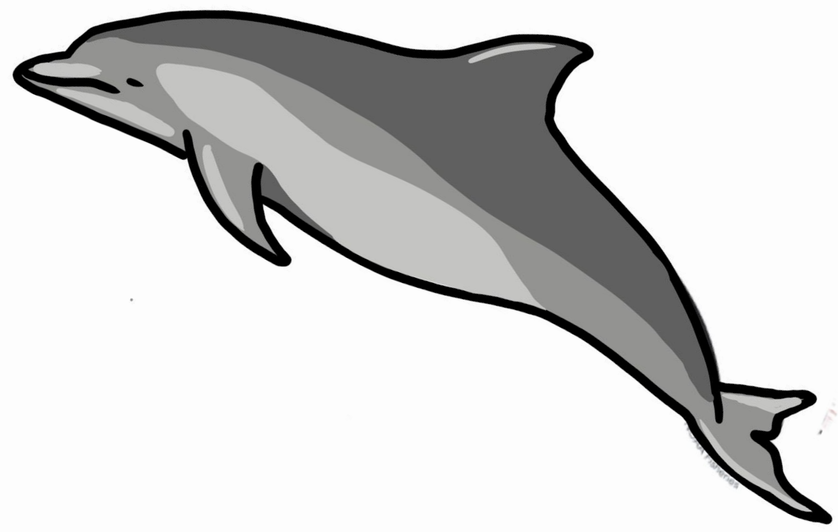
Animal profile pack

Little Inventors

HELP THE SEA CREATURES!

Common Bottlenose Dolphin



Max length: 4m
Max weight: 650kg

Where do they live?

Coastal and estuarine waters (where the rivers meets the sea) all around the world. In the UK, Northumberland is a great place to spot them!

How do they sleep?

With one eye open! While one half of their brains sleeps, the other half stays alert so they can continue breathing and looking out for dangers.

Fun fact:

Dolphins have names! Each dolphin has a unique whistle to announce their presence which other dolphins also use to attract their attention.

Likes:

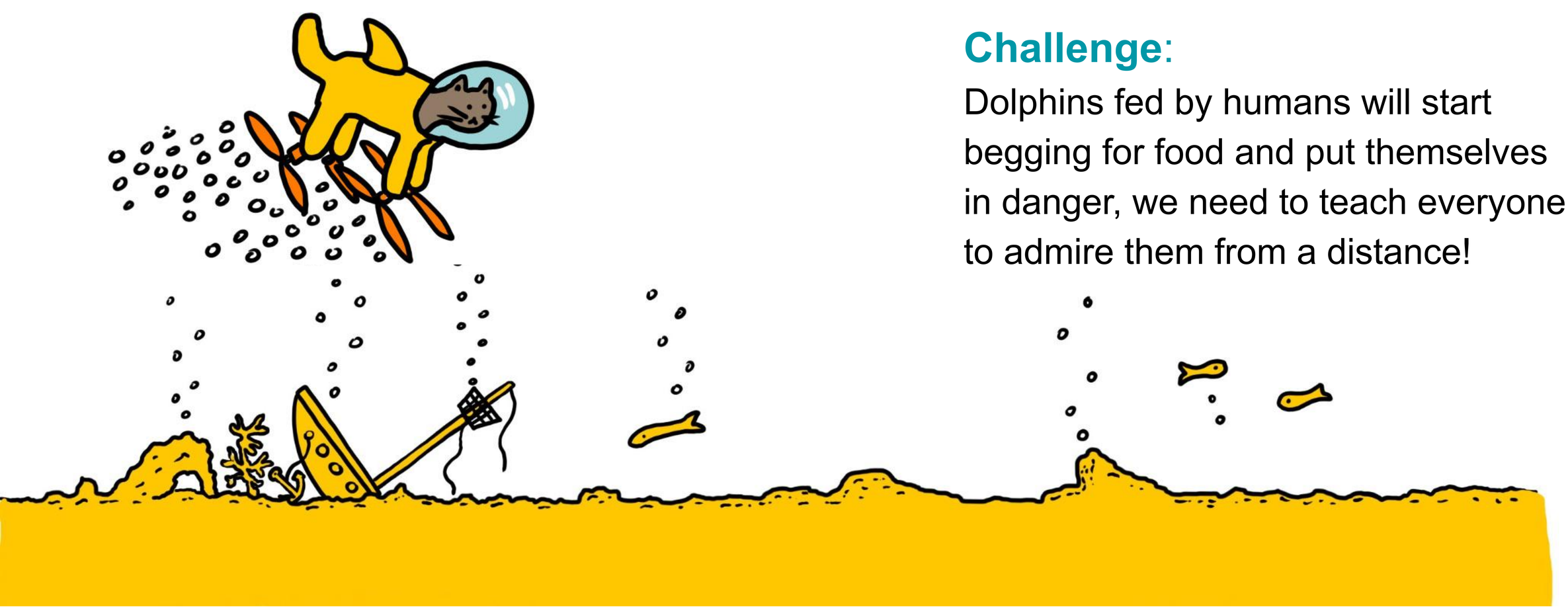
- Eating fish, squid and shrimps
- Jumping out of the water, splashing and playing with each other
- Swimming alongside boats

Dislikes:

- Litter!
- Getting caught in fishing gear, or entangled in discarded rubbish

Challenge:

Dolphins fed by humans will start begging for food and put themselves in danger, we need to teach everyone to admire them from a distance!



