**Ghostly Dumbo Octopus Makes Rare Appearance in Dazzling Deep-Sea Video**

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**PLAY SOUND**

The incredible video captured of the seemingly friendly, little eight-legged ghost elicited squeals of delight and wonder from the team behind the camera on the E/V Nautilus, who immediately identified the animal as a rare dumbo octopus (*Grimpoteuthis* sp.).

"Oh, and the world loves a dumbo," one of the team members said Oct. 23 when the video was captured. [[Gallery: Cutest Creatures from Deep Sea Canyons](https://www.livescience.com/38675-cute-deep-sea-creatures-gallery.html)]

The enchanting creature calmly flapped its two large fins as it cruised slowly through the dark. After a few seconds, the octopus opened up its tentacles in an elegant display, revealing its umbrella of legs with eight rows of suckers.

"Yeah, he's a show-off," one team member said. "You're going to be famous," said another. Both were true statements, of course, because who can resist such a [charming cephalopod](https://www.livescience.com/58063-why-the-octopus-lost-its-shell.html)?

The gentle dumbo octopus, also known as an umbrella octopus, is named for its ear-like fins that resemble the Disney character Dumbo's oversize elephant ears. There are 13 species of dumbo octopuses, and most of them live at [depths of below 9,800 feet](https://www.livescience.com/topics/ocean) (3,000 meters). They're one of the rarest species of octopus, so catching a glimpse like this is pretty extraordinary.

The team used scaling lasers on the ROV to estimate that this particular deep-sea ghost was just under 2 feet (60 centimeters) long, which is a little larger than most dumbo octopuses.

The research ship Nautilus is funded and operated by the Ocean Exploration Trust, a nonprofit organization founded in 2008 by Robert Ballard. An ocean explorer and National Geographic explorer in residence, Ballard is best known for finding the [sunken remains of the RMS Titanic](https://www.livescience.com/38102-titanic-facts.html).

The goal of the E/V Nautilus is purely to conduct scientific exploration of the ocean floor. The group is now in its fourth year of ocean exploration.

For the past couple of weeks, the Nautilus has been working with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to explore an inactive, deep-sea [volcanic mountain range](https://www.livescience.com/63791-underwater-volcanoes-tasmania.html) called the Davidson Seamount. The area is about 80 miles (129 kilometers) southwest of Monterey, California, and has been nicknamed the "oasis of the deep," as it hosts a wide array of deep-sea corals, sponges and [numerous other invertebrates](https://www.livescience.com/31234-hybrid-deep-sea-creatures-discovered.html). But a few spots in the region remain unexplored, and that's where the Nautilus has been sending its ROVs.

Only a few days after spotting the graceful dumbo octopus, Hercules came across a massive [octopus nesting](https://www.livescience.com/63911-octopus-moms-death-spiral.html) ground, where more than a thousand deep-sea octopuses huddled in the rocks with their eggs.

Find more incredible photos and videos of the octapalooza at Davidson Seamount on the [Nautilus Live webpage](https://nautiluslive.org/album/2018/10/28/octopalooza-davidson-seamount).

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