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By: Tudor Vieru, Science Editor



New species of bacteria were found living in hairspray
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[Top 10 Newly Discovered Species](#)

In 2007, experts found 18,516 new species

Yesterday, experts from the International Institute for Species Exploration at the Arizona State University (ASU) and an international committee of taxonomists announced the top 10 new species discovered in 2008, which have never before been studied. Some of them are weird because of their size, while others live in unusual places, they say, and all represent the strangest our planet has to offer.

Hippocampus satomiae is a tiny seahorse, only 0.54 inches (13.8 millimeters) long on average. With a height of around 0.45 inches (11.5 millimeters), the strange animal lives near Derawan Island off Kalimantan, Indonesia, and was named for Miss Satomi Onishi, the dive guide who found the first specimen.

Tahina spectabilis is a very peculiar and extremely rare species of palm, living only in a small area of northwestern Madagascar, where just about 100 individuals were found. It's peculiar because it literally flowers itself to death, blooming in a massive amount of flowers, which made it popular as ornament.

Coffea charrieriana is a coffee plant living in Central Africa, which doesn't have any caffeine in it. One could argue that the new species would be perfect for brewing decaf beverages, if it wasn't so scarce to begin with. It was named for Professor André Charrier, the IRD (Institut de Recherche pour le Développement) expert who spent 30 years studying coffee species and breeding methods.

Japanese experts found out that hairsprays are the home of a new type of bacteria, the *Microbacterium hatanonis*. Named for expert Kazunori Hatano, the extremophile bacteria lives in its very peculiar gas environment, but its effects on humans have not yet been assessed.

With a body length of around 14 inches (36.6 centimeters) and an overall length of some 22.3 inches (56.7 centimeters), *Phobaeticus chani* is the longest insect in the world. It lives in the canopy of forests in Borneo, Malaysia, which makes it extremely difficult to find. Therefore, researchers know very little about it, as only a few specimens were ever recovered.

In St. Joseph Parish, Barbados, experts discovered the smallest snake in the world - *Leptotyphlops carlae* - which only measures 4.1 inches (104 millimeters). The Barbados Threadsnake has at this point no rival in terms of size, and has widely been accepted as the tiniest member of its class still living.

Selenochlamys ysbryda is a very peculiar ghost slug found in the densely populated area of Cardiff, Glamorgan, in Wales. Finding it in such a region came as a surprise, as usually researchers conduct many investigations in areas around large urban centers.

The unique snail *Opisthostoma vermiculum*, which was found to live only in Malaysia, followed a very weird evolutionary path, developing a shell that is able to twist around four different axes. This makes for the most intricate such construction in the world.

Number nine in the top is taken by an extraordinary species of damselfish, named *Chromis abyssus*, which was discovered to live in the waters near high-depth coral reefs. Together with the 2004 tsunami, which revealed numerous new species, the find highlights how little researchers know of this ecosystem.

Only fossilized remains of the animal *Materpiscis attenboroughi* were found. It represents the oldest known vertebrate that bared life (viviparous). In the remains found in Western Australia by John Long, experts identified a mother giving birth to its offspring. They estimated that the fossilization started more than 380 million years ago.

"The international committee of taxon experts who made the selection of the top 10 from the thousands of species described in calendar year 2008 is helping draw attention to biodiversity, the field of taxonomy, and the importance of natural history museums and botanical gardens in a fun-filled way. Charting the species of the world and their unique attributes are essential parts of understanding the history of life. It is in our own self-interest as we face the challenges of living on a rapidly changing planet," concluded ASU International Institute for Species Exploration director and entomologist, Quentin Wheeler.