



See video of the camouflage tricks and getaway moves of octopuses—like this southern keeled octopus—at [natgeo.com/octopus](http://natgeo.com/octopus).

## 62 The Power of Eight

Octopuses appear as alien as any extraterrestrial, yet seem strangely akin to humans.

By Olivia Judson Photographs by David Littschwager

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### The Race to the Red Planet

Humankind's next big mission is Mars. But how long until we get there?

By Joel Achenbach  
Photographs by Phillip Toledano, Robert Clark, Max Aguilera-Hellweg, and Mark Thiessen

### Special Poster: Colonizing Mars

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### Changing Cuba: Here Comes the Wave

A warming relationship with the United States has an upbeat but wary Cuba bracing for an onslaught of tourists from its Cold War adversary.

By Cynthia Gorney Photographs by David Guttenfelder

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### Changing Cuba: The Caribbean's Crown Jewels

Gardens of the Queen, Cuba's sprawling marine preserve, is an oceanic Eden in tourism's path.

Story and Photographs by David Doubilet and Jennifer Hayes

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### Fragile Peace

Sri Lanka is beginning to reckon with the aftermath of a brutal civil war: tens of thousands homeless, tens of thousands still missing.

By Robert Draper  
Photographs by Ami Vitale

## 130 Proof | Consecrated in Mexico

Behind convent walls, cloistered nuns pray, work—and even play volleyball.

Story and Photographs by Marcela Taboada

**On the Cover** The four images in this composite were captured on October 4, 2014, by India's Mars Orbiter Mission probe, circling at an altitude of about 47,650 miles. Image: Indian Space Research Organisation

**Corrections and Clarifications** Go to [ngm.com/corrections](http://ngm.com/corrections).