

Akkorokamui (アッコロカムイ)

Why could it not exist?

An akkorokamui could not exist because primarily the suspected large size would be highly inefficient. In an ocean, where temperatures are often quite cold, and the fact that akkorokamui live in the deepest sections, a warm-blooded akkorokamui-creature would not survive. It would put too much stress on the organism's body to keep its entire body warm. Additionally, as demonstrating in dogs the larger the organism the shorter the lifespan. If an akkorokamui was as large as it was with numbers as few as they are the creature would likely go extinct as it would die before possibly even being able to reproduce.

Where is it in the food chain?

Akkorokamui would be at the very top of the food chain, perhaps even eating current top predators such as sharks and octopi.

What is its niche?

The niche, or the way in which an organism fits into an ecological community or ecosystem, of an akkorokamui would be as a top predator. Its large size would enable it to have little to no predators and abundant food sources. Its only competition would be from octopi that are nocturnal hunters. Competing for similar resources the Akkorokamui would most likely hunt during the day as to not compete directly with a similar species.

What would it eat?

Akkorokamui would eat mostly crustaceans, bivalves, and fish.

Where would it live?

Akkorokamui would live in the depths of the ocean near Japan in the Pacific Ocean.

Would it live alone?

Akkorokamui would most likely live alone or in small cave populations, especially during mating seasons.

Where/How would it mate?

Akkorokamui would mate inside deep sea caves and have k-selected, or logistic growth, laying around 3 eggs which they would care for intently. Mating would occur externally by the male and as a result the male would take most of the responsibility in protecting his offspring due to a high certainty in his paternity of the eggs.

Where does the story of the Akkorokamui come from?

Ainu reverence of this monster has permeated into Shintoism, which has incorporated Akkorokamui as a minor kami. Self purification practices for Akkorokamui are often strictly followed. While Akkorokamui is often presented as a benevolent kami with powers to heal and bestow knowledge, it is fickle and has the propensity to do harm. Akkorokamui's nature as an octopus means that it is persistent and it is near impossible to escape its grasp without permission. Like other Shinto purification rituals, prior to entering the shrine of Akkorokamui, one's hands must be cleaned with water with the exception that one's feet must also be cleaned as well. The indigenous Ainu people of Japan have long told of an enormous marine animal known as the Akkorokamui. It was known The Akkorokamui has been allegedly sighted in several locations including Taiwan and Korea since the 19th century. John Batchelor most notably records an account of this monster in his book *The Ainu and Their Folklore* when noting, "...three men, it was said, were out trying to catch a swordfish, when all at once a great sea-monster, with large staring eyes, appeared in front of them and proceeded to attack the boat.

Where does it live?

The Akkorokamui is believed to live in Funka Bay, also known as Uchiura Bay or Volcano Bay, which is located in the Southwestern portion of the Northern Japanese island of Hokkaido.

What does it look like?

The Akkorokamui resembles a giant octopus. The coloration of the Akkorokamui is said to be a striking red, often described as glowing and sometimes likened to the color of the reflection of the setting sun upon the water. It is also said to have an enormous body

that can reach sizes of up to 120 meters in length. Due to its coloration and immense size, it is visible from great distances.

Where is it located in the food web?

Based on descriptions of the Akkorokamui resembling an octopus/squid, one would presume it would take a similar role in the ecosystem of the aforementioned creatures. Continuing along with it being essentially a bigger octopus, the Akkorokamui would generally eat fish, crabs, and mollusks. However, if the myths are true Akkorokamui also enjoy boats filled with people that disrupt their environment. Although seemingly outlandish, recorded Akkorokamui attacks could just be predatory action. Perhaps the Akkorokamui mistook the ship as another Akkorokamui and decided to fight it for dominance. In addition, humans could conversely eat Akkorokamui, believing it to be octopus.

What is its population density?

Again, supporting the logic that the Akkorokamui would take a similar role in the ecosystem as an octopus, Akkorokamui would have low population density. They would be found in deep sea caves separated from each other.

How many are there?

To exist there would have to be at least 50 to prevent inbreeding and around 500 individuals to reduce genetic drift. Accounts do not reveal any specific number of Akkorokamui that exist but due to the depth and area of the oceans it is certainly possibly there are enough Akkorokamui to exist in a productive population.

Could any of today's marine reptiles survive and breed with Akkorokamui?

Yes, due to description the Akkorokamui it seems very similar to Giant Squid/Octopus and as a result could breed with them.