

# Coconut or veined octopus



Photo used by permission from Richard Carmody

---

## Scientific name:

*Amphioctopus marginatus*

---

## Distribution:

Sandy bottoms in Indo-Pacific waters including the Philippines at depths up to 144 feet (44m).

---

## Size:

Up to six inches long (over 15 centimeters).

---

## Additional information:

The coconut octopus is named for its tendency to carry around halves of coconut shells, which provide it with protection when needed. It is one of at least two octopus species that have been observed using bipedal locomotion, in which the octopus walks on only two legs at one time while the other six are curled up.

# Giant Pacific octopus



---

**Scientific name:**

*Enteroctopus dofleini*

---

**Distribution:**

Temperate Pacific waters from southern California to Alaska and west to the Aleutian Islands and Japan.

---

**Lifespan:**

3–5 years.

---

**Size:**

Up to 150 pounds with an arm span of up to 20 feet across.

---

**Additional information:**

Giant Pacific octopuses have huge appetites. They can consume 2–4% and gain 1–2% of their body weight each day. That's the equivalent of a 150-pound person eating up to six pounds of food and gaining up to three pounds every single day! Their diets consist of crustaceans (Dungeness crabs are a particular favorite); mollusks such as clams, squid, and even other species of octopus; and fish.

# Greater blue-ringed octopus



Photo used by permission from Richard Carmody

## Scientific name:

*Hapalochlaena lunulata*

## Distribution:

Found on sandy bottoms, small corals and clumps of algae in shallow reefs and tide pools from northern Australia to Japan, including Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, the Philippines, and Indonesia and as far west as Sri Lanka, at depths ranging from 0–65 feet (20m).

## Lifespan:

Up to 2 years.

## Size:

About the size of a golf ball as adults: around three inches (8.5cm) long with an arm span up to 7.75 inches (7cm) from tip to tip.

## Reproduction:

The female lays 50–100 eggs and guards them by carrying them under her arms until they hatch about 50 days later.

## Additional information:

Aptly named, the blue-ringed octopus displays its rings as a warning when threatened. If the threat is unavoidable, it injects venom that causes paralysis, then death. This poison is more potent than any found in land animals, and each blue-ringed octopus carries enough venom to kill 26 adult humans within minutes.

# Two-spotted octopus



Photo used by permission from Richard Carmody

---

## Scientific name:

*Octopus bimaculoides*

---

## Distribution:

Found around reefs and pilings from central California to northern Baja California.

---

## Size:

Up to three feet long (over 91 centimeters).

---

## Lifespan:

1 to 1.5 years.

---

## Reproduction:

Unlike other octopus species, female two-spotted octopuses may continue to eat during the two-month gestation period.

---

## Additional information:

The two-spotted octopus is named for the false eyespots located on the mantle below its eyes.

# Caribbean reef octopus



Photo used by permission from Roberta Brooks

---

## Scientific name:

*Octopus briareus*

---

## Distribution:

Found in shallow areas around coral reefs, rocks and seagrass beds located in tropical waters in the western Atlantic, southeastern U.S., the Bahamas, the Caribbean islands, northern South America and western Central America.

---

## Size:

Can grow to over three feet (100cm) long and weigh as much as 3.3 pounds (1.5kg).

---

## Reproduction:

Sexually mature at 150 days, the female will lay up to 500 eggs and guard them for the gestation period of 50–80 days. The young octopuses grow very quickly and reach about 75% of their adult size within about 17 weeks.

# Poison ocellate octopus



*Photo used by permission from Richard Carmody*

## Scientific name:

*Octopus mototi*

## Distribution:

Found on coral reefs, coral rubble and sandy habitat from shallow waters to depths of at least 164 feet (50m). Most commonly found in Rapa (French Polynesia); also observed in scattered locations in Australia and Indonesia up to Okinawa.

## Size:

Arm span up to 1.5 feet (50cm).

## Additional information:

Normally drab orange/cream/brown with black papillae over each eye, poison ocellate octopuses may change color dramatically when alarmed—switching to maroon stripes over a white background along the body and arms. They also flare their webbing and display a pair of iridescent blue rings that act as false eyespots, creating the impression that their heads are larger to scare off potential predators.

# Pacific red octopus



---

**Scientific name:**

*Octopus rubescens*

---

**Distribution:**

The nearshore intertidal zone from the Gulf of Alaska to Northern Mexico.

---

**Lifespan:**

Up to 2 years.

---

**Size:**

Up to 1.5 pounds with an arm span of up to 20 inches (50.8cm) across.

---

**Additional information:**

Pacific red octopuses aren't always red: they may also be solid grey, brown or a variety of colors with white spots. Their ink, however, is reddish or red-brown.

# Common octopus



Photo used by permission from Richard Carmody

---

## Scientific name:

*Octopus vulgaris*

---

## Distribution:

Nearshore habitat to depths up to 200 meters (656 feet). Found in tropical and semi-tropical waters worldwide but abundant in the Mediterranean Sea, the eastern Atlantic Ocean, and in Japanese waters.

---

## Size:

1–3 feet (30–91 cm) long.

---

## Lifespan:

Up to 1.5 years.

---

## Reproduction:

Females lay 100,000–500,000 eggs, each the size of a grain of rice.

---

## Additional information:

While most species are nocturnal, some common octopuses are observed being active during daylight hours.



# Mimic octopus



---

**Scientific name:**

*Thaumoctopus mimicus*

---

**Distribution:**

Muddy estuary bottoms in the tropical waters of the Indo-Pacific (Sulawesi and Bali in Indonesia).

---

**Additional information:**

Discovered in Indonesian waters in 1998, this species avoids potential predators by mimicking both the movements and physical characteristics of animals such as anemones, stingrays, flounders, jellyfish, mantis shrimp, sea snakes, lionfish and possibly others. If mimicry doesn't work, they can also escape threatening situations by burrowing into the sand and emerging more than three feet away.