

Notes on the first Giant Squid, *Architeuthis dux* Steenstrup, 1857,  
found in British Columbia, Canada

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*Abstract:*

A large squid found deceased on the beach in the federal Pacific Rim National Park was salvaged by Parks Canada staff and delivered to the Royal British Columbia Museum for necropsy and identification. The necropsy revealed the squid to be an immature *Architeuthis dux* and also showed that the squid had been attacked by a sperm whale.

*Key Words:* Mollusca, Cephalopoda, Oegopsida, Architeuthidae, Giant Squid, *Architeuthis dux*, Sperm Whale, *Physeter macrocephalus*, British Columbia.

In the summer of 2005, the remains of a large squid were found on Long Beach (latitude 49° 04.185' N, longitude 125° 45.679' W) in the Pacific Rim National Park on the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada (Photo 1). Parks Canada staff collected and froze the remains which were eventually transported to the Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM) in Victoria.



Photo 1: Remains of *Architeuthis dux* found on Long Beach  
Photo courtesy of Heather Holmes

The remains were thawed and found to be in poor condition. All the arms and both of the tentacles were damaged and incomplete. Both tentacular clubs were missing.

The mantle had been torn open and most of the internal organs were missing. Examination of the mantle revealed a row of evenly spaced holes (Photo 2).



Photo 2: Sperm whale teeth holes in the mantle of the squid.  
RBCM photo by Jim Cosgrove

These holes were confirmed (J. Ford, personal communication) to have been caused by the teeth of a sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*).

In order to identify the specimen the beak and radula were extracted (Photo 3).



Photo 3: Beak and radula.  
RBCM photo by Jim Cosgrove.

An online key (<http://research.kahaku.go.jp/zoology/Beaks-E/Sp-sheets/Archisp/Archi.htm>) indicated the specimen to be an *Architeuthis*. Reference was also made to a publication (Förch, 1998) and measurements were made following the methods in that publication. Consultation with one of the world's recognized experts on *Architeuthis* (S. O'Shea, personal communication) confirmed the identification of the specimen as *Architeuthis dux*. This is the first documented specimen of *A. dux* found in British Columbia that the authors are aware of. The incomplete colouration of the beak also indicated that this specimen is a juvenile.

The specimen is now catalogued (RBCM 006-00085-001) as part of the invertebrate collections of the RBCM.

Table 1: Measurements for the arms and tentacles (all incomplete):

	LEFT	Length (mm)	Dia (mm)	RIGHT	Length (mm)	Dia (mm)
ARM	I	1,165	180	I	1,430	200
	II	940	180	II	810	180
	III	805	195	III	710	180
	IV	745	150	IV	700	140
TENTACLE		1,270		TENTACLE	1,105	

Table 2: Other measurements:

Total length	2,340 mm
Dorsal Mantle length	960 mm
Mantle width at widest	780 mm
Head length	410 mm
Eye diameter	40 mm
Width across eyes	360 mm
Buccal apparatus circumference	280 mm
Buccal apparatus length	135 mm
Funnel locking mechanism	straight
Wet weight	22,600 g

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