[PDF] The Search For The Giant Squid: The Biology And Mythology Of The World's Most Elusive Sea Creature

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Description:

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The sea contains many mysteries, and among the most enduring of them are giant squids of the genus *Architeuthis*. About this squid, known as the "kraken" in classical mythology, we know little, except, oceanographic writer Richard Ellis notes, that "it occasionally washes ashore--and when that happens, we don't know why." Some of these odd creatures, Ellis notes, are 60 feet long, cannibalistic, and patently fierce, with the largest eyes of any animal on the planet (useful for seeing in the inky darkness of the deep sea). They're not the kind of thing you'd want to encounter on a benthic shelf, as Ian Fleming made clear in *Doctor No*, in which superspy James Bond had one such

unpleasant meeting. But, thanks to Ellis's well-researched account, they make the perfect subject for armchair sleuthing, and he tells you just about everything you'd want to know about the giant squid, from the biologists and explorers and cryptozoologists who have hunted for it over the centuries, and much more. --*Gregory McNamee* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly It is surpassingly strange that, as Ellis writes, "no one has ever seen a living, healthy giant squid"?for, judging from the evidence, comprised mostly of carcasses and the remains found in sperm whales, there are a multitude of the beasts out there, growing up to 60 feet long, albeit usually, it's thought, at a depth of several hundred feet. But it's not at all strange that, from the meager evidence about Architeuthis, Ellis?author of such fine books as Imagining Atlantis (Forecasts, May 25) and Monsters of the Sea (1995; portions of this newest Ellis book first appeared there)?has fashioned an absorbing work of natural history and a classic of cryptozoology. Some of the appeal of this book is visual, as it presents 30 b&w photographs and 35 line drawings, many historical, several of the drawings by Ellis himself. It's the author's elegant, informative, passionate text that ultimately carries the day, however, as this marine scientist reports on every aspect of the giant squid and its study, covering its biology and behavior, its taxonomy, historical records of its appearances, its treatment in literature, film and museum models, and more. And Ellis not only reports on but sifts through the record, challenging several previous "sightings," most notably those of Jacques Cousteau. At times, the book has a kitchen-sink-and-all feel, as if Ellis aims to cram in every known bit of data about the giant squid; even dedicated monster-lovers may find more here than they want to know. Still, the giant squid may be Earth's last great unknown animal; certainly it is one of nature's enduring mysteries. In this authoritative book, Ellis vivifies and celebrates that mystery with erudition and consummate skill. Newbridge Natural Science Book Club main selection; author tour.

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