

The Scaphian

By Penelope Glosier

Introduction

There's been an exciting new discovery... at least in my mind. An entirely new ocean animal named the Scaphian (Sc-er-fE-in) was discovered deep in the Arctic Ocean. It was extremely hard to find because it's extremely small and almost completely clear! It feeds on many types of Clupeidae (Cl-oo-p-ya-de), like Herrings, Sardines, and Anchovies. The Scaphian does have predators though, such as Sheepshead, Blobfish, Payara, and the Northern Stargazers. As I researched more, I realized it had the translucence of the Jellyfish, the claw of the Pistol Shrimp, and the antifreeze proteins of the Arctic Cod. The Scaphian is a pretty amazing animal and the adaptations are unlike anything I've ever come across. Let's see how these adaptations help the Scaphian survive.

Adaptation 1: The Translucence of the Jellyfish

Being clear like a Jellyfish may be a surprising adaptation, but it is helpful in many ways. The oldest ancestors of the modern-day Jellyfish lived between 500-700 million years ago, which makes them 3-times as old as the first dinosaurs. For a species as old as the Jellyfish, it should be no surprise that they developed such an amazing adaptation. Like the Scaphian, the modern-day Jellyfish have bodies that are about 90% made of water which disguise them from predators. Another advantage this gives the Scaphian is that the Scaphian is able to sneak up on its prey without the prey even knowing it was even there. And finally, since Jellyfish and Scaphian can breathe through their bodies, they can easily find a way to breathe in and out. Their bodies are so thin, they don't need lungs. The translucence of the Jellyfish may seem flabbergasting as something that would be added to the Scaphian, but it is something that could make a real difference in the way the Scaphian population survives.

Adaptation 2: The Claw of the Pistol Shrimp

Most ocean critters have claws: Big claws, Small claws, Pretty claws, Ugly claws. Some claws are more intimidating than others, but the claw of the Pistol Shrimp is the most terrifying claw of all. This amazing shrimp's claw is the largest in the world. This spine-chilling shrimp can make a sound that is about 210 decibels loud! By comparison, a police siren is about 150 decibels. This shrimp does this by "cocking" back one of his claws and as it releases its claw, it blasts a strong blast of bubbles. It goes so fast, it can become as hot as the sun and knocks out nearby small fish. This adaptation allows the Scaphian to threaten or kill nearby predators. It also lets the Scaphian knock out small fish, providing a nice dinner for himself. It's also a good way to communicate with other Scaphian. It would be a very chill life for a little critter in a giant ocean.

Adaptation 3: The Antifreeze Proteins of the Arctic Cod

You've probably never seen an Arctic Cod because they live in the North and South Arctic Oceans. In the unlikely event that you did see one, there is a pretty high chance of it using its antifreeze proteins to keep itself alive in such cold environment. These antifreeze proteins keep them warm in the Arctic Ocean and have become very valuable to the Scaphian. These proteins make sure the Scaphian doesn't freeze in the Arctic. They also allow the Scaphian to give birth in lots of places where they aren't threatened by predators. And last, but not least, since ice crystals grow in the Arctic Cod's blood, it should be able to keep the Scaphian alive in the warm summers. It seems that this fish won't freeze or get overheated in any sort of weather. Thanks to antifreeze proteins!

There are so many other possibilities of adaptations that could have been chosen for the Scorpion, but these stuck out as the best adaptations to help the Scorpion. The translucence of Jellyfish, the claw of the Pistol Shrimp, and lastly the antifreeze proteins of the Arctic Cod. I was astonished when I found this information. Imagine being the Scorpion. What would you do?