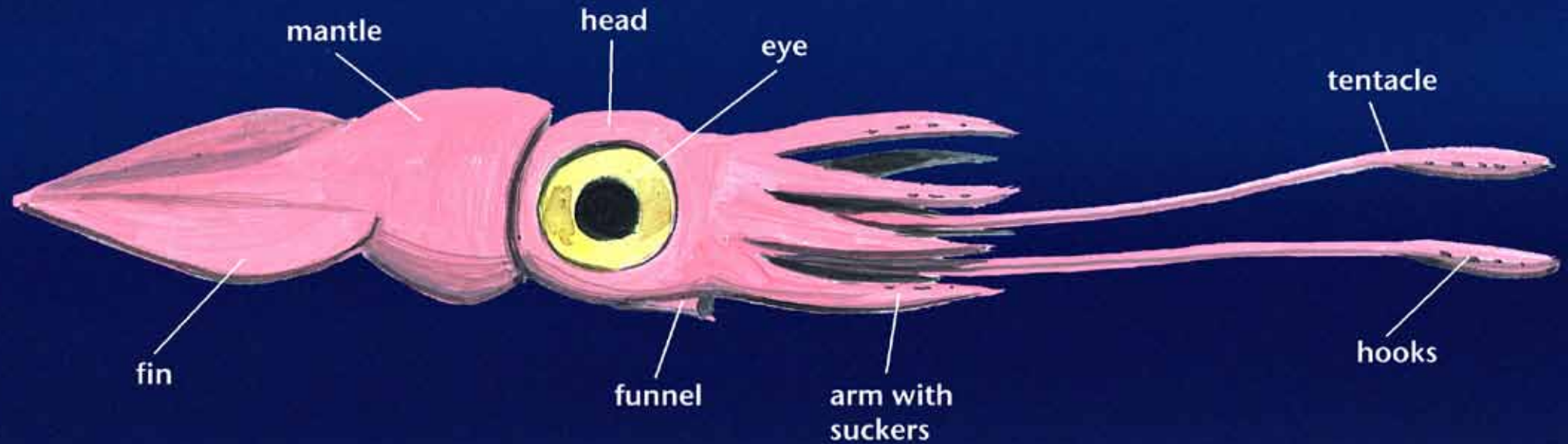


# Colossal Squid Facts



**Scientific Name:** *Mesonychoteuthis hamiltoni*

**Habitat:** Southern Ocean from Antarctica to Chatham Rise. Have been recorded feeding at the surface at night and are thought to spend days at depths of up to 2,500m.

**Features:** Large well-developed eyes. Only squid species with swivel hooks. Colour variable, pink when showing aggression.

**Size:** World's largest invertebrate, (up to ~ 400kg and ~18m). Our model is based on a juvenile, only 6m long.

**Age:** Unknown (estimated 4-5 years) most smaller squid live for less than a year.

**Prey:** Toothfish (and may eat a variety of fish and squid).

**Predators:** Sperm Whale.

**Specimens Collected:** One intact specimen (on which our model is based). Five partial specimens found in the stomachs and vomit of Sperm Whales.

**Other Large Squid Species:** Giant Squid, world-wide distribution but most specimens have been found around New Zealand.

# Big, Bigger, Biggest!



Pygmy Squid (*Ideosepius pygmaeus*) ~ 5cm



Broad Squid (*Sepioteuthis australis*) ~ 1m



Arrow Squid (*Nototodarus sloanii*) ~ 1m

Giant Squid (*Architeuthis dux*) ~ 14m



Colossal Squid (*Mesonychoteuthis hamiltoni*) ~ 18m

The maximum length of a Colossal Squid is unknown! It is estimated that they are the biggest squid in the world, reaching lengths of 18m.

The Colossal Squid replica is based on a young female specimen (6m) caught near Antarctica which had not reached its adult size.



# Armed and Dangerous



Colossal Squid are not only big, they are well-armed!

They have a large strong beak and a toothed tongue (radula) for biting and tearing. The arms are equipped with suckers that have rings of teeth and swivel hooks.

Squid squirt ink as a decoy. The ink sac of a Colossal Squid contains half a litre of ink!



