



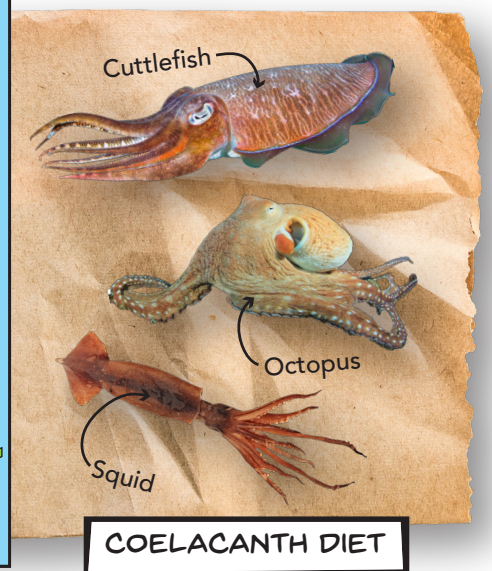
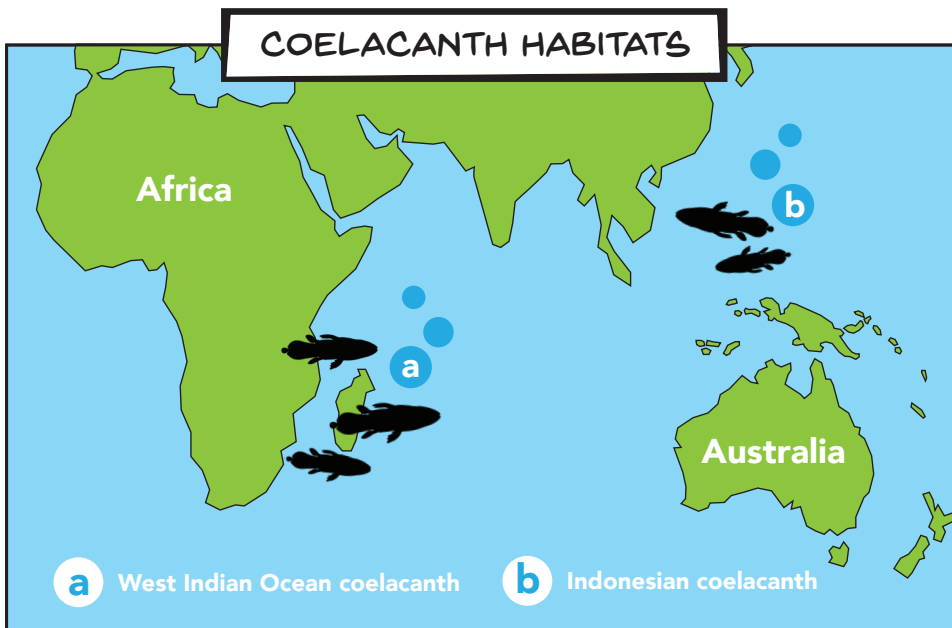
THE MYSTERY FISH: A COELACANTH!

The mystery fish fossil in Deep Sea Mystery™ is that of a coelacanth, which is also known as the “dino fish.” The coelacanth (“seal-uh-canth”) was thought to have gone extinct at the end of the Cretaceous period. In 1938, however, one was discovered off the coast of South Africa aboard a fishing vessel.

