

Eight-legged fisherman's friend finds a home



By **KATE HELYER**
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WHEN an octopus called 'Chris' was tempted by a slither of mackerel, little did he know that it would lead him to a new home.

Rod and line fishermen in Ilfracombe are still excitedly talking about the catch, which was reeled in off Capstone by fisherman Chris Vincent — who has since given his name to the multi-legged beastie, now residing at Ilfracombe Aquarium.

He said: "We thought they were really rare in these waters, but my friend caught one two weeks ago and threw it back, terrified. Maybe it's the same one."

Delighted aquarium manager Lawrence Raybone said: "They can be found all around the British coast, but most abundantly in Scotland as they prefer the cooler waters."

"In the summer months our waters warm up considerably, but now the winter is coming, perhaps they are seeking deeper coastal waters around here."

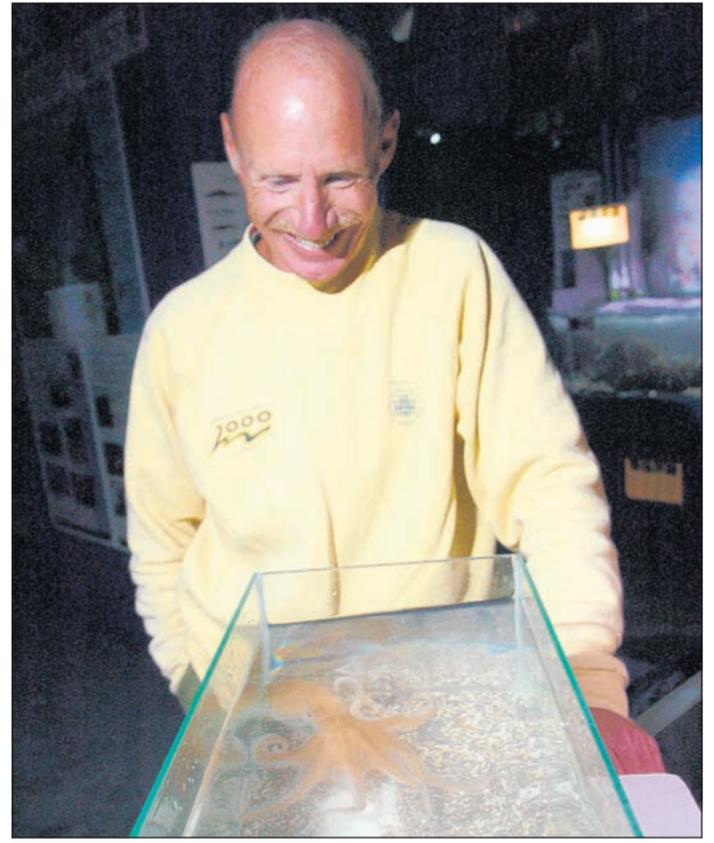
"But judging by how excitedly the fishermen are still talking about it, it's quite a rarity to catch one."

He added: "We are quite a small operation here, so we don't have time to go out and explore the waters and really do rely on the local fishermen to acquire new species for us."

"We have seen one or two of the more exotic species coming up from the Mediterranean in the summer months, including a gilthead sea bream, which I have never seen caught off the harbour here, but which was kindly donated to us by a local fisherman."

"Understanding the variety of species in our coastal waters is a fantastic thing and a lot of our local fishermen have been very kind in helping to bring new species to light, so that we can display them for our visitors."

● Mr Raybone has extended an invitation to anyone who would like to go and meet Chris the Octopus, to take along this article from this week's *Journal*, to receive one-third off the entry fee at Ilfracombe Aquarium. The offer is open until November 25.



■ **PAY A VISIT:** Chris the octopus is now living at the Ilfracombe Aquarium. Picture: Tom Teegan 071015901

■ **NEW HOME:** Angler Chris Vincent with his eight-legged friend. Picture: Tom Teegan 071015908

Charitable David offers services for the day

A **BARGAIN** could be on offer at Holsworthy Market on Wednesday. David Stephens is pledging his services for a day to the winner of a raffle in aid of Children in Need. The winner will be able to put David, who is no stranger to hard work, to any use

for the day. The TWB Ltd employee will be selling the tickets for £1 at the market between 10am and 4pm. Tickets are also available from TWB Ltd and Mole Valley Farmers in Holsworthy. The winning ticket will be drawn on November 16.

Quacking surprise for Diana



■ **FEATHERED FRIENDS:** The ducklings that were rescued by Diana Lewis from St George's Road.

Picture: Jo Tibbles 071015202

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DUCKLINGS have defied Mother Nature and baffled animal 'angel' Diana Lewis, with their appearance — at the wrong end of the year!

The seven little chaps were rescued from the St George's Road area of Barnstaple.

And Diana said that as well as having to struggle against all the perils that nature threw at them, they were also having to contend with vandals who have been throwing fireworks at them too.

She said: "In all the years I have been doing this work I have never seen ducklings

born so late in the year. Domestic ducks are born all year round — but not wild ones like these.

"We were called by members of the public who were very distressed and concerned, that seven little Mallard ducklings were still left, after two had been taken by rats and two were taken by gulls."

"Ducklings stand little chance of survival, even when they are born at the right time of year, with all the hazards they encounter. So in the winter, they stand virtually no chance."

Diana is regularly called out in the spring to rescue ducklings in Barnstaple that

have been washed down storm drains.

She said: "If you then add fireworks into the equation, it's an impossible situation."

She said that while the fireworks don't often cause the ducklings and adult ducks any physical damage, the noise frightens them, often with disastrous consequences.

"They fly up in fear, in the dark and quite often hit overhead power cables or walls which can injure or kill them."

Diana added: "It's very sad that wild creatures have to be taken into care, for them to survive and have some hope of a future."



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**NORTH DEVON
JOURNAL**

Police call for help in their search for Denis

A **VULNERABLE** man, who has been missing from his home in Ilfracombe since October 18, is being sought by police.

Denis Davenport, 52, is described as white, 5ft 6in, of medium build, with short dark hair which is slightly longer on top and a moustache. He also has a small tattoo on his right forearm. A police spokesman said that as he has been

missing for this amount of time he will probably look scruffy.

He was reported missing by his mother who lives in Redditch, Worcester, as he normally telephones her every day.

Anyone who may have seen Denis is asked to call police on 08452 777444 quoting log number 386 261007.