

DANGEROUS
SEA CREATURES



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY

BARRACUDA



THE BARRACUDA DOESN'T USUALLY ATTACK HUMANS, but it is very dangerous to fish! Unlike many other ocean predators which hunt by smell, the barracuda hunts by sight. This fish has teeth—two rows, actually—well situated in its large mouth with an extended lower jaw. The barracuda is also very fast, reaching burst speeds of up to 56 km (35 mi) per hour.



Although not generally eaten, the barracuda is often fished for sport due to its feisty nature.



Attacks are not common, but the barracuda can be dangerous to humans. This is because a barracuda could mistakenly attack shiny objects on a diver or even compete for a fish on a spear.



The barracuda lives worldwide near the shore and in the open ocean.



A young barracuda can change color to blend in with its surroundings.



TWO ROWS OF SHARP TEETH

SPEEDS UP TO 56 KM (35 MI) PER HOUR



BLUE-RINGED OCTOPUS



THE BLUE-RINGED OCTOPUS IS A TINY TERROR found in shallow depths of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. There are four types of this invertebrate, each measuring only 12–25 cm (5–10 in) in length, including its arms. When frightened or hunting prey, it can either inject or release a cloud of powerful venom which paralyzes the victim. The faint blue rings marking its body will flash bright blue to warn predators and larger creatures when it feels threatened.



Like other octopuses, it has three hearts, and its blood is transparent blue.



The tetrodotoxin (the same toxin found in puffer fish) it releases is produced by bacteria in its salivary glands and is more powerful than any land animal's toxin.



The blue-ringed octopus is shy and will often hide in marine crevices or shells.

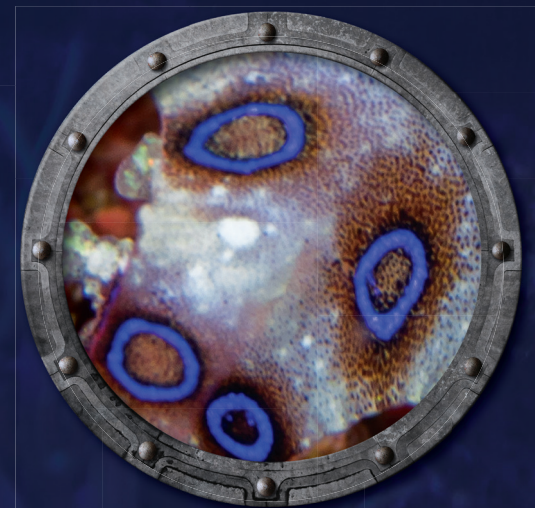
**MEASURES ONLY 12-25 CM
(5-10 IN) IN LENGTH**



**POWERFUL VENOM
PARALYZES PREY**



**RINGS FLASH BRIGHT BLUE
WHEN THREATENED**



BOX JELLYFISH



*ABLE TO MOVE ON ITS OWN
INSTEAD OF DRIFTING*

WHEN YOU THINK OF THE MOST VENOMOUS CREATURES IN THE WORLD, you may imagine a rattlesnake or a spider, but few snakes and spiders are as deadly as the box jellyfish. It uses its highly toxic venom to paralyze or kill fish and shrimp for its dinner. The box jellyfish is much more advanced than most jellyfish; God gave it the ability to move on its own rather than just drifting, and unlike other jellyfish, it has eyes!



Living for up to a year, box jellyfish can grow up to 3 m (10 ft) long.



