

Grades K-5

Mini-Lesson: "What's the most dangerous animal in the ocean?"

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

VIDEO 1

Hi, it's Danni! In case you haven't already guessed, one of my favorite places in the world is the ocean. I love the waves and the water and learning about all the incredible creatures that live there. Like have you ever seen this one? Looks like seaweed doesn't it but it's not. It's actually a fish called a leafy sea dragon and it lives the ocean near Australia. Oh and check this one out. Looks like it has hands, right? Make sense that they call it the red hand fish. Okay. This one might be the weirdest looking one of all. It's a dragon fish. Don't worry even though it looks scary, it's pretty harmless. In fact, many of the creatures in the ocean are harmless to humans. Someone named Kimaya has question about the different types of animals in the ocean. Let's give Kimaya a call now.

[Video Call]

- Hi, Danni.
- Hi, Kimaya.
- I have a question for you. What's the most dangerous animal in the ocean.
- That's a great question.

And if you could ask a sea creature like this tiny damsel fish, they might say that this animal is the most dangerous. With their amazing swimming speed and rows and rows of sharp teeth. Great white sharks are among the fiercest hunters in the ocean. So they can be pretty

dangerous to fish or maybe they would tell you a blue whale is the most dangerous. And that would make sense since it's so huge. Blue whales swim through forms of tiny creatures called Krill with their mouths wide open and when they do watch out. They can swallow up to four tons of Krill in a day. That's more than the weight of three of these cars. Whoa. And that's not all they eat with their mouths open like that, they can sometimes accidentally swallow other creatures like fish and squid in the process. Okay. Skilled hunters like great whites or huge animals like blue whales can be pretty dangerous if you're a damselfish or a tiny sea creature like krill, but some of you may be wondering what about human which ocean animal is the most dangerous to us. Before I go on, I'm curious which ocean animals do you think are the most dangerous to humans?

VIDEO 2

When we think about dangerous creatures, it's tempting to think of the big ones or the ones with sharp teeth, but you don't have to be big or have sharp teeth to be dangerous. Believe it or not, some dangerous ocean animals are pretty small like this one. This is a needlefish. Sure. They're not that big but their pointy beaks are pretty sharp kind of like little knives and that can cause some problems especially if you're a fisherman. See, needlefish like to jump out of the water and though it's pretty rare they can accidentally crash into fishermen sometime. Especially at night when the needlefish are attracted to the lights on their boats. Now even though needlefish are something fishermen in places like Indonesia need to watch out for. They're definitely not the most dangerous ocean animal. That prize might go to an even smaller animal. Check out this blue ringed octopus. A blue ringed octopus can fit in the palm of your hands, but if you ever find one on the beach or underwater, you definitely wouldn't want to hold their saliva is venomous.

So venomous that a single bite can be deadly. See those cool looking blue rings, they flash across their bodies when they're scared or upset. A lot of venomous animals have beautiful patterns and colors like that. And though we may be tempted to get close to get a better look, those patterns are assigned to stay away. So it's important to respect them and give them space. The blue ringed octopus isn't the only venomous animal in the ocean. There are lots of them. But luckily, they don't all hang out where people swim, but there are some venomous creatures that do. Like jellyfish. Jellyfish like this one don't try to attack humans on purpose but they do float close to beaches in places like Australia and Indonesia where people swim and that can make them pretty dangerous. See their tentacles? The venomous darts on those tentacles can sting you, and it can hurt. Believe me, I know I was once stung by a medusa jellyfish in Italy. There I was just standing in the water on a rock, and it caught me by surprise. Ouch. I still have the mark. Now most jellyfish stings will only hurt for a while like the sting I got and that's it. But not if you get stung by this type of jellyfish. This is a sea wasp. One of the most dangerous animals in the ocean. The sea wasp has one of the most powerful venoms in the world, even more powerful than a cobra or rattlesnake which makes them really dangerous to humans. Okay. Don't panic at beaches where jelly like the sea wasps swim, lifeguards are trained to monitor when groups of them get close to shore. And when they do, they warn people to stay out of the water. Sometimes they even close the beach until they go away. So you don't need to be afraid to get in the water. The most important thing to remember with all of these dangerous ocean animals is to pay attention when you're swimming. When I'm in the ocean, I wear goggles so I can see better and I always swim with a buddy so we can keep an eye out for each other. That way I can swim safely with all the ocean animals that I might meet along the way. In summary, It's not just the huge animals with sharp teeth that are dangerous. There are smaller animals that can be dangerous for other reasons. Like their sharp pointy beaks or

venom filled saliva. And though we may not know for sure which ocean animal is the most dangerous We do know that because of its super strong venom and because of how close it swims to shore, the seawasp jellyfish is one of the most dangerous creatures of all. Not just in the ocean, but in the entire world. That's all for this week's question. Thanks Kamaia for asking it.