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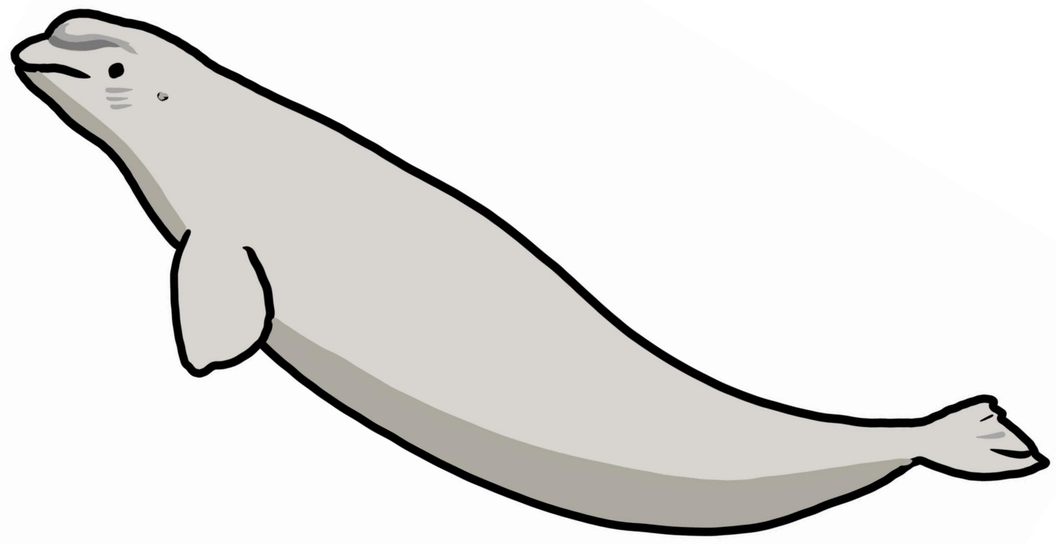
Beluga Whale



Max 5.5m
up to 1600kg

Where do they live?

Cold Arctic and sub-Arctic waters.
Some populations stay in one place while others migrate seasonally to feed and have their babies.

How do they sleep?

Vertically, with their tail pointing down! They spend 30% of the day sleeping, while other whale species only sleep 7% of the day on average.

Fun fact:

Belugas can mimic human speech and change their facial expressions to pull funny faces.

Likes:

- fish including cod and salmon, as well as squid, shrimps and crabs
- chatting and singing, they are so enthusiastic their vocalisations can be heard from the boats above!

Dislikes:

- Not being white! Sometimes they rub themselves against gravel to get rid of the yellowish algae that grows on their skin. This restores their pearly glow!

Challenge:

Vessel traffic and underwater noise due to oil and gas exploration have a negative impact on their ability to navigate, feed and look after their young.

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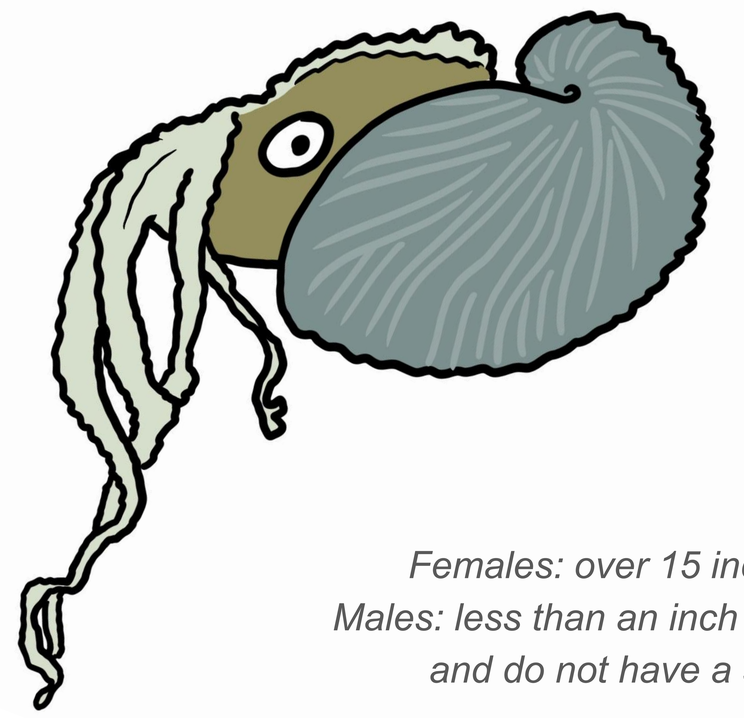
Argonaut



Females: over 15 inches
Males: less than an inch long and do not have a shell

Where do they live?

They drift near the surface of tropical and subtropical seas. In the open ocean they are commonly found attached to jellyfish, possibly for shelter or to hide.

How do they sleep?

Scientists are not sure! But they are known to rest during the day, hiding away in deep water, and to come up to shallower water to hunt prey at night.

Fun fact:

Argonauts can swim quite quickly—faster than a human diver!—by using water jet propulsion.

Likes:

