

Hanauma Bay Education Program's

Creature Feature

Hawaiian Name: **He'e maui**

Common Name: **Day Octopus**

Scientific Name: ***Octopus cyanea***



Indigenous

Family: Octopodidae

Name Origin: In Hawaiian, he'e means octopus. It is commonly known as squid

Size: The Day Octopus is quite large with a body length of around 16cm and legs reaching 80cm.

Current Fishing Regulations: Minimum size One pound.

Description: The Day Octopus is usually grayish brown in color but has the ability to camouflage itself by changing the color and texture of its skin. It can blend in so that it looks like the natural rocks surrounding it, both in color and texture. They have dark oval false eye-spots with no iridescent rings present at the base of its arms. The dark eye-spots are only sometimes visible. They also have complex brains. Their brain sends nervous impulses to their muscles causing them to change almost instantly as they move over sand, coral, rubble and other surfaces. The octopus matures within a year and its lifespan is no longer than 18 months.

Habitat: The Day Octopus is found throughout the Indo-Pacific and the Red Sea region wherever there are coral reefs located. They are seen in shallow waters to depths of 150 feet.

Diet: The Day Octopus feeds on crabs, small fishes, shrimp and bivalves. It excavates holes in coral reefs that are identified by the empty shells and other remains of its prey that litter the floor. They feed during the daylight hours and sleep at night.

Reproduction: The male octopus waves around his modified third right arm to get the attention of the female. He darkens his skin color and slowly approaches the female. If the female responds the male inseminates the female by releasing spermatophores into her oviduct. This is commonly done at arms length because the female has been known to eat the male after copulation. The female lays thousands of eggs and attaches them to the coral inside her lair. When the eggs hatch the youngsters feed on zooplankton until they mature into adults.

'Ōlelo No'eau:

Pua ke kō, ne'e i ka he'e hōlua. *When the sugarcane tassels, the octopus season is here.* The sugarcane tassels in late October or early November.

Nani ke 'ike a ka he'e i na wahi leho li'ili'i. *It is wonderful how the octopus notices the little cowries.* Said sarcastically of a man who looks at young girls with lust.

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