## Hide and Seek

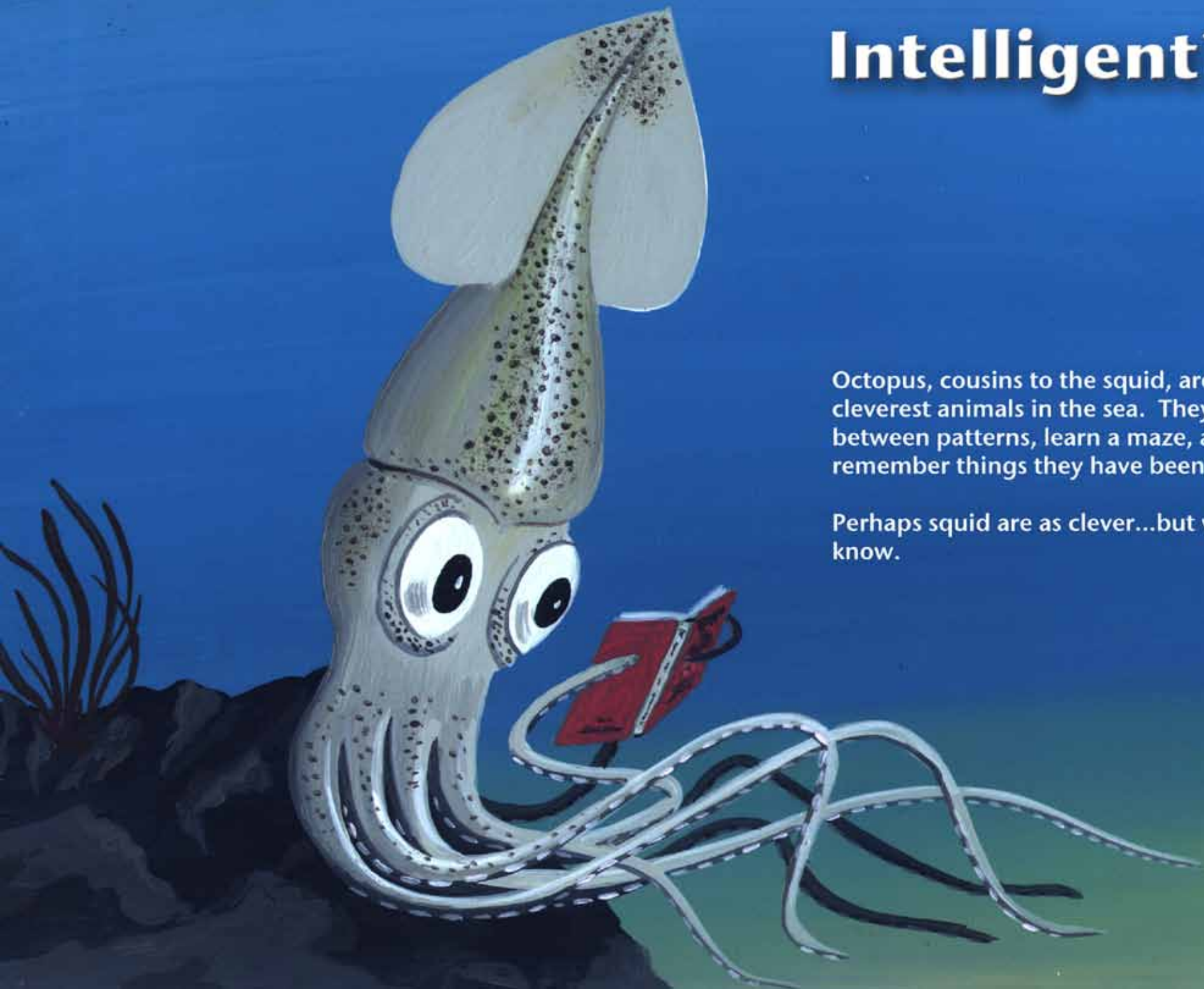
Many squid live in the deep sea, where it is dark all the time. The only light comes from other animals who make their own.

So how do scientists find and study an animal that lives in such an inaccessible environment?

# Intelligent?

Octopus, cousins to the squid, are amongst the cleverest animals in the sea. They can discriminate between patterns, learn a maze, and they can remember things they have been taught.

Perhaps squid are as clever...but we really don't know.