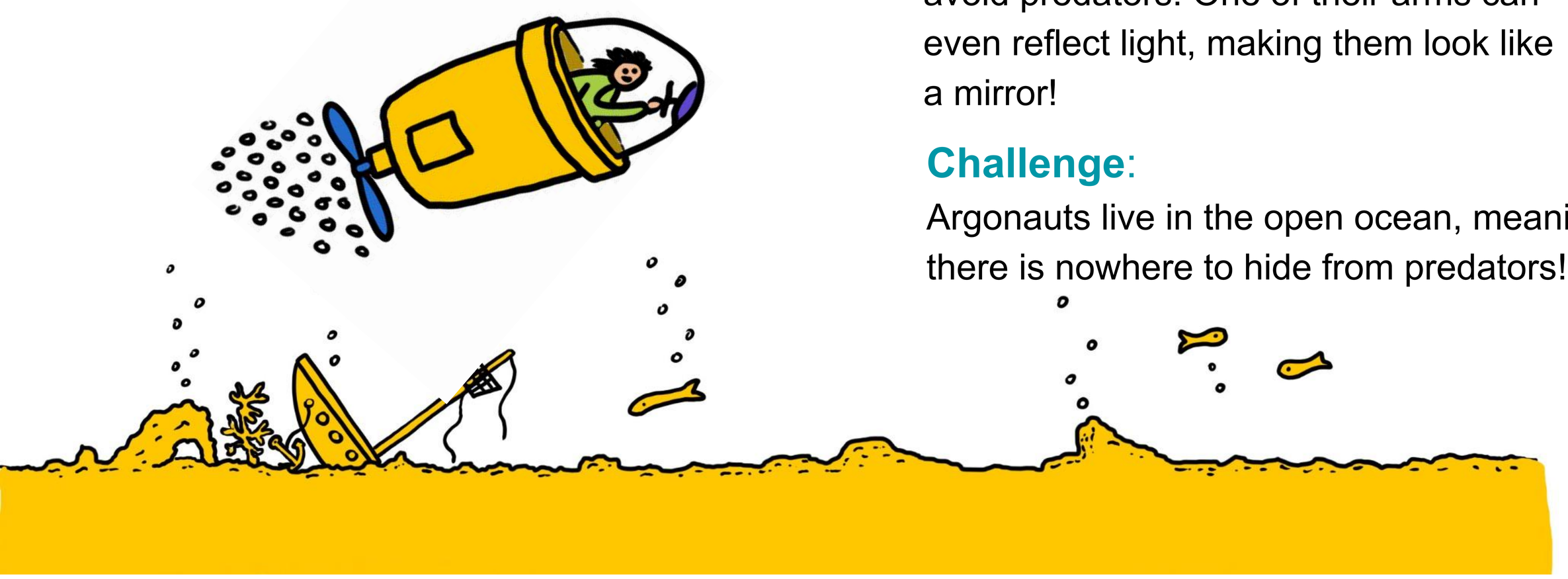
- Eating small crustaceans and molluscs
- Repairing their shells! Females have fragile, translucent shells that they create themselves and lay their eggs in. If a shell is damaged, they repair it; if it's lost, they make a new one.

Dislikes:

- Being seen! They alter their color to blend in with their surroundings to avoid predators. One of their arms can even reflect light, making them look like a mirror!

Challenge:

Argonauts live in the open ocean, meaning there is nowhere to hide from predators!



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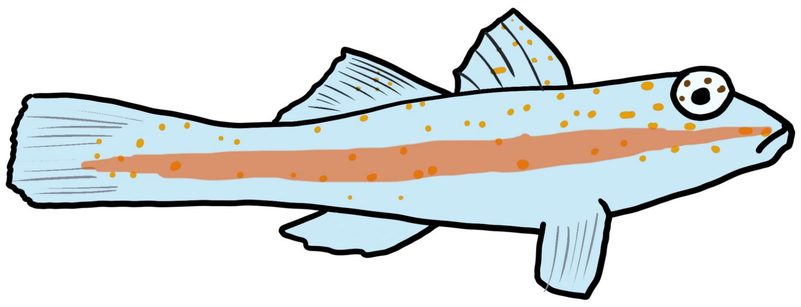
Ghost Goby



3cm

Where do they live?

In the coral reefs of the Indo-West Pacific Ocean, between India and Australia.

How do they sleep?

They sleep at night, hiding in the coral, safe from predators.

Fun fact:

They are called Ghost Gobies because they are translucent, which means that light can go through them which makes them hard to see.

Likes:

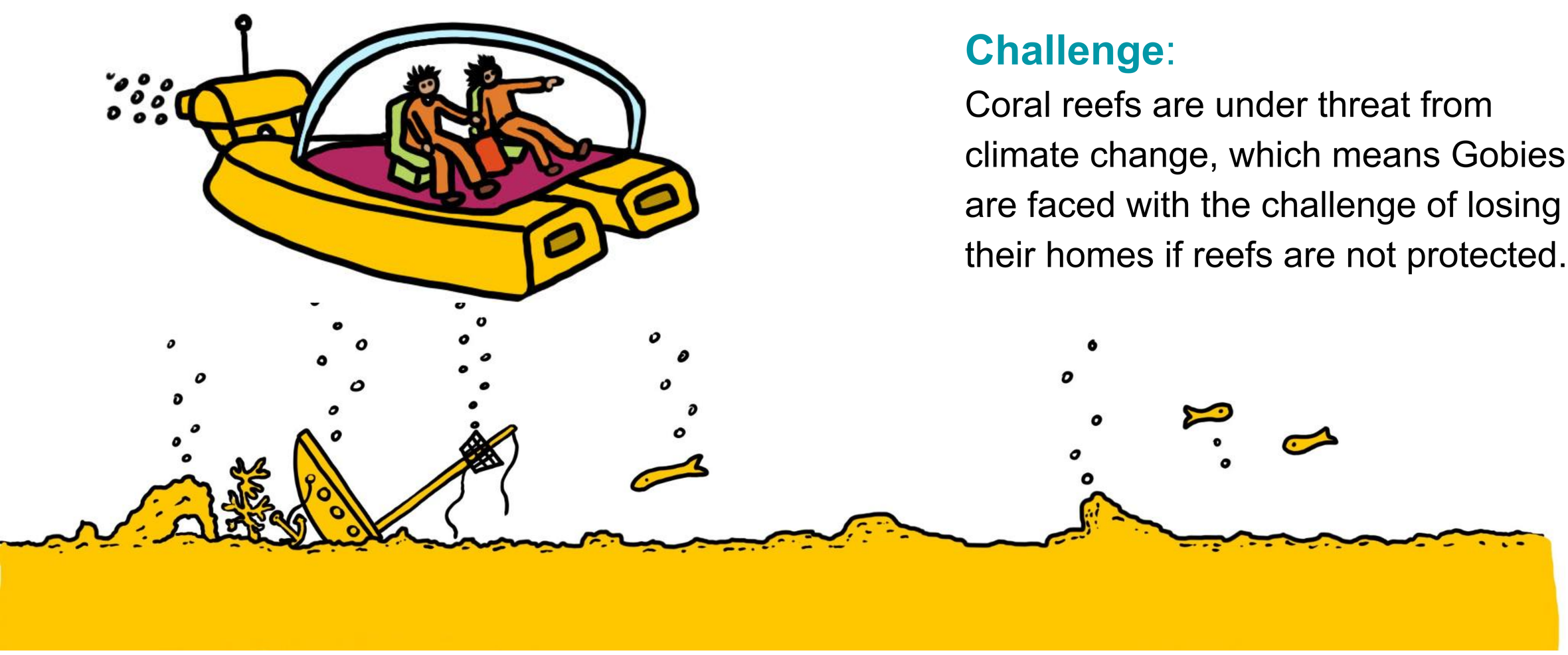
- Flowing water that brings food to them, so they don't have to spend energy looking for it.