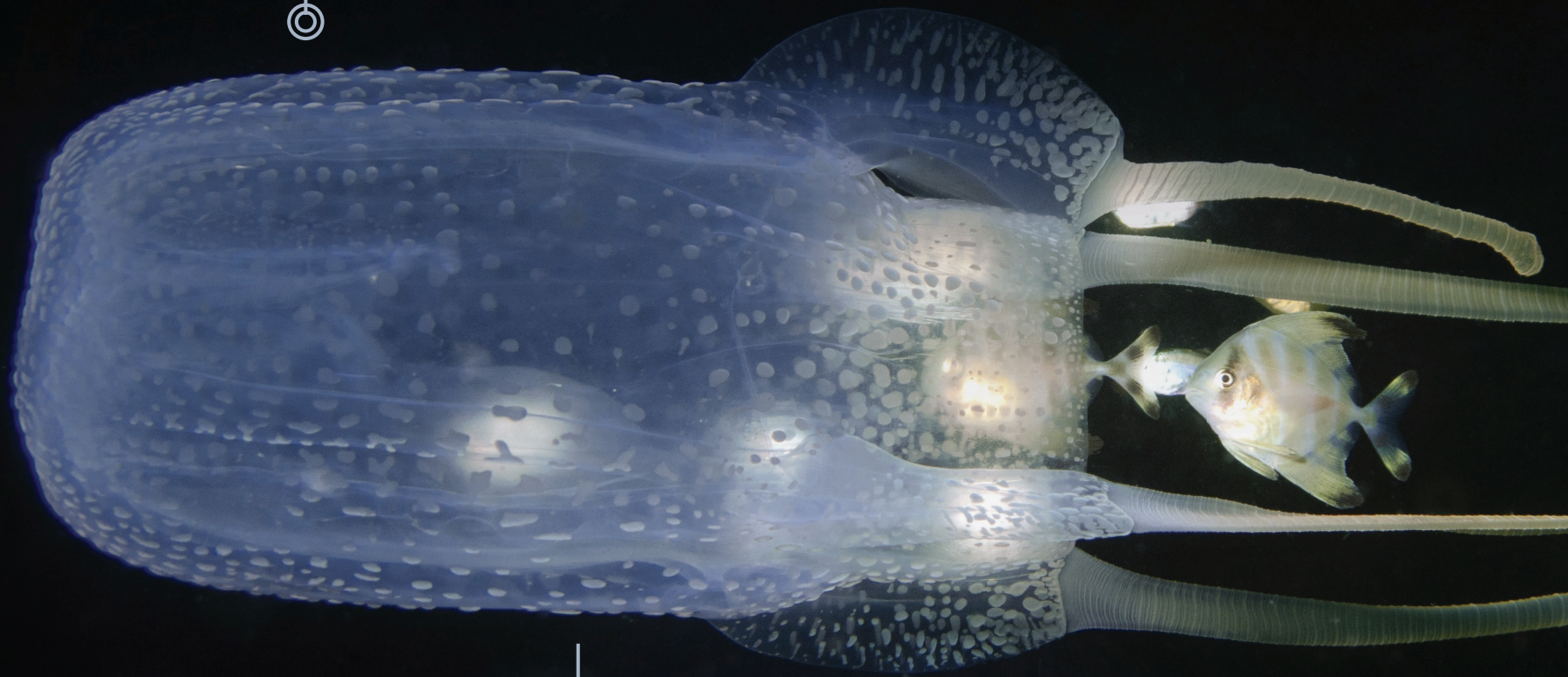
On average 100 human deaths per year are caused by the box jellyfish.



The box jellyfish does have a predator—the sea turtle, which is not hurt by its venom.



Called the "bell," the box jellyfish's head has four groups of six eyes. That's a total of 24 eyes!



