



# BLUE-RINGED OCTOPUS

Small but  
Deadly



by Natalie Lunis

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Deadly



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Consultant: Dr. Roy Caldwell  
Professor of Integrative Biology  
University of California, Berkeley

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# Blue Means Danger

Anthony Cerasa was exploring the water's edge at Suttons Beach in Redcliffe, Australia. The curious three-year-old could see all kinds of rocks and shells in the **shallow** ocean water. He even saw a tiny octopus—so small it was about the size of a child's hand.

Anthony picked up the little brown creature. As he held it, something surprising happened. Bright blue lines and rings appeared on its skin. The boy didn't know it, but the blue markings meant danger. The little creature was a blue-ringed octopus—the only kind of octopus that is known to be deadly to people. Its change in color was a sign that it was about to bite.



A blue-ringed octopus before and after it shows its blue markings





## DANGER

A blue-ringed octopus weighs less than one ounce (28 grams).

Almost all blue-ringed octopus bites happen when children or other beachgoers pick up the tiny creatures.

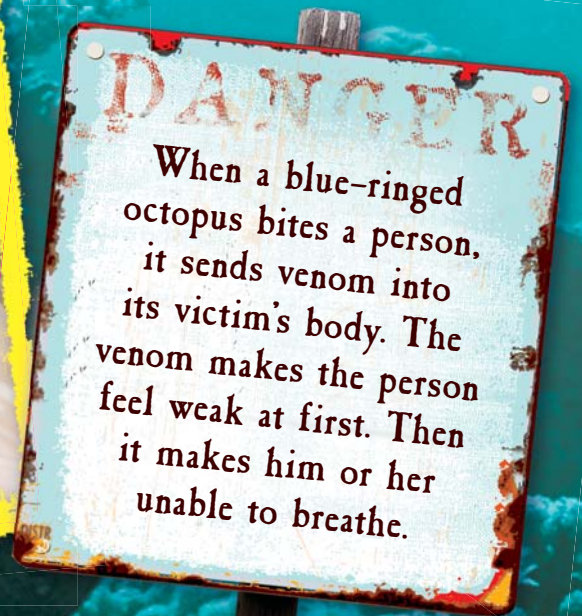


# Keep Breathing!

The blue-ringed octopus in Anthony's hand was so small that he didn't even feel the bite. He put the little creature back in the water after showing it to his mother. A few minutes later, however, he started feeling strange. He told his mother that his legs felt "floppy" and that he couldn't walk.

Luckily, Anthony's mother acted quickly. If she hadn't, her son would soon have been unable to breathe. She made sure he was rushed to a nearby hospital. From there, doctors sent him to a larger hospital where he was put on a **respirator**. After breathing with the help of the machine all night, he was safe. The **venom** he had received from the bite had stopped working. Anthony was back to being a healthy three-year-old.

Respirators like this one help people with serious illnesses or injuries breathe.





A blue-ringed octopus  
walking along the  
ocean floor





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## Learn More Online

To learn more about the blue-ringed octopus, visit  
[www.bearportpublishing.com/AfraidoftheWater](http://www.bearportpublishing.com/AfraidoftheWater)

## About the Author

Natalie Lunis has written many science and nature books for children.  
She lives in the Hudson River Valley, just north of New York City.





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# **BLUE-RINGED OCTOPUS**

**Small but  
Deadly**

Three-year-old Anthony Cerasa was at the beach with his family. He saw a tiny brown octopus and picked it up. Then something surprising happened. Bright blue lines and rings appeared on the creature's skin. Anthony didn't know it, but he was holding a blue-ringed octopus—one of the most venomous sea creatures.

The blue-ringed octopus may look cute and harmless—but it isn't. Look inside for the surprising truth about how dangerous this little sea creature really is. You'll also find out where it lives, what it eats—and how to stay safe if you meet up with one in the water.

**BLUE-RINGED OCTOPUS**  
**SMALL BUT DEADLY**

**BOX JELLYFISH**  
**KILLER TENTACLES**

**MORAY EEL**  
**DANGEROUS TEETH**

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