Dislikes:

- Change! Gobies dislike any changes to the water temperature, salinity (amount of salt), and pollution level as it makes them unwell.

Challenge:

Coral reefs are under threat from climate change, which means Gobies are faced with the challenge of losing their homes if reefs are not protected.



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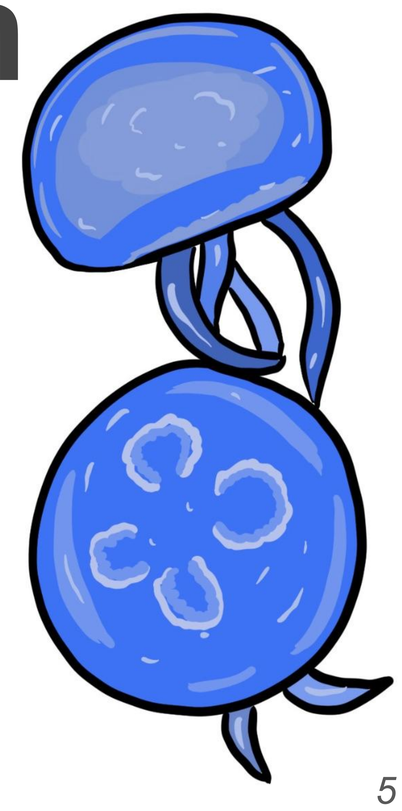
Moon Jellyfish



5 to 40cm diameter

Where do they live?

The most common jellyfish in the UK, they live all across the world's oceans and can survive temperatures as high as 31° and low as - 6°!

How do they move around?

Wind and water currents often group the jellyfish together, as they can't control their direction - this can create giant swarms of jellyfish especially closer to shore.

Fun fact:

Jellyfish don't have teeth - they use stomach enzymes to digest their prey.

Likes:

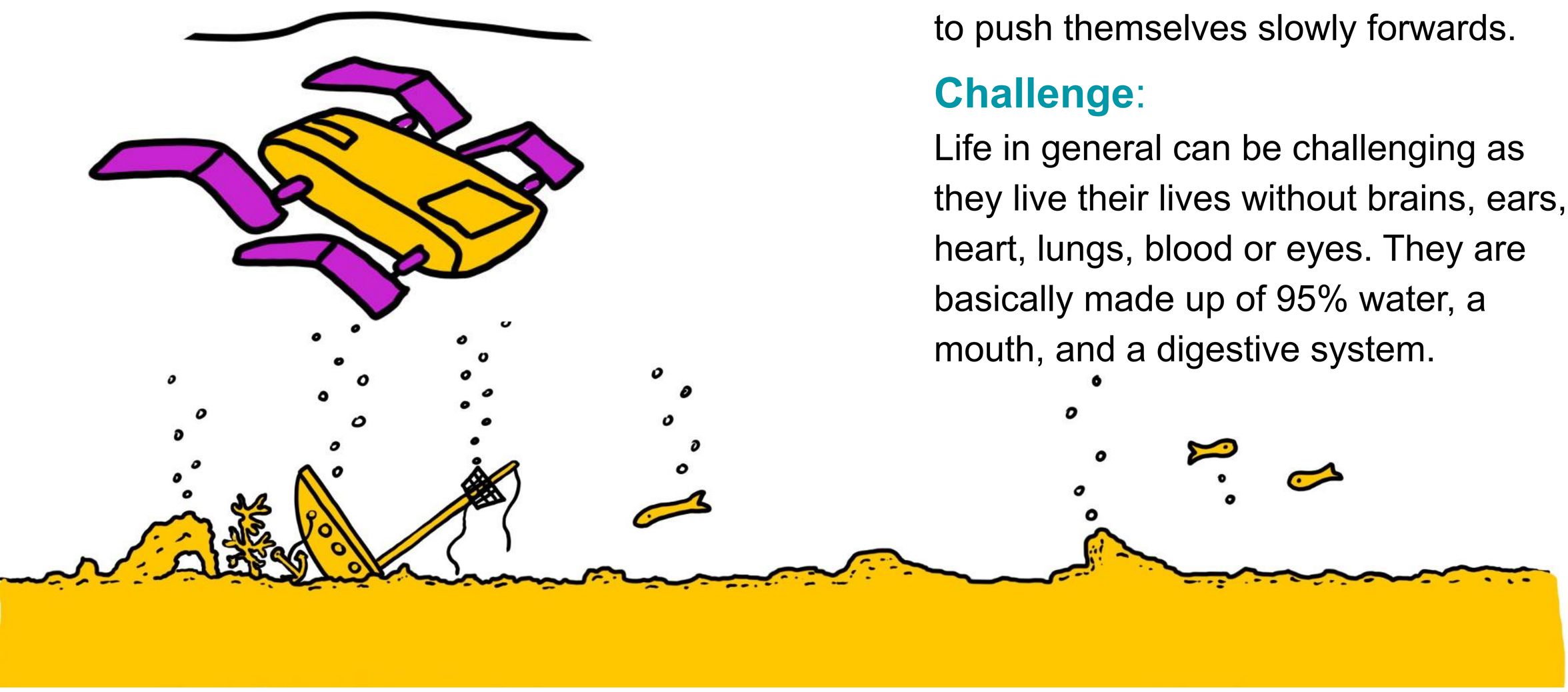
- Eating zooplankton and fish eggs
- Disco lights! They are bioluminescent, which means they glow in the dark

