

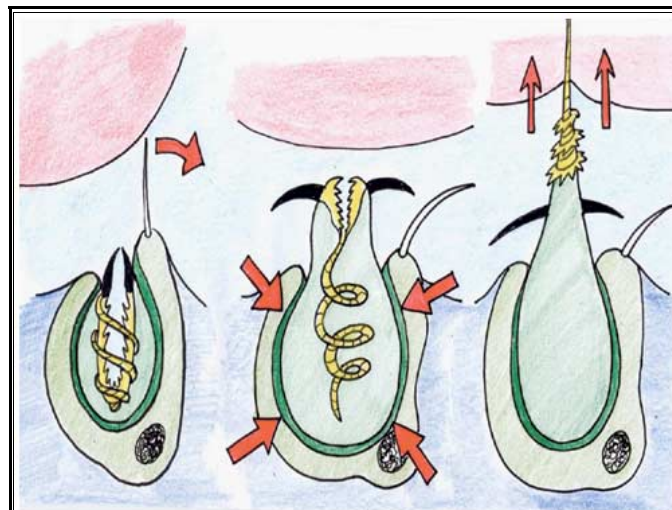
## Elementary Dear Watson...

### ... The Culprit is a Jellyfish!

The jellyfish that caused such a panic around our beaches a few summers ago was the "Lion's Mane" (*Cyanea capillata*) which starred as the villain of the piece in the Sherlock Holmes short story of the same name.

Lion's Mane Jellyfish occur from the Arctic to Mexico and resemble a pulsating brown soup plate with tentacles that can reach up to thirty metres long.

Stings can be severe, but rarely fatal although several people were hospitalised in the Dublin area in recent years. Tentacles continue to sting even when detached from the body or washed up on the beach. To be safe, do not swim when red flags are flying on beaches and never touch jellyfish of any kind, even if they appear dead.



### How Jellyfish Sting

Jellyfish tentacles are lined with thousands of stinging cells, each resembling an inside-out rubber glove with one finger and a poisonous fingernail.

#### Captain Cockle's Log

Welcome aboard shipmates! Together, we'll be taking a look at the world's greatest natural resource – the sea!

Words & pictures by John Joyce John Joyce 2005  
For more adventures from Captain Cockle, visit his website at [www.captaincockle.com](http://www.captaincockle.com)



If the trigger hair is touched, the cell squeezes, the gloves turns right-way-out and the fingernail injects poison through a hollow thread.

These cells live on in the tentacles that otherwise appear dead, which is why it is unsafe to touch even beached jellyfish that appear dead.