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Brittle stars off the coast of New Zealand number in the millions
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[Marine Census Reveals Underwater Wonders](#)

New discoveries prove how little we know about the oceans

In a preview of the new [Marine Census](#), due to be released in 2010, scientists presented some amazing discoveries, made over the course of the past couple of years. Among the most interesting things, they mentioned a "city" of brittle stars and an Antarctic octopus route, where the animals ride on a current of extra-salty water. In the Gulf of Mexico, researchers discovered a high concentration of tiny crustaceans on the ocean floors, with as much as 12,000 of the small creatures inhabiting an area as small as 1 square meter. This fourth update on the census was released just ahead of the next Census meeting, scheduled to take place in Valencia, Spain, on Tuesday. During the conference, some 2,000 scientists from 82 countries will report their latest discoveries, and will add them to what is already known about the biodiversity of the planet's oceans. By working in collaboration with the PLoS ONE Journal, scientists with the Census hope to be able to make the information they obtain available to the open-public. To that very end, the international team plans to edit three separate books, detailing the results of the Marine Census. The first one will be a popular and comprehensible survey of marine wildlife, detailing the numbers of species currently out there, as well as their interactions. The second book will feature chapters detailing the works of each science group, while the third will have biodiversity as its theme. Among the latest discoveries, marine researchers also found that the ridge located in the middle of the Atlantic ocean is home to many new species, which cannot be found anywhere else in the world. The area will offer many challenges to science in the future, as the new animals have to be catalogued and studied. The coast of New Zealand is home to millions of brittle stars - five-armed animals - which inhabit the top of an underwater mountain. The unique conditions of the area allowed several millions of brittles to totally take over the mountain top, as the steady stream of water passing by, at a constant speed of 2.5 miles per hour (mph), offers enormous amounts of food, which the creatures can easily trap. Undoubtedly, the full Marine Census will offer more such finds. The full extent of marine interactions is currently very little known, and the study will try to offer a comprehensible look on how marine wildlife interacts with its ecosystem, so as to maintain the natural balance of the deep-sea.