



GIANT AUSTRALIAN CUTTLEFISH

SEPIA APAMA

DID YOU KNOW?

Cuttlefish have a colour named after them! *Sepia* comes from the dark brown ink squirted in defence. This is ironic as cuttlefish are colourblind. Their w-shaped pupils may, however, let them see forwards and backwards at the same time though!!

WHERE AT AQWA?

Look for baby cuttlefish in the Ocean's Nursery exhibit of our Perth Coast.

SIZE: <100CM

DIET: FISH, CRABS

MAIN PREDATOR:
DOLPHINS, SHARKS,
FISH

HABITAT: SEAGRASS,
ROCKY REEF

FOUND: ONLY IN
AUSTRALIA

MORE ARMS THAN AN OCTOPUS?

With 8 arms plus 2 feeding tentacles a cuttlefish has even more appendages than its famous cousin, the octopus. The tips are covered in tiny suckers and when hunting these feeding tentacles shoot out from sockets near the eyes, pulling prey towards their beak-like mouth to be crushed.

All 10 appendages are connected to their head, rather than their body making cuttlefish a member of the *Cephalopod* ("head foot") family. Cephalopds belong to the mollusc groups of animals - a cuttlefish has a shell! Their shell is on the inside, not the outside, and is called a cuttlebone.

SWIMMING - SUBMARINE STYLE

Cuttlebones are full of pockets that can be filled with air to help them float , or water to sink, allowing cuttlefish to hover up and down just like a submarine.

To swim forwards or backwards a cuttlefish moves its long fin in a wave-like motion. They can also jet propulse just like an octopus.

ELECTRIC SKIN

Cuttlefish can change the colour of their skin in less than a second! They can also change their skin's texture, creating bumps and ridges that blend with rocks, seaweed and coral.

They don't just use their chameleon abilities for camouflage though- they also use it to put on amazing light shows which mesmerise prey, attract mates and deter predators!

LITTLE SNEAKERS

Small male cuttlefish, who can't compete with the larger more dominant males during the mating season, will disguise themselves as a female so that they can sneak past the male and get to the girls!

Cuttlefish live alone however they will gather in large groups to mate. The largest gathering of cuttlefish in the world occurs in South Australia, every winter.