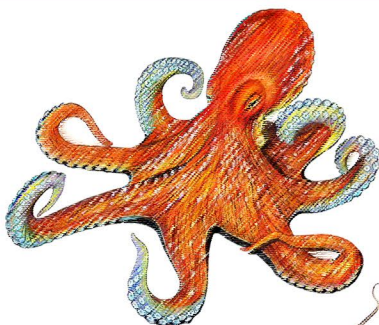


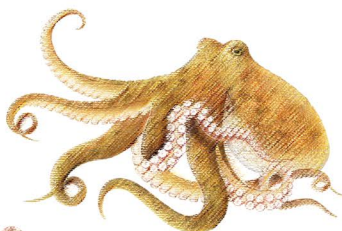
A Nature-In-Your-Pocket Guide

GALACTOPUS

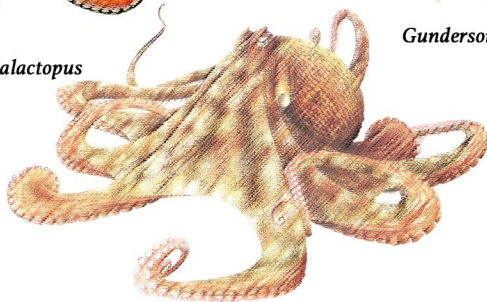
An Introduction to Identifying
and Destroying Common Species



Western Red Galactopus



Gunderson's Pygmy Galactopus

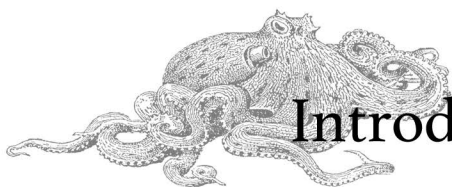


Greater Spotted Galactopus



AtariAge

NOTE: Never, ever, ever, ever insert or remove a video game cartridge when your Atari 2600 VCS is powered on. Doing so can damage the electronics and your 90-day limited warranty expired 33 years ago.



Introduction

No creature in recent memory has been as widely misunderstood as the galactopus. Once thought to float mindlessly through the void consuming whatever fleeting bits of matter floated into its path, we now know it is a purposeful and voracious destroyer, capable of leveling a city the size of Akron, Ohio. Astrobiologists are unclear what motivates the galactopus to wreak such havoc, but they do know that Akron is home to forty-five percent of America's rubber industry and losing it would be a critical blow to the economy.

Until now the galactopus has been able to rampage through the galaxy unchecked, but recent developments in space flight and ion displacement cannons give us hope that one day soon mankind will be able to rid itself of this eight-legged menace once and for all. Until that day comes, however, it is imperative that the citizens of earth educate themselves.

This handbook will teach you what to do to keep yourself and your family safe in the event of a galactopus attack, what warning signs to look for to predict an attack and what charitable organizations will most benefit from receiving your belongings after your demise.



Figure 1. A galactopus pair passes Saturn on the way to Earth. Normally a solitary species, it is rare to see more than one galactopus outside of mating season and some of the higher difficulty levels. Photo courtesy NASA.

What is a Galactopus?

Galactopus can refer to any of the more than four hundred species of space-faring cephalopods found throughout the Milky Way galaxy, defined as having a large ovoid body, eight long flexible arms and a hard exoskeleton composed of octonium.

The exact origins of the galactopus remain unknown. Some speculate they are a mutation of the octopus, the result of nuclear weapon tests in the Pacific ocean. Another hypothesis, put forth by the book *Chariots of the Galactopi*, suggests that the octopus is the descendant of ancient galactopus visitors responsible for the evolution of all life on earth.

Neither of these theories is given much credence by serious astrobiologists who, when asked, usually answer with something along the lines of “I don’t [expletive] care right now. One of those mother-[expletive] just ate my research assistant.”

Life Cycle and Anatomy

Due largely to the many difficulties associated with attaching an ear tag tracker to a creature that doesn't have ears and habitually kills and eats anything that comes close enough to attach a tracker to its non-existent ears, little is known about the non-destroying, non-killing parts of the life of the galactopus. This includes mating and the birthing and raising of young.

Chance encounters with immature specimens have given researchers some insight into the galactopus life cycle. Juvenile galactopuses, regardless of species, are pale pink in color. As they grow, they shed their octonium shell, leaving shards of valuable octonium in their wake which is often collected and sold by less scrupulous scientists.