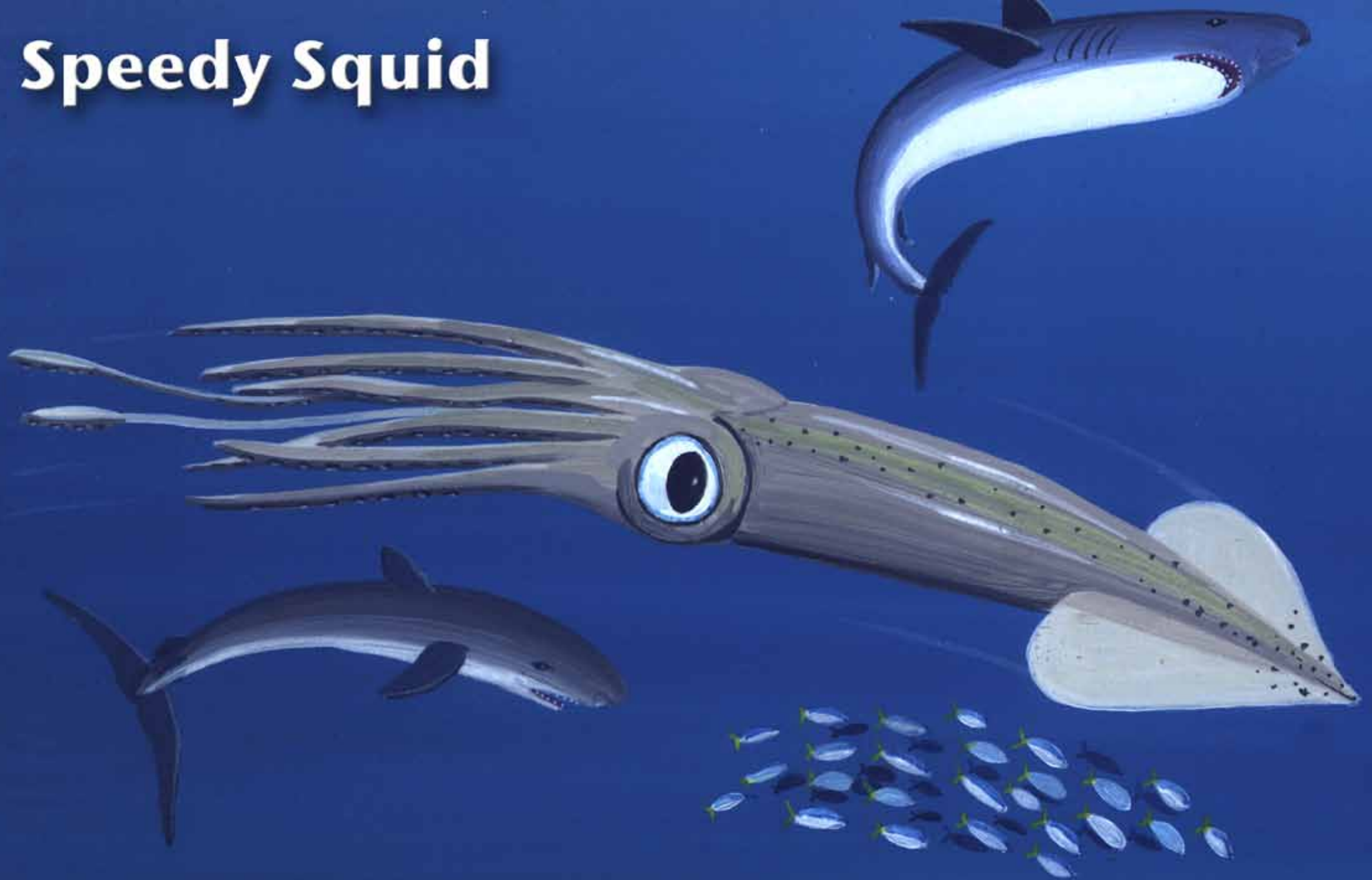


# Sign Language



Skin colour and patterns can change with the opening and closing of special pigment cells (chromatophores). This communicates readiness to breed, aggression and fear.

# Speedy Squid



We don't know how fast the Colossal Squid can swim but some smaller squid have been recorded swimming at 30kph! Squid are jet propelled. They suck water into their body (mantle) and then squirt it out through a narrow funnel below the head.

