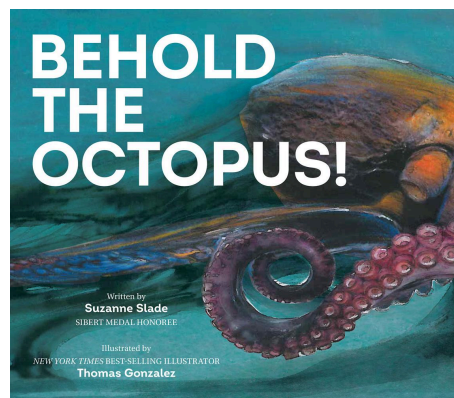


## Tentacle Tales: Cephalopod-Inspired Stories and Beyond

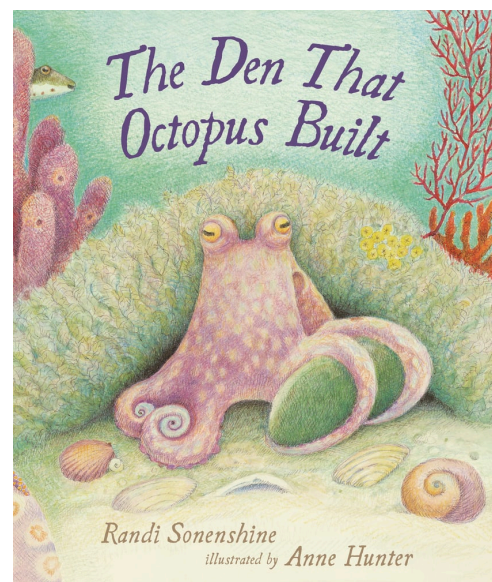
There are so many wonderful books about cephalopods and their ocean friends. Not sure what books to share with your learners? No problem. Science Friday is here to help. We reached out to some of our favorite children's book authors for recommendations. [Jennifer Swanson](#) is a scientist, educator, children's book author, and co-host of the [Solve It! for Kids](#) podcast. [Ruth Spiro](#) has authored over thirty children's book, and her work has been praised by Popular Science, Working Mother, and the National Science Teaching Association. We also included picks from our "[Best Science Books For Kids](#)" annual feature, which has included experts such as [Mahnaz Dar](#) a young readers' editor at Kirkus Reviews, [Carrie Wolfson](#) a collection development librarian at the Boulder Public Library, Melissa Stewart a science book author, and Kristina Holzweiss is an education technology specialist among others.

- [Hello, World! Ocean Life](#) by Jill McDonald: All young children love to play in the waves at the beach. This board book teaches them all about oceans and the creatures and plants that live there. (Ages 1-3)
- [Smart About Sharks](#) by Owen Davey: It's time to learn about the sea's most feared (and most misunderstood) residents: sharks! Exciting and detailed illustrations fill the page and educate young readers about these thrilling residents of the sea. (Ages 2-9)
- [Deep in the Ocean: A Board Book](#) by Lucie Brunellière: From the glittering surface of the sea to the darkness of the abyss, this book will take readers on a bewitching journey through fascinating waters—where some are warm, colorful, and crowded with sea creatures, and others are mysterious and turbulent. (Ages 3-5)
- [Mother of Sharks](#) by Melissa Cristina Márquez, illustrated by Devin Elle Kurtz: With lyrical writing and gorgeous art, this moving story explores Melissa's personal journey from inquisitive ocean-loving child in Puerto Rico to becoming the Mother of Sharks. (Ages 3-10)
- [Behold the Octopus](#) by Suzanne Slade, illustrated by Thomas Gonzalez: Discover the fascinating features

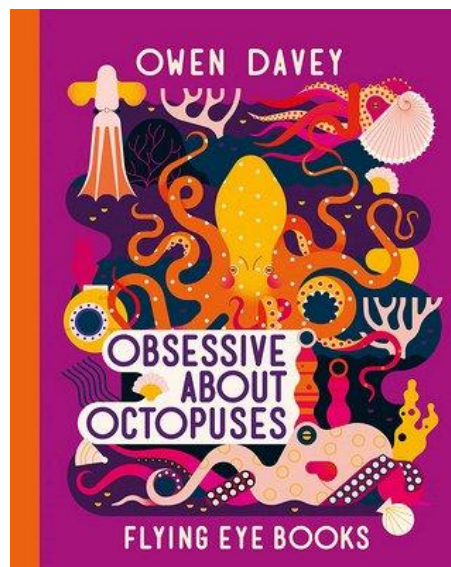


of the glorious octopus, such as lights that attract prey, legs that walk on land, and the ability to change color and shape to match their surroundings and even masquerade as other animals. (Ages 4-8)