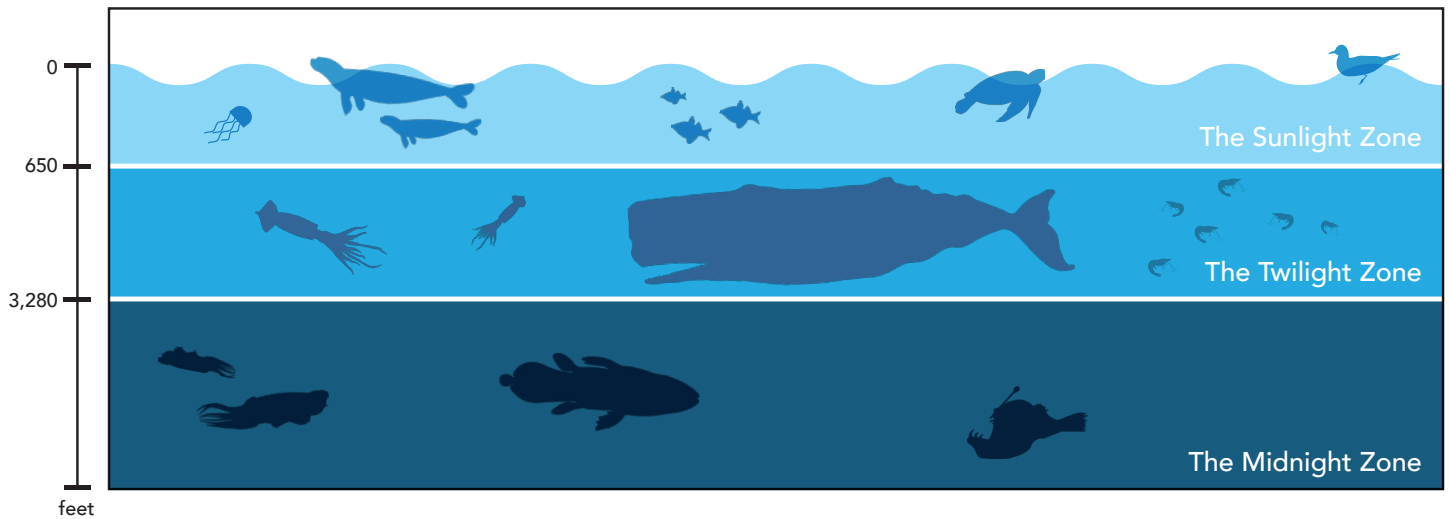
It took decades before underwater divers discovered and observed a coelacanth swimming in its natural habitat. The main reason for this is because coelacanths inhabit the Ocean Twilight Zone: a transition zone between the Sunlight and Midnight Zones that is too deep for regular SCUBA gear but largely ignored by deep-diving submarines.

With the advancement of SCUBA gear, particularly closed-circuit rebreathers, a small number of divers have had the rare opportunity to dive deep enough into the Ocean Twilight Zone to view the coelacanth underwater.

Check out the coelacanth locations and their diet below!



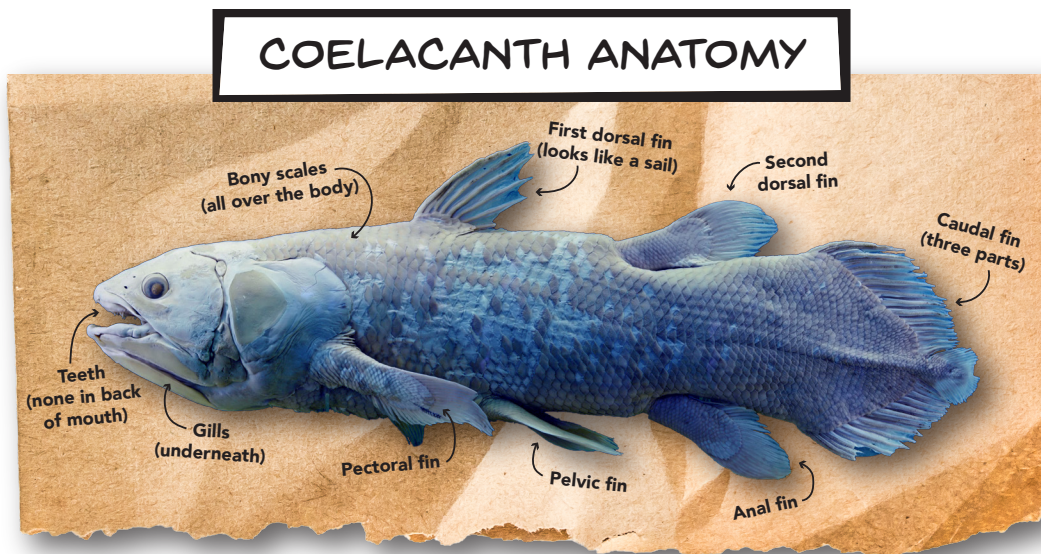
Since most life ultimately gets its energy from the sun, the Ocean Twilight Zone is very interesting. The sea creatures that live in this zone (e.g., the coelacanth) tend to be somewhat sluggish, as their food source mostly includes low-energy treats, like bacteria and detritus that drifts down.



The coelacanth remains somewhat mysterious, as it is not easy for most divers to access and observe.

Coelacanths give birth to live young, which is a rarity for fish. Their fins are more arm-like than fin-like, with one bone connecting to two bones, which are connected to digits. They are actually classified with land tetrapods (four-footed animals), rather than with fish.

Coelacanths also have a feature that is not found in other vertebrates — a rostral organ. It is filled with a jelly-like substance near the front of their heads. Researchers think that this organ might help coelacanths hunt by detecting low-frequency electrical signals given off by prey.



While we have discovered a lot about this fish, it is very likely that we will discover more. With more of a focus on the Ocean Twilight Zone, we will also very likely discover more about their habitat and ecosystem.