# Squid Relatives



Squid and octopus are cephalopod molluscs which means head-foot, but their foot has been divided into tentacles.

As molluscs, they are related to snails, slugs, scallops, mussels and cockles.

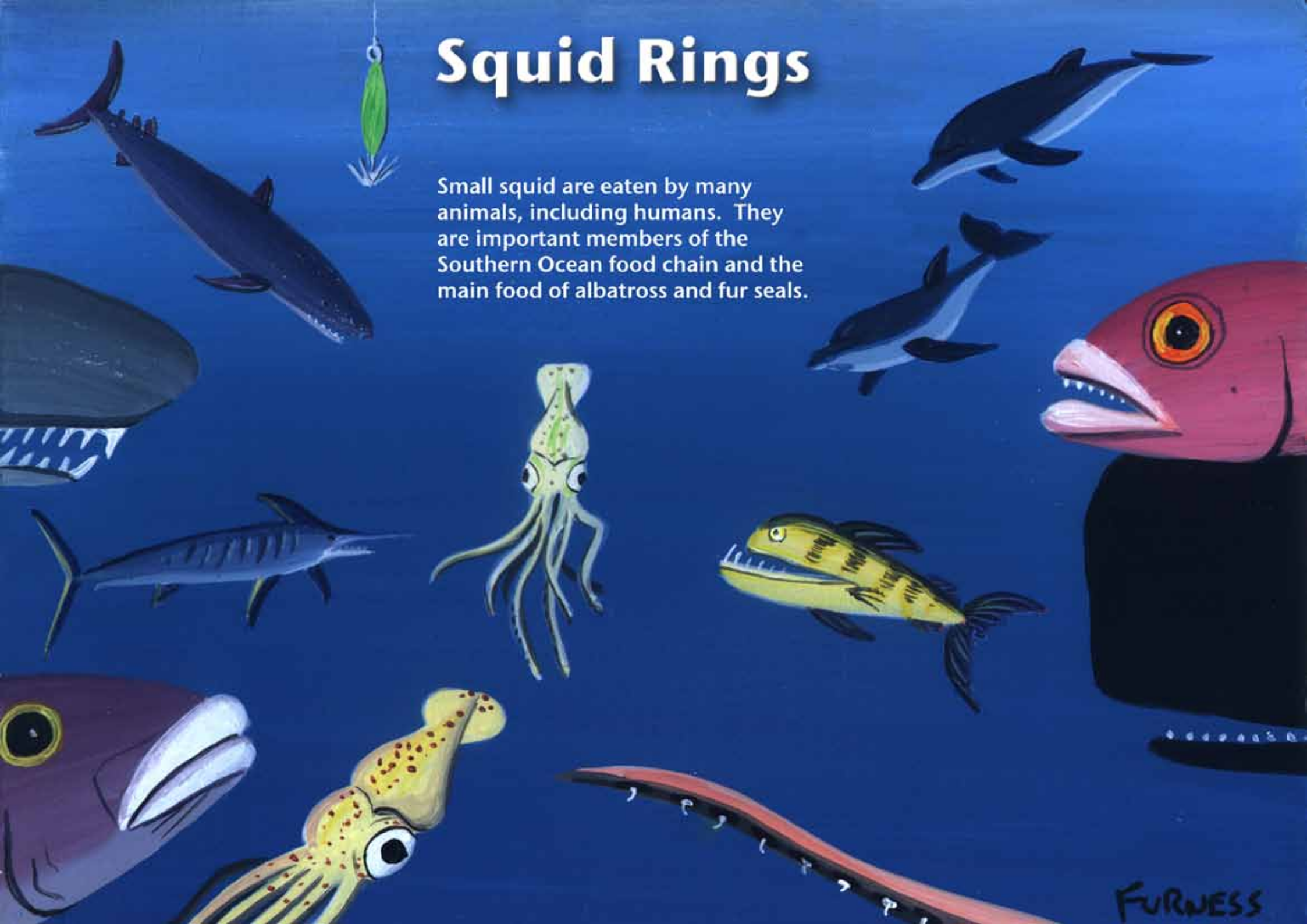


FURNESS



# Squid Rings

Small squid are eaten by many animals, including humans. They are important members of the Southern Ocean food chain and the main food of albatross and fur seals.

