CEPHALOPOD WEEK
21 TO 28 JUNE

Cephalopod Awareness Day was established in 2007.

The day highlights the diversity, conservation and biology of the world’s cephalopods.

WHAT ARE CEPHALOPODS?

Cephalopods are the most advanced molluscs and rank amongst the most sophisticated of all invertebrates.

They all have a complex nervous system.

ABOUT CEPHALOPODS

Cephalopods include:

Squid

Octopus

Cuttlefish

Nautilus

The extinct ammonite was a cephalopod.

Ammonite fossils
ABOUT OCTOPUS

They are fast growing, but short lived.

Females protect their eggs and die after they hatch.

They are mostly solitary and live in dens on the seabed.

The mantle contains 3 hearts and a digestive system.

They have 8 arms which can regenerate (grow again) if damaged or lost.

Powerful arms are used for movement and catching prey such as crabs, lobsters and mussels.

Two rows of suckers on each arm give a powerful grip. The suckers also have a sense of taste.

The beak cracks open tough outer shells of prey to get to the flesh inside.

Their skin contains special cells that can change colour for camouflage and communication.

They can squeeze their whole body through spaces the size of their eye.
ABOUT CUTTLEFISH

They have **8 short arms** and **2 long tentacles** which can be retracted into pockets below the eyes.

They feed mainly on **crustaceans**.

Long rippling fins run along either side of the body.

Their internal chalky cuttlebone is used for buoyancy. These are very light and often wash up on the beach.

There are over **120** species of cuttlefish.

Their lifespan is **1 - 2 YEARS**

Dried cuttlebones are fed to pet birds to increase their **calcium** intake.

CHAMELEONS OF THE SEA

Cuttlefish can change their skin colour **within a second**. They change colour, pattern, shape or texture of the skin to **communicate** to other cuttlefish, to **camouflage** themselves and to warn off potential **predators**.
**ABOUT SQUID**

- They feed on small fish.
- The body is slender and delicate with 8 arms and 2 long retractable tentacles at the mouth.
- Squid are served as calamari in restaurants and fishermen call their squid bait chokka.
- The females lay eggs in clusters, deposited on the seafloor or attached to structures on the seabed. Squid egg masses are communal, meaning that more than one squid will contribute eggs. Each capsule holds up to 200 eggs.

**ABOUT NAUTILUS**

- Only the female paper nautilus produces a shell.
- They have an amazing buoyancy control mechanism.
- The male is tiny and floats in the water.
- They use “jet propulsion” to move.
- They are also known to “hitch a ride” on jellyfish.
- The paper nautilus has 8 arms. Two are used to make and hold their delicate shell.
- The **Paper nautilus** (Argonauta argo) occurs in our waters.
THREATS

Fishing pressure. Often caught as by-catch in trawl nets.

Habitat disturbance and loss – due to trawling gear damage.

Pollution. They are sensitive to oil and chemical pollution from spills.

Climate change. An increase in water temperature due to global warming.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP CEPHALOPODS?

Be informed. Find out more about cephalopods.

Choose your seafood wisely according to the SASSI list.

Support scientists who study cephalopods.

Cape Hope Squid: 
Green if jigged; 
Orange if inshore demersal trawl.

Support MPAs and fishing quotas.

Octopus: 
Orange if offshore demersal trawl.