopuses are beige to brown over most of their body and are named for their blue rings, which flash brightly when they are threatened or startled. To advertise that they are dangerous and deter attacks, many sea creatures use blue.

Why blue? Colours are absorbed differently in water and some can be hard to see. But blue light scatters and travels deep, making it more visible. So it's the perfect colour to use when making a bold statement, like a warning!

A BEAKED BITE AND SERIOUS SPIT

A blue ringed octopus' danger is in its spit! Biting its prey with a beak-like mouth, the blue ringed octopus injects poisonous saliva.

The poison is made by bacteria living in the saliva glands above the octopus' brain. The poison is strong enough to kill 10 people and there is no antidote!

FLIGHT BEFORE FIGHT

Octopuses prefer to escape and deter, rather than attack with their deadly bite. They use their jet-propulsion to make speedy escapes, but as a last resort, a blue ringed octopus will aggressively flash its bright blue spots to scare away the threat!