



## THE AMAZING CUTTLEFISH

by Lanny and Marilyn Johnson

"Dad, that funny looking bone that was in Budgie's bird cage is almost gone," Mary called out.

"It's called a cuttlebone, Mary. Your parakeet likes to take bites of it to get calcium and minerals she needs to stay healthy," Mr. Jones replied. "Cuttlebones are collected from dead cuttlefish that have washed up on seashores and are then sold in pet stores."

"What's a cuttlefish?"

"Cuttlefish are amazing creatures but are not actually fish. They are marine mollusks, like squid, octopuses, and nautilus. Cuttlefish usually live in shallow, tropical waters, but some have been found in deeper waters up to 650 ft (about 200 m). Over 120 kinds of cuttlefish have been discovered all over the world, except in North and South America. They vary in size from one inch (2.4 centimeters) to three feet (90 centimeters), with the giant Australian cuttlefish reaching the length of a small man.<sup>1, 2, 3, 4</sup>

"Cuttlefish have a large body called a mantle. Inside the mantle is a long, oval bone called a cuttlebone, like the one in Budgie's cage. As you can see it's porous and full of small holes called chambers. The cuttlefish can rise higher or descend lower by increasing or decreasing the amount of gas and water in its chambers."<sup>5</sup>

"How do you know so much about animals, Dad?"

"I love to study the design in all the creatures that God has made, Mary, and cuttlefish are packed full of creative design. They have a fin, which looks like a skirt, that goes around their mantle. They routinely use this fin to swim slowly from place to place. However, when cuttlefish need to move quickly, they draw water into a compression chamber and squeeze it out of a tube under their head. When using this jet-propulsion system to escape a predator,

they might also release a thick cloud of brown fluid called 'ink' or sepia, allowing them time to escape."<sup>6</sup>

"The cuttlefish has a sharp beak-like mouth surrounded by eight arms and two long tentacles. It quickly extends its tentacles to snatch prey such as shrimp, small crabs, mollusks, fish and other cuttlefish. Once captured, the victim is drawn into the cuttlefish's body by both the arms and tentacles which are lined with finely toothed suckers."<sup>7, 8</sup>



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Cuttlefish Eye

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"A cuttlefish's blood looks blue-green because it uses the copper-containing protein hemocyanin to carry oxygen throughout its body. It even has three hearts to pump the blood - one for each set of gills, and one for the rest of the body."<sup>9</sup>

"They have very large brains, and are considered one of the most intelligent marine invertebrates (animals lacking a backbone). They can also change the color, texture, and pattern of their skin very quickly, using millions of color cells connected with muscles in their skin."<sup>10</sup>

"Cuttlefish have two very large eyes, with special W-shaped pupils that help control the amount of light entering the eye. To focus on an object, a cuttlefish changes the shape of its eye, rather than the shape of its eye's lens, as we do. They can't see color, but they can 'see' enough information in light waves to sense contrast and decide what colors and patterns to use when blending into their surroundings."<sup>11</sup>

"Amazingly, using its superpowered brain and eyes, it can alter its skin color and texture as it swims, instantly mimicking its surroundings and enabling it to hide from predators. This ability to camouflage itself also helps the cuttlefish hide from prey when hunting. When excited, it can stunningly cycle through a whole range of colors, flashing rapidly from yellow to red-orange and blue green in only a few seconds!"<sup>12, 13, 14</sup>

"There is no other animal that can change its appearance in the blink of an eye the way the cuttlefish can. Only an intelligent Creator create such an amazing creature as a cuttlefish."

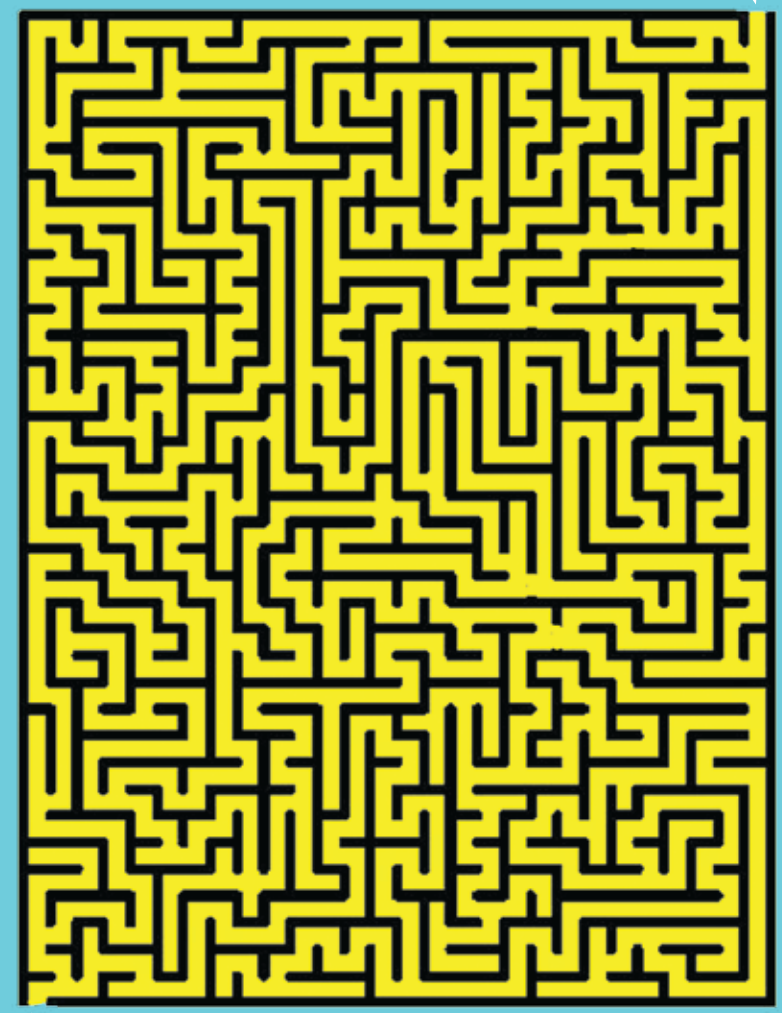
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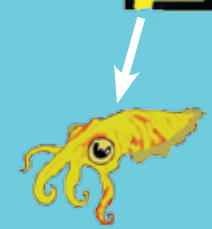
Find the 18 differences between the two pictures.



Help the cuttlefish through the maze to find a mate.



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