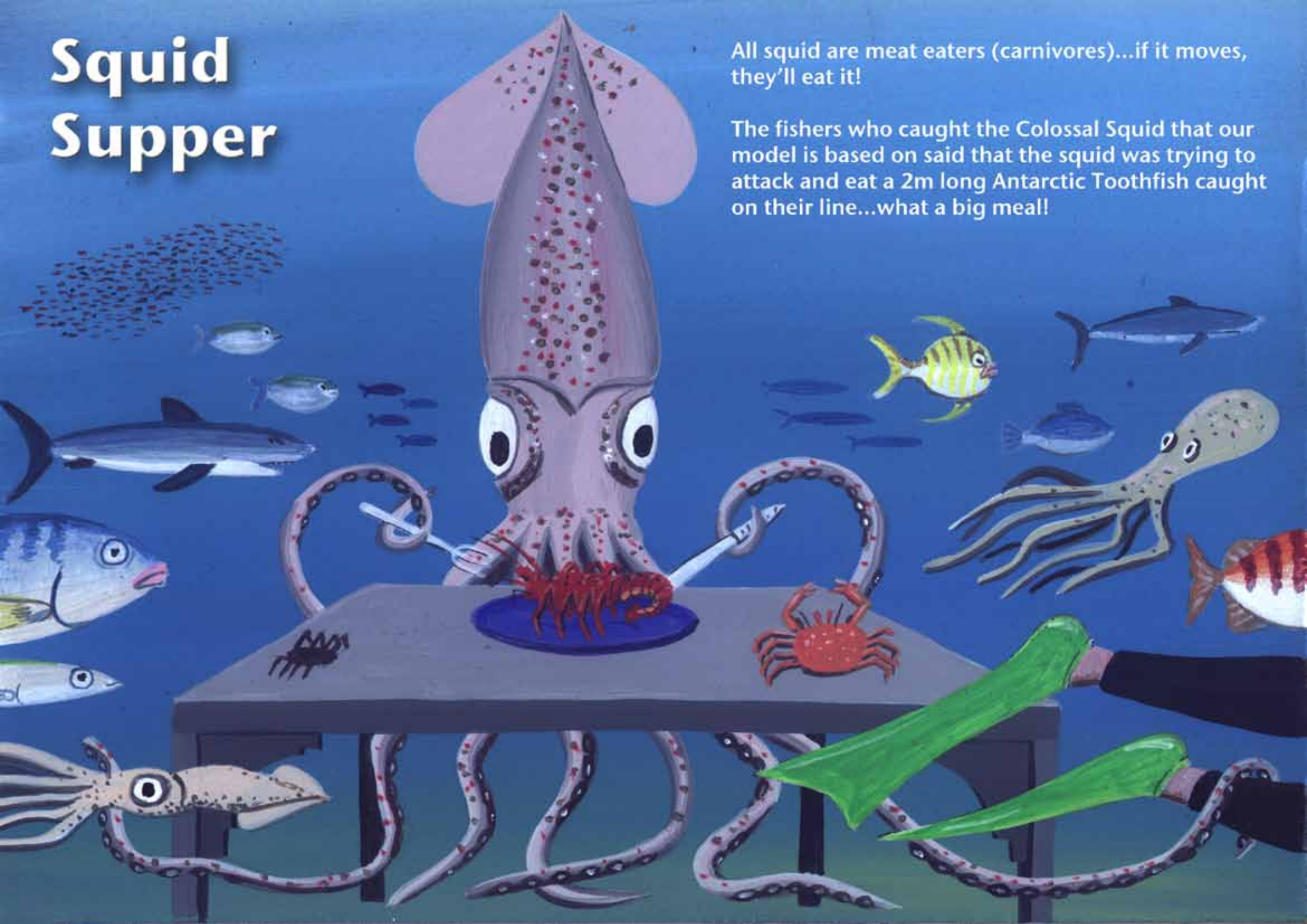


FURNESS

# Squid Supper

All squid are meat eaters (carnivores)...if it moves, they'll eat it!

The fishers who caught the Colossal Squid that our model is based on said that the squid was trying to attack and eat a 2m long Antarctic Toothfish caught on their line...what a big meal!

