

Japanese Scientists Photograph Giant Squid

Japanese scientists have taken the first-ever photographs of a live giant squid.

These sea creatures are called “giant” for a reason. This particular squid was 26 feet long. Giant squids have been known to grow up to 60 feet long!

Squids are *invertebrates*, which means they do not have backbones. They have eight short arms and two long tentacles, which are covered with suction cup-like suckers.

Capturing giant squids on film has been very difficult because they are shy creatures that live in very deep water. In the past 100 years, there only have been 50 confirmed sightings of live giant squids. Most scientists have only seen dead squid that washed ashore or were caught in fishermen’s nets.

It took three years for scientists to get pictures of this squid. Scientists placed a camera about 3,000 feet under water near the coast of Japan’s Bonin Islands. They put bait near the camera. Finally, a squid came by to test the bait and was photographed.

Scientists already have learned a lot about giant squids from the pictures. Many people thought squids were slow because they are so big. But the photos show that giant squids might be more active predators than thought. The photos also show that a giant squid uses its tentacles to squeeze prey in much the same way a python does.

MORE FACTS ABOUT GIANT SQUIDS

- Some squids squirt out an ink-like substance when they are threatened.
- Giant squids have the largest eyes of any living creature.



NEWS WORD BOX

giant squid invertebrate
tentacle Bonin Islands

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

If you were fishing in a boat and came upon a giant squid, what would your reaction be?