Dislikes:

- Not a strong swimmer! They mainly using their short tentacles to stay near the water surface or pulsing their body to push themselves slowly forwards.

Challenge:

Life in general can be challenging as they live their lives without brains, ears, heart, lungs, blood or eyes. They are basically made up of 95% water, a mouth, and a digestive system.



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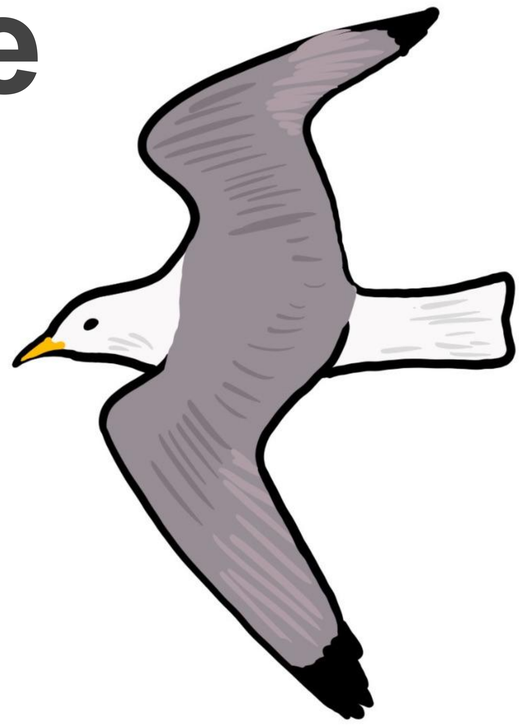
Kittiwake



max length 40cm
wingspan 110cm max
weight 500gr

Where do they live?

Mostly on the high seas of the Atlantic Ocean. In the UK during the breeding season, they come to have their chicks in Scotland, especially Orkney, Shetland and the north-west coast.

How do they sleep?

On cliffs, beaches, and at their nests during the breeding season. When they are not looking after chicks, they spend most of their time in flight and even sleep in the air when far out to sea!

Fun fact:

A colony of kittiwakes comes to Newcastle every year to nest on the Tyne Bridge!

Likes:

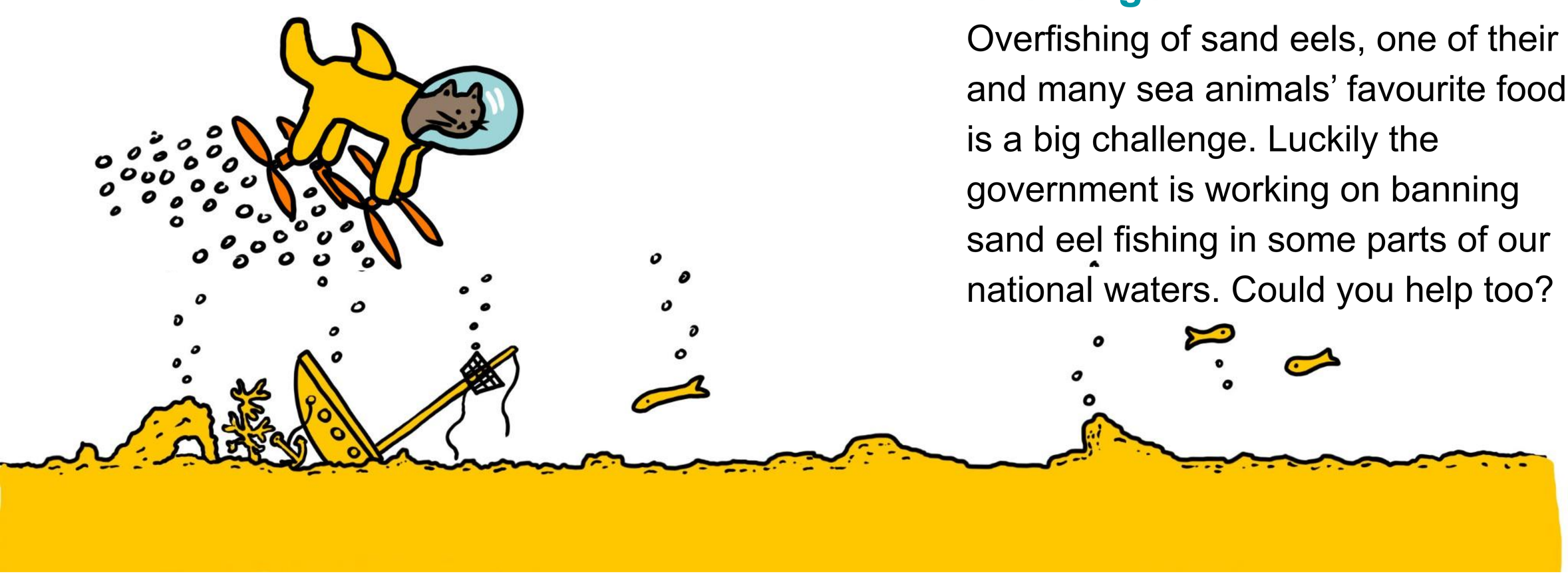
- Eating fish, shrimps and worms
- A room with a view! They are the only gull-like bird in the world to make cliff dwellings

