



# New Rainforest Species



Oceans are full of new species, and so are rainforests. Until a few months ago we didn't know about the world's longest insect. A team of scientists discovered it in the rainforests of Borneo. This stick insect, known as *Phobaeticus chani*, can grow to be more than two feet long.



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Scientists searching a rainforest in Indonesia also found a memorable new species. It is known as the Pinocchio frog. Why? Look at the frog's nose. In case you don't know, Pinocchio is a make-believe character whose nose grew longer whenever he told a lie. The Pinocchio frog's nose inflates whenever it calls out. It must call loudly to be heard over the rushing waters of nearby streams.



Courtesy of WWF's Heart of Borneo Initiative

## Do You Know?

Scientists who search rainforests for new species are real adventurers. They must camp out for weeks at a time far from the comforts of civilization. The weather is extreme, with blazing heat, blinding rainstorms, even flash floods. But discovering these new creatures makes up for all the hardship and distress.



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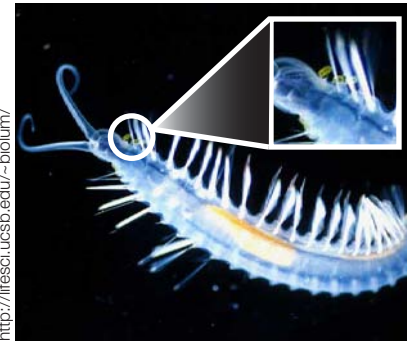
## SCIENTISTS DISCOVER STRANGE NEW UNDERSEA SPECIES

By Ron Fridell

Scientists are engaged in a race against time. Oceans are being polluted, rainforests are being cut down, and the world's climate is heating up fast. All these changes are taking their toll on the animal kingdom. Some species face extinction, including animals still unknown to us. Scientists

want to discover and study new animal species while they still can, before they are gone forever.

Most undiscovered species live in remote, isolated places. Recently scientists sent undersea robots two miles deep to search the sea bottom off the coast of southern California. The robots brought back seven new species of glowing sea worms that have a unique skill. At that depth, animals must produce their own light. The sea worms have glowing green sacs attached to their heads. Why are they there? The worms can drop them like little bombs to distract nearby predators.



Courtesy of Steve Haddock/  
<http://ifesci.ucsb.edu/~biolum/>

The green ovals are the glowing "bombs" that are meant to distract predators.

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## UNDERSEA SPECIES

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Another team of scientists has discovered new species of fish in ocean waters. Like the sea worms, these brightly colored little creatures have a unique skill. Instead of swimming, they prefer to walk slowly along the sea floor on special fins that look like hands. And so they are known as handfish.

Fifty million years ago handfish walked oceans all around the world. Today they are found only off the coasts of eastern and southern Australia. Year by year there are fewer and fewer. Scientists hope to help save these unique creatures from extinction.



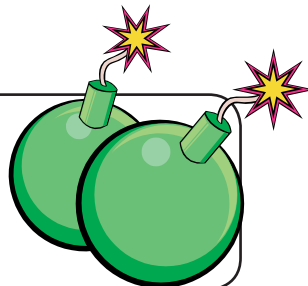
The spotted handfish may have a toxic skin that kills most attackers.

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## Word Wise

The new species of sea worms are called *Swima bombiviridis*. *Swima* means that they are good swimmers, and *bombiviridis* is Latin for "green bomber."



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# Biodiversity

Life on earth is incredibly diverse. Scientists discover new plant and animal species at the rate of about two each hour of each day of each month. That adds up to about 17,500 species each year.

Our planet has about 12 million plant and animal species in all. So far, scientists have discovered only about 2 million. And

that's just the organisms we can see with the naked eye. What if we add in all the species of bacteria and other microscopic creatures? Then the total increases by tens of millions. We have a great deal more to learn about the many living things that share Earth with us.



Tarsier



anteater



spotted  
boa

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## Write About This!

Why do you think people pollute the environment? Make a list of three or more reasons. Use it to help you write your answer to the question above.



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