World Sight Day 2026 & World Octopus Day 2026 (8 October)

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News

World Sight Day falls on the second Thursday of October – 8 Oct in 2026. It is coordinated by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB); theme 'Love Your Eyes'. About 1 billion people worldwide have vision loss that could be prevented or treated. World Octopus Day is on the same date (8 Oct), raising awareness about this intelligent sea creature and ocean conservation.

Key facts

World Sight Day	2nd Thursday of October (2026: 8 Oct); IAPB
Theme	'Love Your Eyes'
Main causes	Cataract (leading cause of blindness), uncorrected refractive error, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy
World Octopus Day	8 October
Octopus	Phylum Mollusca, class Cephalopoda; 8 arms, 3 hearts, blue blood

Background

- World Sight Day was begun in 2000 by the Lions Clubs' 'SightFirst' campaign and joined WHO–IAPB's 'VISION 2020: The Right to Sight' (1999).

- India: the National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) began in 1976 as a 100% centrally funded scheme; NPCBVI since 2017. Eye Donation Fortnight runs 25 Aug–8 Sep.
- Science – octopus: blood is blue because of copper-based 'haemocyanin' (humans have iron-based haemoglobin); 2 gill hearts + 1 main heart; camouflage by chromatophore cells; escapes by squirting ink.
- An octopus has about 500 million neurons, two-thirds of them in its arms – the most intelligent invertebrate. The blue-ringed octopus carries deadly tetrodotoxin.
- Cephalopods: octopus, squid, cuttlefish and nautilus. They are an important part of India's seafood exports.

Tamil Nadu link: the Regional Institute of Ophthalmology, Egmore, Chennai (1819) is Asia's oldest eye hospital; Aravind Eye Hospital, Madurai (1976, Dr G. Venkataswamy); Sankara Nethralaya, Chennai (1978, Dr S.S. Badrinath). The Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve (1989) is India's first marine biosphere reserve and home to octopus and other cephalopods; CMFRI has a regional centre at Mandapam.

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