



~BIO Brain Waves~

Sea Creature Fun Facts

- Sea urchins' self-sharpening teeth are so powerful they can chew through stone!
- Many say sturgeons are like "living fossils" because they've changed so little since first appearing over 200 million years ago.
- One of the Leatherback Sea Turtle's favourite snacks is jellyfish!
- A "Smolt" is a teenage salmon heading to the ocean.
- Almost every year BIO scientists find new species of coral off the coast of Atlantic Canada.
- Baleen, the filter in a whale's mouth, has a lot in common with human hair and finger nails.
- Copepod, a whale's fav snack, are believed to have the largest animal biomass on earth. The "mako" is the fastest shark. Some scientists believe they can swim up to 100 km/h!
- There are 40 different species of coral living off of Nova Scotia's coast.
- Bottlenose whales use "echolocation" to find food – making a sound and listening to the echoes returning from their dinner.
- Right whales have different patterns of calluses on their backs, making it easy for scientists to tell them apart.
- If you cut a starfish in half, each half will grow into 2 separate starfish, like an earthworm!



Halifax Harbour trivia

- Some believe the A. Murray MacKay bridge is cursed because there were two other bridges in its place that did not survive.
- This popular myth is actually false - there's a tunnel from Citadel Hill to George's Island.



- Did you know there are unused explosives and other dangerous cargo found at the bottom of the Halifax Harbour?
- There's a hole in the North West Arm seafloor made by strong currents. Many dive here to hunt for old and rare bottles.
- There are about 45 shipwrecks in Halifax Harbour, mostly sunk by fires and collisions.
- This popular myth is actually false - the Halifax explosion created a huge crater on the bottom of the Harbour.
- Did you know that during WWII underwater nets crossed the opening of the harbour to block sneaky submarines?



Our amazing oceans

- At 243,000 kilometres, Canada has the world's longest coastline. If you were to try to walk around Canada it would take you 33 years.
- Our oceans cover 71% of the Earth's surface and contains 97% of the Earth's water.
- Less than 1% of the world's water is fresh.
- 2-3% of our fresh water is contained in glaciers and ice caps.
- Our oceans contain 99% of the living space on the planet and an estimated 50-80% of life on earth.
- While the average height on land is 840 m, the average depth of the oceans is 3,795 m.
- The Mid-Ocean Ridge is more than 50,000km long- 4 times the Andes, Rockies, and Himalayas combined.
- 90% of all volcanic activity on Earth occurs in the oceans.
- The ocean is the lifeblood of the Earth, yet 95% remains unexplored and unseen by human eyes.
- The Atlantic Ocean is the youngest of the world's oceans and it was formed in the Jurassic Period.



Marine Protected Areas

- There are currently five Marine Protected Areas in Atlantic Canada managed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada manages two Marine Protected Areas in the Maritimes: the Gully and Musquash Estuary.
- The Gully is more than 65 km long and 15 km wide - twice as long as Halifax Harbour and 7 times its width!
- Marine critters are safe from harm to depths below 3 km in the Gully submarine canyon.
- The Gully MPA is an important habitat for whales – with more than 16 species of whales sighted in this large submarine canyon!
- The Gully submarine canyon was designated as critical habitat for Endangered bottlenose whales in Aug. 2010
- Canada's 6th MPA is the Musquash Estuary; a large ecologically intact salt water marsh in the Bay of Fundy.
- Choosing a Marine Protected Area is no simple task – scientific data, and social, cultural, economic concerns all play a role.
- St. Anns Bank was announced as an Area of Interest in June 2011- the 1st step to becoming a Marine Protected Area.
- More than 100 species have been recorded in the St Anns Bank Area of Interest; a high diversity of species due to a high diversity of habitats.
- The St. Anns Bank Area of Interest ranges from shallow, algae-covered inshore banks, to rocky outcrops, to deep Laurentian Channel.
- The St. Anns Bank MPA Area of Interest is important to depleted groundfish species, like Atlantic cod and Atlantic wolffish.
- Cod and herring from the Gulf of St. Lawrence spend the winter in deep water off Cape Breton, including in St. Anns Bank.

