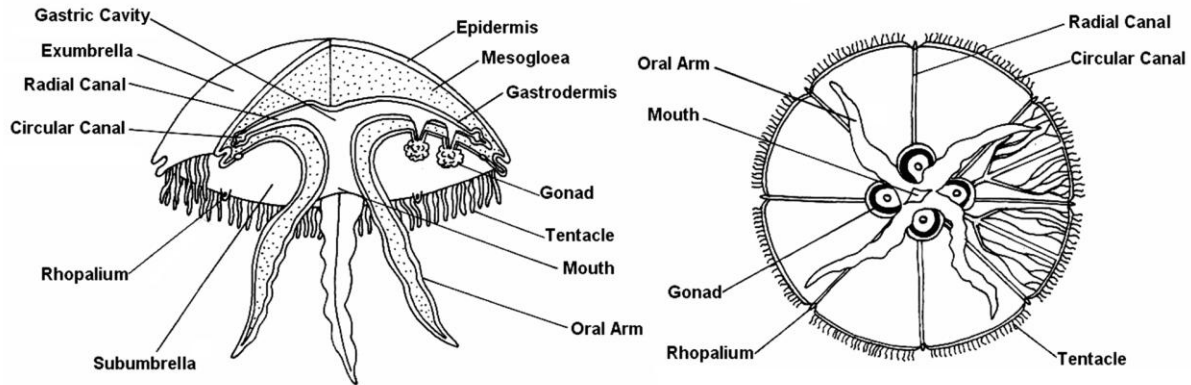


Jellyfish – Simple – But Incredible!



Jellyfish are free swimming animals found in every ocean in the world. There is scientific evidence of their existence from over 500 million years ago.

Jellyfish have no bony skeletons so are called invertebrates. They keep their shape by taking in water, and their bodies can be 95% water. Many, but not all, jellyfish have defensive stinging tentacles called nemocysts. When Jellyfish are in contact with their predator (or an unfortunate human being) pressure builds inside their bodies which explodes at over 14,000kPa (that's a lot of pressure). The venomous sting is pushed into the victim by a lance type structure on the tentacles.



Jellyfish do not have any digestive or circulatory systems, no hearts, eyes or brain. There is just one cavity in the centre, underneath of the animal, which acts as a mouth where nutrients (plankton) are taken in. Oxygen is diffused directly from the water into the body (so there are no gills, which fish use for absorbing oxygen from the water.) They can move by pulsating their bodies – but mainly they drift in the currents.

Apart from stinging swimmers – blooms of jellyfish can also affect humans by blocking cooling equipment of power plants, desalination plants and ship's engines.

Although having only a short lifespan there is one species, *T. Nutricula*, which escapes death by transforming back into a polyp stage and starting its life all over again. Is this jellyfish the only immortal animal on Earth?

FABULOUS FACTS:

Type : - Invertebrate

Phylum: Cnidaria
(related to Corals)

Habitat: Every ocean across the world and at all depths

Largest: Lion's Mare
(up to 36.5m)

Smallest:
Staurocladia (a few mm wide and almost invisible)

Most Dangerous:
Box Jellyfish and the tiny Irukandji Jellyfish found in the Pacific Ocean

Life Span: 2 to 6 months

Status: NOT endangered