Dislikes:

- Staying still! Kittiwakes spend the winter months at sea and rarely touch the ground during this period
- Eating from landfills

Challenge:

Overfishing of sand eels, one of their and many sea animals' favourite food, is a big challenge. Luckily the government is working on banning sand eel fishing in some parts of our national waters. Could you help too?



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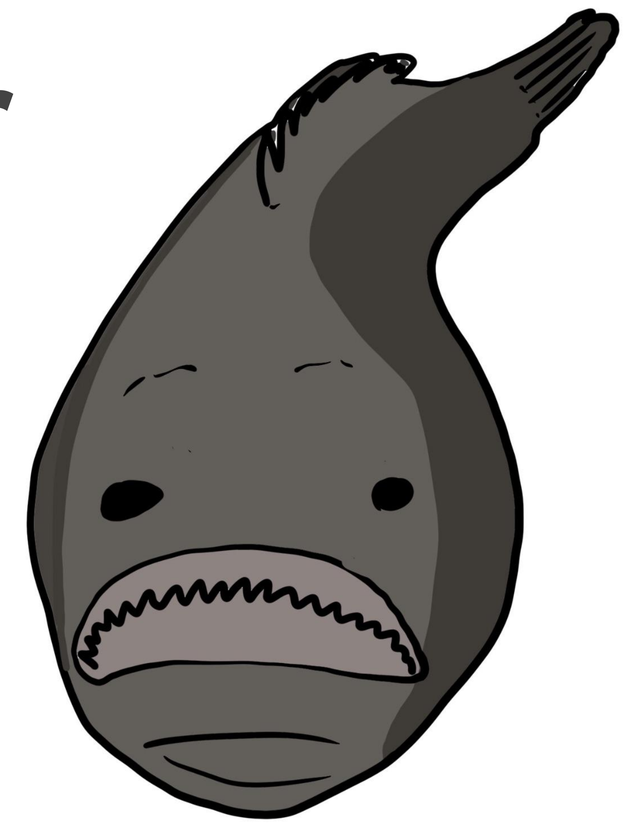
Stargazer



Max 30cm
up to 1 kg

Where do they live?

In the warm waters of the European Atlantic Coast and Mediterranean Sea. They spend most of their time burrowed into the sand and mud.

How do they sleep?

They are nocturnal, which means they live by night and sleep hidden under the sand and mud during the day.

Fun fact:

Stargazers are one of few fish capable of generating an electric charge for hunting or defense!

Likes:

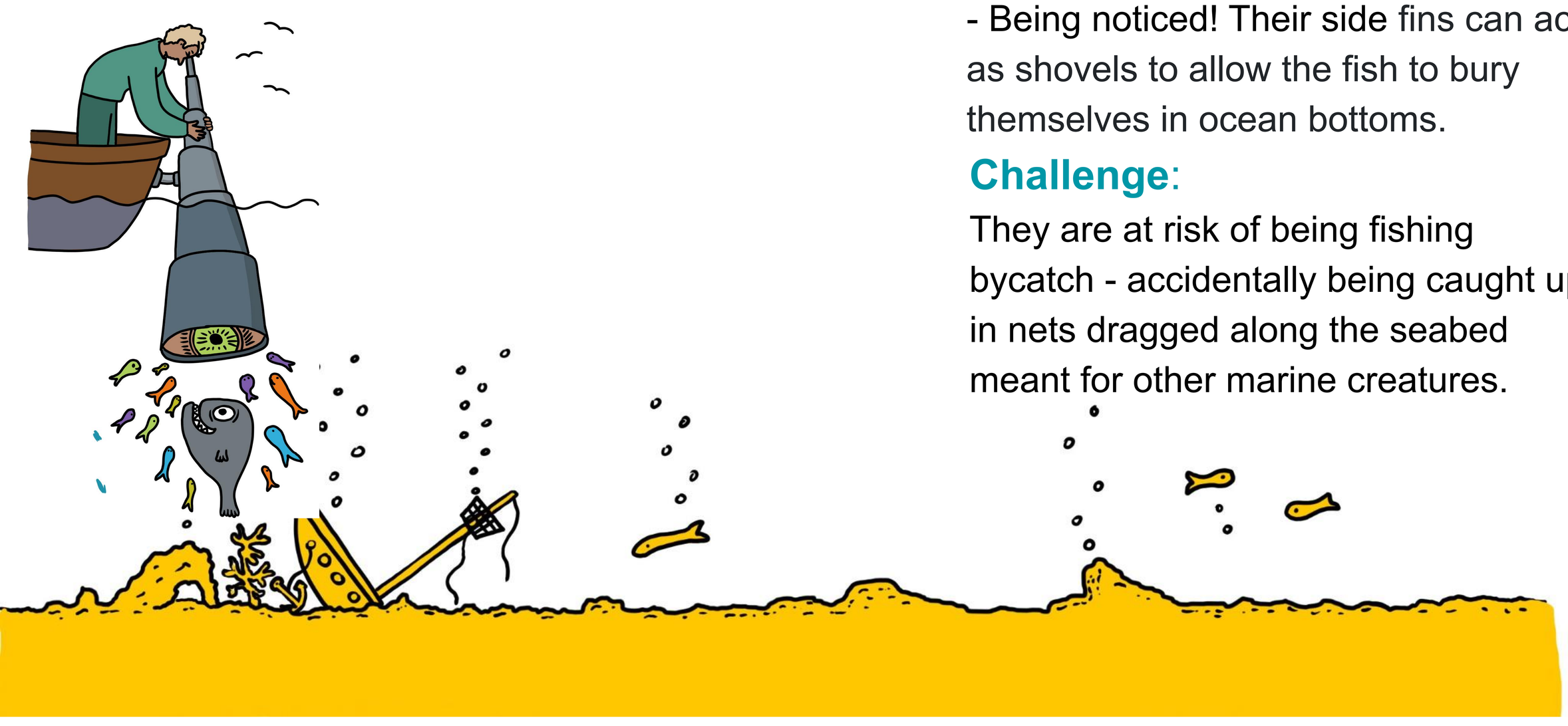
- Fishing! They lie in wait for prey to come within a certain distance before attacking. They are able to extend a part of their mouth and wave it around as a lure to attract small fish.