- [\*Octopus Acrobatics\*](#) by Sue Fliess, illustrated by Gareth Lucas: Though octopuses live in every ocean and along every US coast, you may never catch a glimpse of one in the wild. With rhyming text and colorful, vibrant illustrations this fact-filled book is a perfect choice for read-alouds. (Ages 4-8)
- [\*The Den That Octopus Built\*](#) by Randi Sonenshine and illustrated by Anne Hunter: The solitary and ingenious octopus is a master of disguise and invention, creating her den out of the objects of the ocean, from shells and rocks to tiny glass shards. (Ages 4-8)
- [\*An Anthology of Aquatic Life\*](#) by Sam Hume, illustrated by Daniel Long: A stunning ocean encyclopedia for readers of all ages to explore, with reference pages packed with fascinating facts, stories and myths behind more than one hundred sea-life animals. (Ages 4-9) ALSO [AVAILABLE IN SPANISH!](#)
- [\*Octopuses Have Zero Bones: A Counting Book About Our Amazing World\*](#) by Anne Richardson, illustrated by Andrea Antinori: An unconventional, engaging, and delightful counting book for curious minds that playfully uses numbers as an entry-point to discover the amazing, diverse, fact-filled world of wonders all around us. (Ages 5-7)
- [\*Mysterious, Marvelous Octopus!\*](#) by Paige Towler: With their super smarts and awe-inspiring abilities, octopuses have captivated human imaginations. This book is a celebration of all things weird and wonderful about these beloved creatures—with their eight arms, nine brains, and one-of-a-kind personalities. (Ages 5-8)
- [\*Ocean Animals for Kids: A Junior Scientist's Guide to Whales, Sharks, and Other Marine Life\*](#) by Bethanie and Josh Hestermann: The oceans are full of creatures that are beautiful and strange. Whether you're a fan of sharks, snakes, penguins, or polar bears, this book is full of fascinating critters to meet. (Ages 5-9)

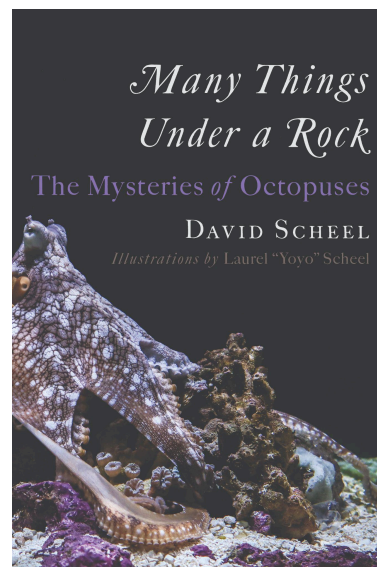


- [Search for a Giant Squid](#) by Amy Seto Forrester, illustrated by Andy Chou Musser: In this pick-your-path STEM adventure, readers embark on an expedition to the ocean's twilight zone in search of a giant squid. But giant squids are hard to find. Readers will need to join the expedition and help make choices along the way. (Ages 6-8)
- [Great Carrier Reef](#) by Jessica Stremer, illustrated by Gordy Wright: An outstanding STEM picture book documenting the transformation of an aircraft carrier that was gutted and turned into the world's largest artificial reef. (Ages 6-8)
- [Whale vs. Giant Squid \(Who Would Win?\)](#) by Jerry Pallott and illustrated by Rob Bolster: This nonfiction reader compares and contrasts two fearsome sea creatures. Kids learn about a whale and a giant squid's anatomy, behavior, and more. This book is packed with photos, charts, illustrations, and amazing facts. (Ages 6-9)
- [Giant Squid](#) by Candace Fleming and illustrated by Eric Rohmann: In this beautiful and clever nonfiction picture book about the giant squid, you'll explore, both visually and poetically, this hidden creature's mysterious life. (Ages 6-10)
- [Good Eating: The Short Life of Krill](#) by Matt Lilley, illustrated by Dan Tavis: The unidentified narrator follows one krill among billions as it pursues its brief existence, eating and eating while metamorphosing from one thing into another and trying to avoid being eaten. (Ages 7-10)
- [Obsessive About Octopuses](#) by Owen Davey: Dive into this fascinating illustrated guide all about the aliens of the deep. From the truly terrifying giant Pacific octopus to the inventive common octopus, find out where they live, what they eat, and how we can protect them. (Ages 7-10)
- [The Octopus Scientists](#) by Sy Montgomery, photographs by Keith Ellenbogen: Travel to the waters off of Moorea, Tahiti, to study the mind of the mollusk. Follow scientists as they uncover the secrets of its advanced intelligence and learn what these thinking, feeling creatures have to teach us about the oceans, its animals, and ourselves. (Ages 10-12)



## Don't Forget the Grownups!

In June 2025, the [Science Friday Book Club](#) is reading [Many Things Under a Rock: The Mysteries of Octopuses](#) by David Scheel. Octopuses live incredible lives in the oceans—shifting colors, outsmarting predators, and engaging with the world in ways that question our ideas about intelligence. Marine biologist David Scheel has spent decades studying these unreachable animals off the coast of Alaska and beyond. There is also a [young readers edition](#) of this title for aspiring marine biologists.



Looking for more books for the squid scientists in your life? Try these!

- [Monarchs of the Sea: The Extraordinary 500-Million-Year History of Cephalopods](#) by Danna Staff: Cephalopods, Earth's first truly substantial animals, are still among us: Their fascinating family tree features squid, octopuses, nautiluses, and more. Marine biologist Danna Staaf unspools how these otherworldly creatures once ruled the deep—and why they still captivate us today.
- [Remarkably Bright Creatures](#) by Shelby Van Pelt: After Tova Sullivan's husband died, she began working the night shift at the Sowell Bay Aquarium, mopping floors and tidying up. Tova becomes acquainted with curmudgeonly Marcellus, a giant Pacific octopus living at the aquarium. Marcellus knows more than anyone can imagine but wouldn't dream of lifting one of his eight arms for his human captors—until he forms a remarkable friendship with Tova. ALSO [AVAILABLE IN SPANISH!](#)
- [The Underworld: Journeys to the Depths of the Ocean](#) by Susan Casey: Susan Casey is our premiere chronicler of the aquatic world. For *The Underworld* she traversed the globe, joining scientists and explorers on dives to the deepest places on the planet, interviewing the marine geologists, marine biologists, and oceanographers who are searching for knowledge in this vast unseen realm. She takes us on a fascinating journey through the history of deep-sea exploration.