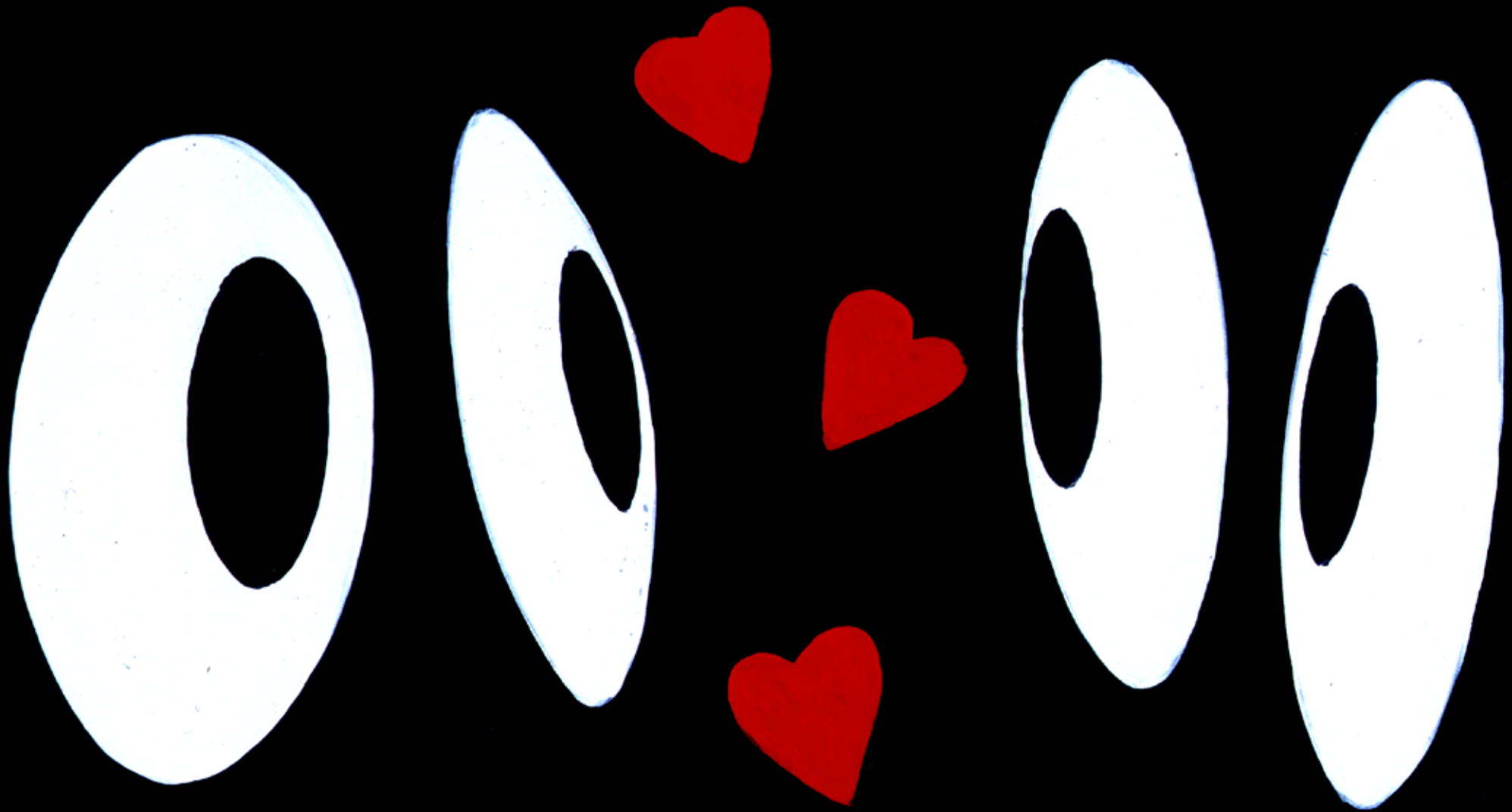


# The Battle

Many Sperm Whales have battle scars from the hooks of Colossal Squid. We know who wins some of these battles because Colossal Squid remains have been found in the stomachs of Sperm Whales.



FURNESS



## Sexy Squid

When Colossal Squid breed, the male injects sperm into the female's arms. After that it's a mystery! What we do know is that squid breed only once during their life and then they die!