

A Terse Invocation of Cuttlefish

by strannikov

The germ of this account is lifted from Wikipedia (thank you, Wikipedia, still becoming a worthy successor to Funk & Wagnalls), though not strictly verbatim.

In what follows do not think of any exact correspondences with any other species, but do look at what plausible comparisons can be suggested.

Cuttlefish eat: small mollusks, crabs, shrimp, fish, octopuses, worms . . . and other cuttlefish.

The chief predators of cuttlefish are: dolphins, sharks, fish, seals, seabirds . . . and other cuttlefish.

Cuttlefish life expectancy perhaps without surprise extends about one or two years.

Recent studies suggest nonetheless that cuttlefish are among the most intelligent invertebrates. Evidence is also found in the very physiological structure of cuttlefish, which have one of the largest brain-to-body size ratios of all invertebrates.

Far be it from yours truly to invoke any formal comparison of cuttlefish with any other species (though I had wondered about one species of bipedal vertebrate that seems not to include much cuttlefish in its diet).

Nevertheless, these pieces do fit together snugly, and it is perhaps difficult to keep cuttlefish dietary data wholly separate or disentangled from the data on cuttlefish intelligence: though no trained marine biologist, I suspect that the dietary data are an explicit expression of cuttlefish intelligence.

The cuttlefish's ready resort to cannibalism looks to be ingrained to the point of innate disposition if simultaneously: a) cuttlefish is a

delectable staple in cuttlefish diets and b) any enterprising cuttlefish enjoys a reasonable expectation of expiring in the gut of another cuttlefish.

Are we not compelled by our own professions of logic to conclude that every living specimen of cuttlefish enjoys a lifelong, ready, and disinterested appetite for his or her fellow cuttlefish?

Once the limits of human commitment to logic are conceded, cuttlefish may in fact be deemed superior logicians to all other aspirants.

“Devour, and be devoured” certainly exhibits all the hallmarks of stoic equanimity and balance, characteristics that commend themselves to the attention of any other species paying attention, no matter what life expectancy it enjoys.

Even if we don't dare prize cuttlefish for their strict exercise of logic, they remain the prized source of sepia ink (the brown variety, at least), and according to Funk & Wagnalls now that I'm consulting its account, some people in fact eat cuttlefish, which itself is a fine expression of logic so long as cuttlefish are devouring each other.

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