

## **Key Stages 1 & 2: Myths and Legends**

The marine world has been the inspiration for many tales of mythical creatures from the dawn of time. Other mysterious creatures of the deep have terrified humans for years, some with just cause, others without. Separate the facts from the fiction in this magical mythical tour.

### **Seahorses**

Seahorses have enchanted and mystified humans from the earliest times. Ancient Greek poets described them as half horse, half fish, on which the sea gods rode. Early Greek coins depict them as sea monsters rather than real animals. Find out the truth about these weird and wonderful fish.

### **Giant Squid**

Living at great depths, these elusive giants of the deep remain one of the marine world's last great mysteries. Reaching lengths of up to 18m long, they have been known to attack sperm whales and even apparently attempt to sink ships. Meet their close relative, the Giant Pacific Octopus which can grow to 10m long, and has often been mistaken for its mysterious larger cousin.

### **Sea serpents**

From Scotland's Nessie to America's Lake Champlain 'Champ' there have been many apparent sightings over the centuries of sea serpents measuring 20m or more in length, however there is virtually no hard evidence to substantiate their existence. Meet some real 'sea serpents' and discover some of the other amazing sea creatures that may have been mistaken for sea monsters over the years.

### **Mermaid's purses**

As with many myths and legends, mermaids were first thought of as ancient gods. Fishermen have long claimed that the bewitching voices of mermaids can lure a ship onto rocks and men to their deaths. Whether a myth or not, you may be able to find some real mermaid's purses in the Blue Reef nursery and discover the amazing secrets that lie within them!

### **Mawgawr**

Mawgawr is a creature believed to be living off the south coast of Cornwall. Sightings began only 100 years ago and many local people believe this animal really does exist. Sceptics think that the sightings can be explained by basking sharks, the second largest shark in the world, which is a regular visitor to Cornish waters. Find out what other unusual animals can be found in UK waters.

## **Sharks**

Often associated with terrifying tales of death and destruction the shark has suffered hugely at the hands of man. The film Jaws portrayed the great white shark as a mindless killer apparently intent on eating its way through the entire human race! Discover the truth about these amazing fish and exactly just how big a threat they really do pose to humans.