

The ethereal and enigmatic underworld of the Mariana Trench is home to some of the strangest species on Earth. Not only are these species peculiar, but they're also among the toughest animals on the planet. Let's follow Praneel Praval, AIS Gwalior, IX A as he shines a little light so we may take a closer look at some of these deep-sea creatures.



### Dumbo Octopus

**Scientific name:** Grimpoteuthis

**Size:** 12 inches

**Depth:** Up to 13,000 ft

**About:** They may look cute because of their long Elephant ears, but they can easily swallow their prey whole. Interestingly, the ears help them navigate through the deep sea. They fall under the category of umbrella octopuses due to their webbed tentacles.

### Zombie Worms

**Scientific name:** Osedax

**Size:** 2 inches

**Depth:** 10,000 ft

**About:** Even after their unexpectedly small size, they feed on dead and decaying bones of some of Earth's biggest animals, including whales, with the acid it secretes, hence giving them the name 'zombie'. It keeps itself alive by taking in oxygen through its feathery branches.



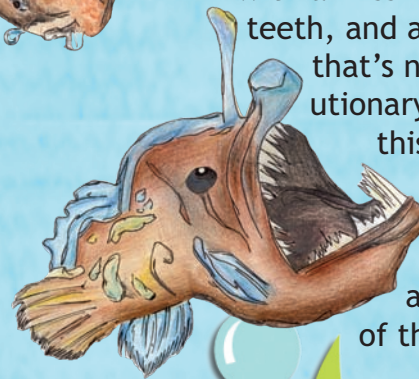
### Seadevil Anglerfish

**Scientific name:** Melanocetus

**Size:** 8 inches

**Depth:** 13,000 ft

**About:** It is indeed a bizarre creature with a misshapen body, razor-like teeth, and a cold death stare, but that's not all. In an odd evolutionary twist, the males of this species coalesce themselves into the females, as their fins, teeth, and eyes disappear, along with a few of their internal organs.



### Benthocodon

**Scientific name:** Benthocodon

**Size:** 2 inches

**Depth:** 2500 ft

**About:** Unlike other jellyfish which are usually transparent, it has an opaque reddish colour. This helps the Benthocodon to protect itself as it dines on small crustaceans and foraminifera, the tiny unicellular organisms with a bioluminescent glow. This jellyfish has an estimated 1,500 wispy red tentacles.

### Telescope Octopus

**Scientific name:** Amphitretus pelagicus

**Size:** About 10 inches

**Depth:** 500-6500 ft

**About:** Its cellophane-like body is so clear that it seems transparent. It gets its name due to its tubular protruding eyes which also rotate, granting it wider peripheral vision to spot its predators and prey alike.

