



Smithsonian Institution

Here's Looking at You, Squid

One of the biggest creatures in the world is the giant squid. It grows as big as 60 feet long. But because it lives so deep in the ocean—650 to 3,300 feet down—nobody was able to get a picture of a live giant squid until just three years ago.



A School Bus?



A Triceratops?



The World's Longest Sandwich?

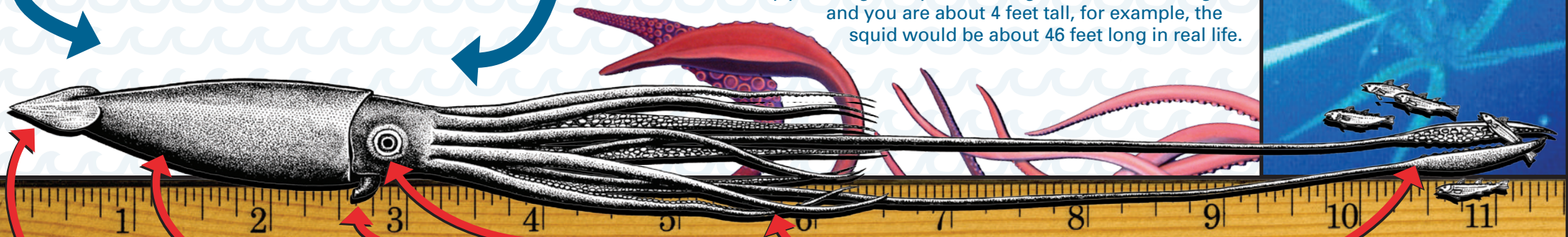
Which One Is Longer than a 60-Foot Giant Squid?

In Italy in 2004, a team of Japanese scientists went fishing for the giant squid and snagged one that seemed to be about 25 feet long. It put up a fight and broke free, but not before the scientists got the world's first pictures. The longest giant squid is longer than both of those but far shorter than the world's longest sandwich—a 2,000-foot salami sub created in Italy in 2004. Like the triceratops, the sandwich is now extinct. A triceratops: about 30 feet long. A school bus: about 40 feet long. The longest giant squid is longer than both of those but far shorter.

A Squid and a Kid: Draw Yourself Swimming Here

The eyes of the giant squid are about the size of a human head—the largest eyes in the animal kingdom. Draw your head at the same size as the eye of the squid below. Then draw the rest of your body.

You can figure out how big this squid would be in real life by using this ruler. How many times bigger is the squid drawing than your drawing? Multiple that number by your height. If your drawing is about 1 inch long and you are about 4 feet tall, for example, the squid would be about 46 feet long in real life.



These **FINS** keep the squid balanced as it swims.

This **MANTLE** works like a jet engine. The squid moves by drawing water into cavities in the mantle and shooting it out through this **FUNNEL**.

It needs these huge **EYES** to see anything in the dark depths where it lives.

It uses its eight **ARMS** to pull food toward its mouth.

It catches the food with these two long **FEEDING TENTACLES**. Each sucker on a tentacle fits a knob on the other tentacle. (Think of snaps on a jacket.) The prey gets locked between sucker and knob.

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www.SmithsonianEducation.org/Students

In Search of Giant Squid, a Smithsonian exhibition, is now touring America. To learn if it's coming to your town, go to: www.sites.si.edu/exhibitions/exhibits/squid/main.htm.

Giant squid photo courtesy of the *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* and Dr. Tsunemi Kubodera. All other images courtesy of the Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Service.

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