Dislikes:

- Being noticed! Their side fins can act as shovels to allow the fish to bury themselves in ocean bottoms.

Challenge:

They are at risk of being fishing bycatch - accidentally being caught up in nets dragged along the seabed meant for other marine creatures.



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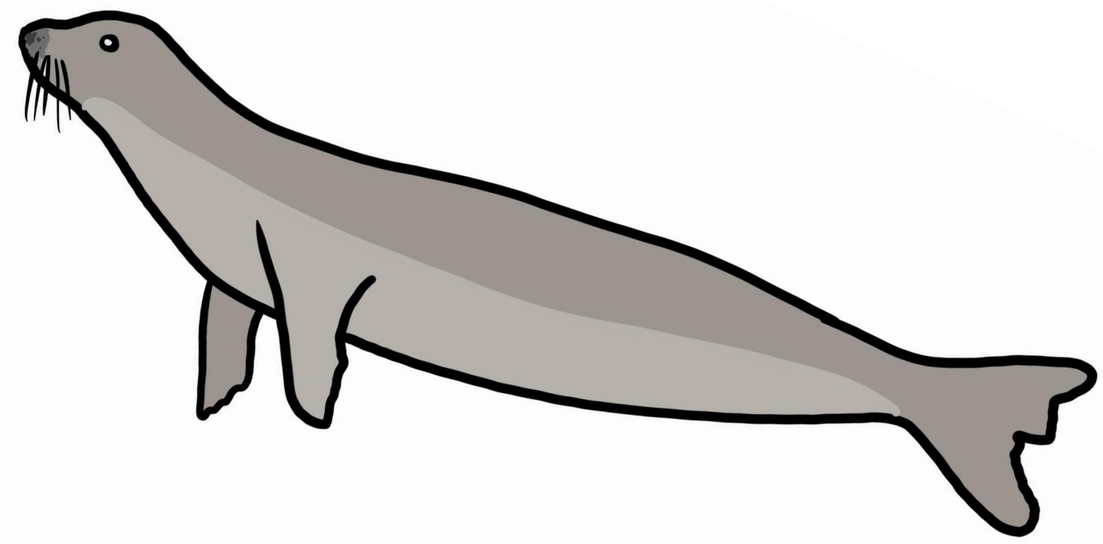
Mediterranean Monk Seal



max 2-3m and 300kg

Where do they live?

Along the coast in the Mediterranean Sea and Northwest Africa. They are mostly found in Greece.

How do they sleep?

They sleep in marine caves along the coast, though some have been found snoozing in the water. In ancient times, they used to sleep on beaches but relocated due to human activities.

Fun fact:

In ancient Greece, monk seals were placed under the protection of the Gods Poseidon and Apollo because they showed a great love for sea and sun.

Likes:

- Eating bony fishes, octopus and crustaceans
- Diving! Some have been recorded diving to more than 70m!
- Spend time underwater with other seals

Dislikes:

- Being cold! They have thick layers of fat and fur to protect them.
- Being caught in fishing gear

Challenge:

There are only 600 of these seals left in the world and they need a lot of help! Protecting the coast where they live and their food sources is essential.

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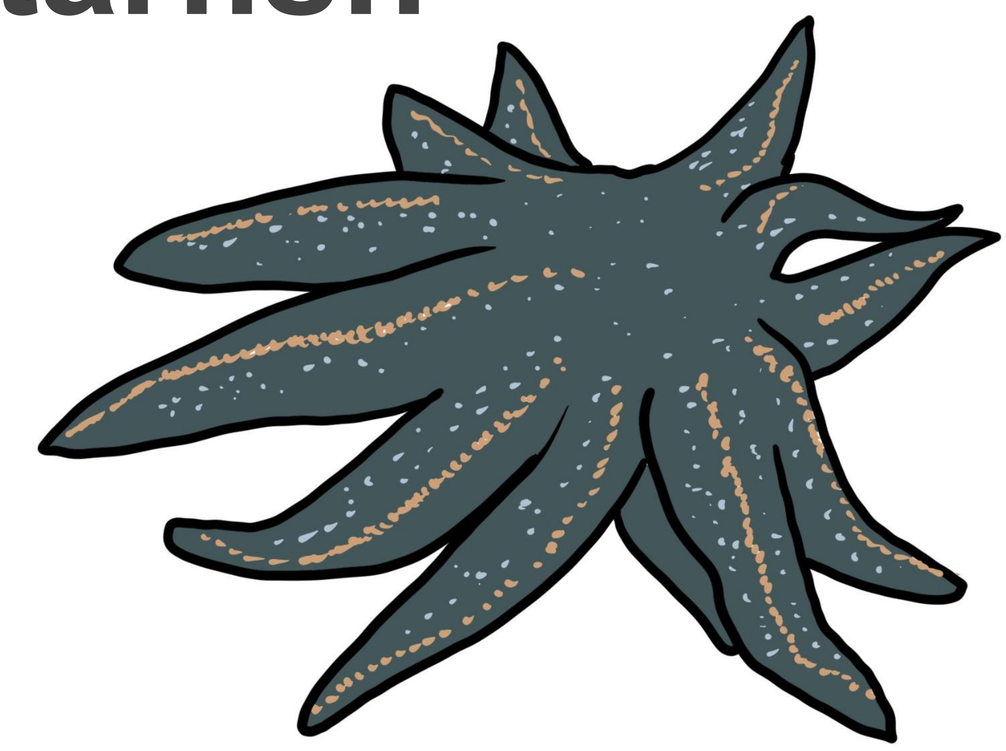
Reef Starfish