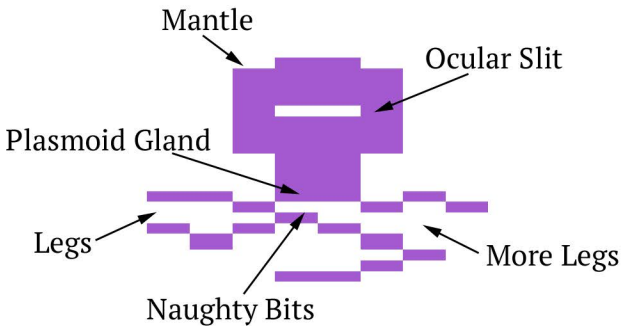


Figure 2. Galactopus anatomy.

Unlike adults, young galactopuses can be approached safely, as their plasmoid gland has not fully developed. This organ, located at the base of the mantle, stores electro-chemical energy which can be released in the form of a force blast powerful enough to completely destroy most small space craft.

The electro-chemical energy stored in the plasmoid gland can also be manipulated to form an energy barrier, called an octo-magnetic shield. This shield is strong enough to stop most incoming projectiles and in some instances even reflect them back to their source.

Galactopus Feeding

The galactopus is a solitary hunter. So much so that if more than one come upon the same prey they will attack in sequence, beginning with the weakest individual, rather than as a group.

Despite their heavily armored exteriors and considerable size and strength advantage over most of its prey, most galactopuses will attack from a safe distance, staying behind their octo-magnetic shields while weakening their prey with plasmoid blasts before moving closer to feed.

Galactopuses have voracious appetites and are not picky eaters. Witnesses have reported sightings of galactopuses eating anything from the tiniest solar shrimp to entire space stations to plutonium station tuna melts, although the last one is unconfirmed.



Figure 3. A galactopus spotted at a farm near McMinville, Oregon. Note the enlarged plasmoid gland, a sign the creature is about to release an energy blast. Photo courtesy Paul Trent.

Galactopus Hunting

To paraphrase the ancient philosopher Yakov Smirnoff, “In ocean, you hunt octopus. In space, octopus hunts you.” The galactopus is an alpha predator with no natural enemies and, to be frank, not a lot of unnatural enemies either.

The prototype PX-77 low-orbit fighter is humanity’s latest best hope against the galactopus. Constructed from a new ultra light-weight yttyxkium alloy, engineers are cautiously optimistic that it can survive the trip to the upper atmosphere.







Figure 4. PX-77 Low-Orbit Fighter.

The PX-77 is armed with an ion displacement cannon powered by an on-board octonium reactor. Adding octonium to the reactor increases the output of the cannon. At full strength, it is theoretically powerful enough to fell a galactopus.

One major drawback in the current cannon design is the potential for overheating. After each shot, the firing mechanism goes into a lockdown state that lasts roughly the amount of time it takes for the shot to disappear from view in order to allow the system adequate time to cool down.

Only time and the heroic sacrifices of test pilots will tell if the PX-77 will fare any better than previous anti-galactopus efforts. In the meantime, be sure to always wear your collapsable reflective headgear when outdoors, just in case that actually helps.

HOW TO PLAY ***GALACTOPUS!***

- **PLUG JOYSTICK INTO LEFT CONTROLLER PORT**
- **PRESS FIRE BUTTON OR GAME RESET SWITCH TO BEGIN GAME**
- **JOYSTICK MOVES  LEFT AND RIGHT**
- **BUTTON FIRES ION CANNON**
- **HIT  TO DISLODGE OCTONIUM SHARDS**
- **COLLECT 8 SHARDS TO FULLY CHARGE ION CANNON**
- **PINK  DROPS OCTONIUM FOR BONUS POINTS**
- **COLLECT 10 SHARDS WITHOUT MISSING FOR EXTRA **

SETTINGS

- **LEFT DIFFICULTY B - SHOTS PASS THROUGH OCTONIUM**
- **LEFT DIFFICULTY A - SHOTS DESTROY OCTONIUM**
- **RIGHT DIFFICULTY B - OCTONIUM CARRIES OVER**
- **RIGHT DIFFICULTY A - OCTONIUM LOST WITH SHIP**