CROWN-OF-THORNS STARFISH

*PREYS ON CORAL POLYPS,
DIGESTING NUTRIENTS
THROUGH ITS STOMACH*



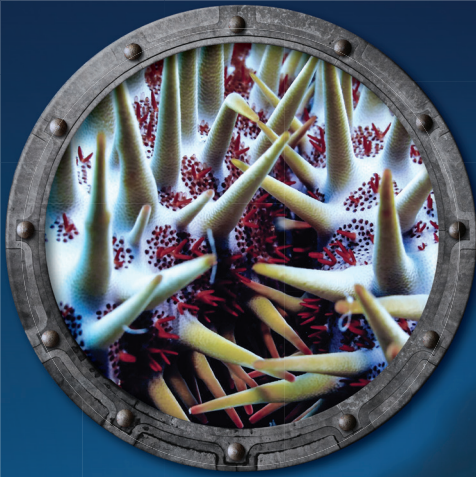
WHEN YOU THINK OF DANGEROUS SEA CREATURES, you probably think of those dangerous to humans. While the crown-of-thorns starfish can certainly harm humans with its toxin-filled spines, the real danger caused by this invertebrate is to the stony coral species. The crown-of-thorns starfish preys on stony coral, digesting the nutrients through its stomach and leaving only a coral skeleton. The starfish can turn its stomach inside out through its mouth to eat coral polyps found in reefs of the Pacific and Indian Oceans.



Due to its venomous spines, this sea star has few natural predators. The predators it does have are quickly disappearing due to overfishing.



An adult of this species can have anywhere from 12 to 23 arms.



◎ *TOXIN-FILLED SPINES CAN HARM HUMANS AND PREY*

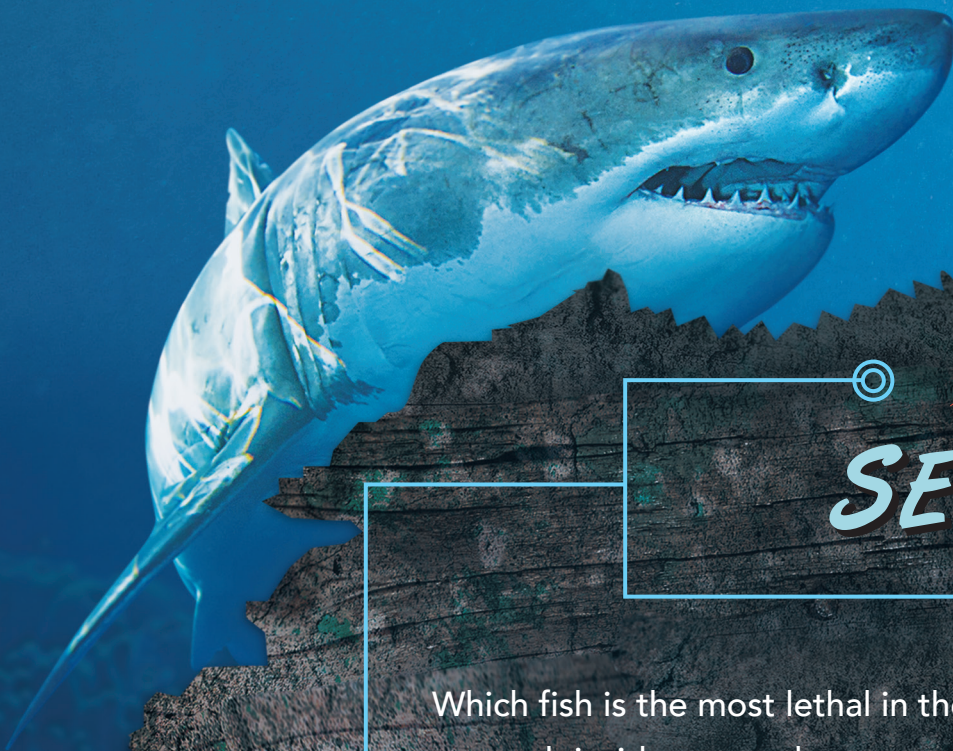


The crown-of-thorns starfish is the second-largest starfish in the world; on average it is 45 cm (18 in) across.



The crown-of-thorns starfish gets its name from the hundreds of venomous spines on its body, which resemble the biblical crown of thorns placed on Jesus before His crucifixion.





DANGEROUS SEA CREATURES

Which fish is the most lethal in the world? Which creature can turn its own stomach inside out to devour coral polyps? *Dangerous Sea Creatures* provides you with a window into the beauty of menacing sea dwellers as well as the tricks and defense mechanisms they use to protect themselves and catch their prey.

■ ORIGINAL PUBLICATION



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