Max 8 to 10 cm diameter

Where do they live?

This species of starfish is found in the shallow waters of the rocky intertidal zone of New Zealand, where the ocean meets the land.

How do they sleep?

Scientists don't know - but species related to the starfish have periods of inactivity and rest to recuperate.

Fun fact:

They have the ability to regrow lost or damaged limbs! If under attack, some starfish will even shed an arm to escape the predator!

Likes:

- Action! They enjoy a high-energy environment and do not like calm waters
- Eating mussels! To get to their prey, they break its shell and insert their stomach within it, eating and digesting the mussel before swallowing their stomach back in.

Dislikes:

- Predators! Their tough, prickly, armor-like skin helps protect them.

Challenge:

Being at the bottom of the food chain is a real challenge as they have many predators.

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Horseshoe Crab

Average of 36–48cm (14–19")

Where do they live?

They live on the muddy, sandy bottoms of estuaries (where a river meets the sea) and bays on the East coasts of Asia and of North America.

How do they sleep?

They are more active at night, specifically during full or new moons, but not much is known about how they sleep during the day.

Fun fact:

Four species of Horseshoe crabs have survived the extinction event that wiped dinosaurs from the planet 66 million years ago!

Likes:

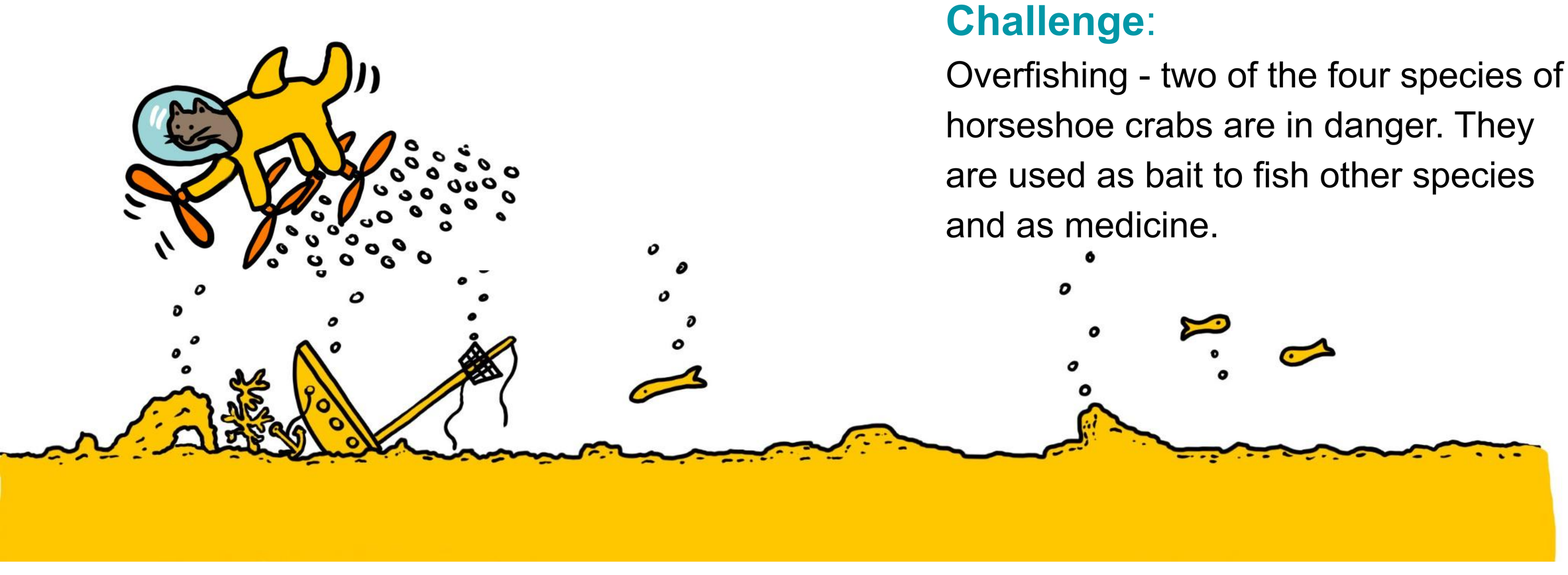
- Eating algae, marine worms, clams and other mollusks, and dead fish
- To be seen! Like scorpions, horseshoe crabs exhibit fluorescence under ultraviolet light, which means they glow!

Dislikes:

- They are easily jostled by ocean currents and waves and each other. When a crab gets stuck upside-down, it uses its tail, called a telson, to flip over!

Challenge:

Overfishing - two of the four species of horseshoe crabs are in danger. They are used as bait to fish other species and as medicine.



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