

# Creatures of the Deep

Concealed in darkness, bitterly cold and under extreme pressure - the deep sea is no place for the faint hearted.

Animals that call this part of the ocean home are specially adapted to live in such harsh conditions. A simple task like finding food is pretty tough in total darkness, so some creatures use light to attract prey and some have features to help them detect movement in the water. Let's meet some deep-sea animals and find out how they are adapted to life in the deep.



Long Nosed Chimaera

To deal with the pressure their skeleton is made of cartilage - just like our ears.

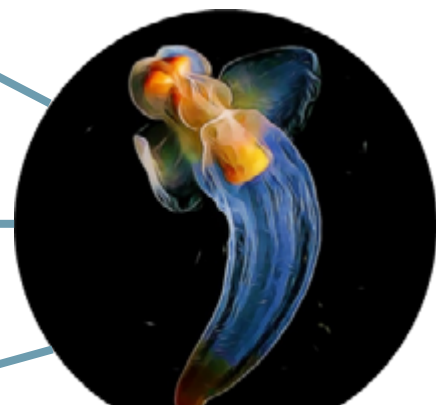
Their long paddle nose scans the seabed, detecting any electrical currents coming off prey hidden in the mud/sand.

Their dorsal fin, located behind the head, is filled with venom and used as a defence.

They release a chemical that makes them taste sour to help deter predators.

It's hard to find a mate in the dark, so to make it easier they can switch sex and pair up with any other Sea Angel they meet.

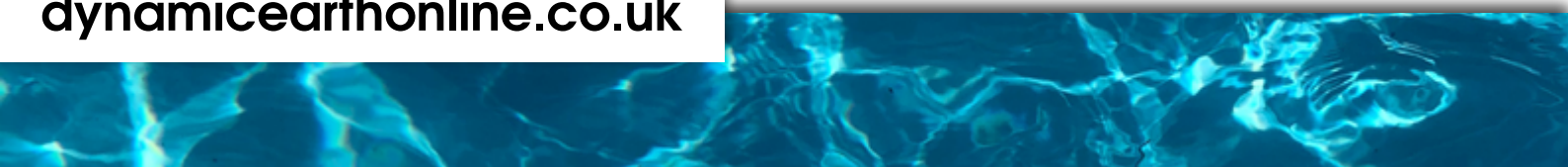
They extend finger-like tentacles from their head to catch their prey.

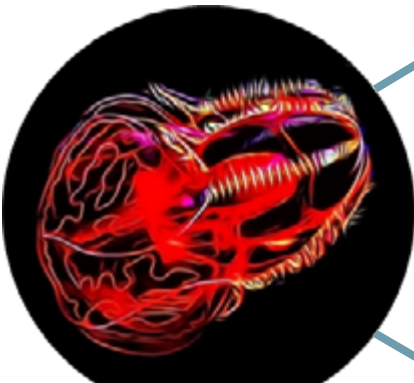


Sea Angel

**Why not design your own deep-sea creature! Think about how it's going to find food and how it will protect itself from predators. Will it use light? Does it have a venomous spine?**

*Artist Impressions based on Images from NOAA*





Blood-belly Comb Jelly

The colour red actually looks black in the deep sea, so this comb jelly is really well camouflaged.

Their red stomach helps mask the bioluminescence from their prey.

Light deflects off tiny hair-like cilia when they propel through the water, making them glow.

They have lights along the side of their body which can be used to communicate with other Pacific Viperfish or attract prey.

They also have rows of lights on their belly to help them blend into the surface light and protect them from predators lurking below.

Their teeth overlap to create a cage, trapping any food in their mouth.



Pacific Viperfish



Barreleye Fish

The "eyes" at the front of the head are actually nostrils! They confuse predators.

Its actual eyes are the green balls/orbs which are covered by a clear jelly-like dome.

Their body is virtually impossible to see as their skin pigments are the darkest shade of black.

*Artist Impressions based on Images from MBARI*

