

# Giant squid public dissection at Melbourne Museum

**For the first time ever, Melbourne Museum is inviting the general public to observe the dissection by Museum scientists of a giant squid recently caught near Portland, Victoria, at 11.30am, Thursday 17 July 2008.**

This large specimen was accidentally caught in a fishing trawl off western Victoria in June this year. Captured at a depth of 550 metres by the crew of the "Zeehaan", it was donated to Museum Victoria by Toberfish of Portland.

The squid weighs around 245 kg, making it the largest giant squid that Australian researchers have encountered and just 30 kg lighter than the largest giant squid ever found. It is estimated that, intact, the animal would have been over 12 m long, this length including the long thin pair of feeding tentacles used by the squid to catch its prey.

"This is the first time the Museum has done a dissection in a public forum, and we expect the interest to be enormous," said Dr Mark Norman, world-renowned squid expert and Deputy Head of Science (Marine Zoology), Museum Victoria.

"With this public dissection, we hope to achieve greater awareness and understanding of these little-known and rarely-seen deep-sea creatures. During the dissection, we will measure and take tissue samples for ongoing research into giant squid diversity, age, growth, diet, reproduction and other aspects of their biology" he added.

Using video cameras and audio links, the dissection process will be explained and the current knowledge of the biology of these almost mythological creatures will be discussed.

Results of this dissection will contribute to the long-term exhibition *Marine Life: Exploring our Seas*, currently on display at Melbourne Museum. The exhibition features never-before-seen footage and rare photographs of deep sea creatures, a preserved giant squid and other rare specimens, and takes visitors on a journey through Victoria's unique underwater worlds.

*Marine Life* also showcases the research activities of Museum Victoria world-renowned scientists and tells the stories of our local marine life using rarely seen sea creatures drawn from the Museum's extensive and historical marine collections.

The giant squid dissection will also be streamed live on the Museum Victoria website – [museumvictoria.com.au/giantsquid](http://museumvictoria.com.au/giantsquid)

## **Public dissection of a giant squid**

**Place:** Science and Life Gallery, Melbourne Museum, Carlton. Limited space available.

**Date:** 11.30am – 1pm, Thursday 17 July 2008

**Cost:** Included in general Museum entry. Adults \$6, children and concession card holders free of charge.

**For further information, visit [museumvictoria.com.au](http://museumvictoria.com.au) or phone 13 11 02.**