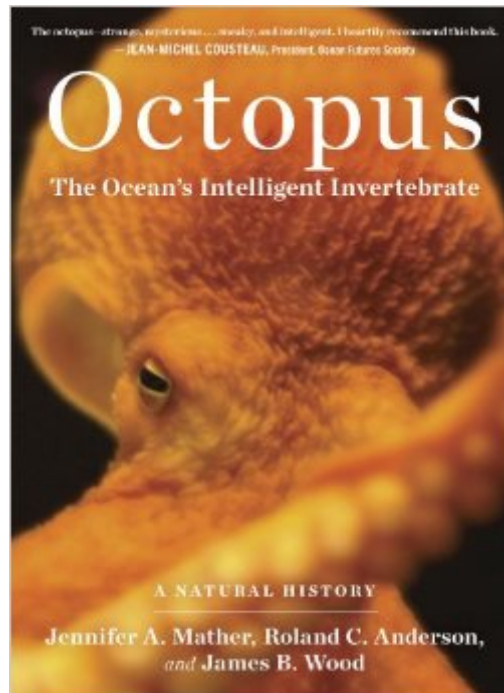


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Octopus: The Ocean's Intelligent Invertebrate



Synopsis

The visually arresting and often misunderstood octopus has long captured popular imagination. With an alien appearance and an uncanny intellect, this exceptional sea creature has inspired fear in famous lore and legends—from the giant octopus attack in *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* to Ursula the sea witch in *The Little Mermaid*. Yet its true nature is more wondrous still. After decades of research, the authors reveal a sensitive, curious, and playful animal with remarkable intelligence, an ability to defend itself with camouflage and jet propulsion, an intricate nervous system, and advanced problem-solving abilities. In this beautifully photographed book, three leading marine biologists bring readers face to face with these amazingly complex animals that have fascinated scientists for decades. From the molluscan ancestry of today's octopus to its ingenious anatomy, amazing mating and predatory behaviors, and other-worldly relatives, the authors take readers through the astounding life cycle, uncovering the details of distinctive octopus personalities. With personal narratives, underwater research, stunning closeup photography, and thoughtful guidance for keeping octopuses in captivity, *Octopus* is the first comprehensive natural history of this smart denizen of the sea. [^]

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [^] [^] See all reviews [^] (39 customer reviews)

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Sciences > Animals > Marine Life

Customer Reviews

For (hopefully) obvious reasons, here are eight ways octopuses [^] and this book [^] rock:1)

Octopuses (and not, as I learned, [^] œoctopi[^] •) are fascinating, smart and have distinct

personalities; they are able to solve problems and learn new strategies (though, like some other

unnamed animals [hint: humans], they still have behavioral blind spots that no amount of new data inputs can override).2) They are masters of camouflage, able to blend in with any number of environmental backgrounds and even move patterns across the surface of their bodies like fleshy LED banners.3) As an extension of #2, they can do all this even though their eyes are color blind, which makes me wonder if they have some kind of crazy, eyeless physical sight in their skin/appendages.4) Even though this is related to squid and not octopuses, some may have a visual language on their skin to share information with fellow squid; in other words, they're living books.5) The authors are clearly experts with tons of shared experience with, and empathy for, octopuses, and the book is sprinkled with meaningful personal anecdotes.6) Octopuses are mostly solitary, have boring sex lives that always end in senescence and they die young. The males basically fumble around with their arms, squirt some sperm and then get sick and die or, more usually, are eaten by sharks and seals.7) Octopus mothers are awesomely attentive to their eggs, carefully hanging up strands of thousands and thousands of eggs they carefully tending to them until just about the time they hatch. Then get sick and die. Or are eaten. And all the little babies whoosh out into the ocean where most are eaten. But a few live.8) The whole ink thing is insane.

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