

MAUVE STINGER



Photo by Meet the Sea

Curiosities

Rather than a brain or concentrated area of nerve cells, these jellyfish have a 'nerve net', which is a distribution of nerve cells throughout the whole body. This means that sometimes they seem to process sensory input slowly, as the information has to travel throughout the net before the jellyfish can respond.

Life in the deep sea

The mauve stinger usually stays in deep water throughout the day, but rises closer to the surface at night, meaning this is when it is most likely to be seen by people. They are occasionally observed nearer the surface of the water during the day, but only on days with poor visibility and little light.

They are also able to bioluminesce and produce short flashes of light, making them easy to spot in the dark.

Scientific Name:

Pelagia noctiluca

Key Information

This species of jellyfish is fairly small, with a typical bell diameter of between 3cm and 12cm.

They are semi-transparent, and range in colour from shades of purple and pink to light brown or yellow.

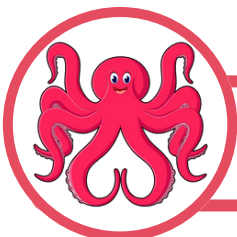
These jellyfish have eight tentacles which can grow to around three metres long. Each of these 'arms' have a mouth which transports food to the jellyfish's stomach.

Food and behaviour

The mauve stinger is opportunistic and has been observed eating a wide range of other marine organisms - if they can catch them. Their diet includes fish eggs, mollusk larvae, and sometimes other, smaller jellyfish.

These jellyfish have stingers which cover their whole body which activate when they come into contact with their prey. They have two types of stinging cells which inject different types of toxin that can either paralyse their prey or cause inflammation.

For humans, this sting is not dangerous but can be fairly painful. After a sting from a mauve stinger people report symptoms such as swelling, itching and redness lasting up to 10 days. The toxins may still activate even if the jellyfish has recently died, so always be careful not to touch them, whether in the water or on the beach.



Meet the Sea

Education & Entertainment at Sea