

GENTLE.NEWS

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*"Promise me you'll never forget me because if I thought you would, I'd
never leave."*

— A.A. Milne

Scientists Find Nine New Sponge Species in Alaskan Waters

Scientists have found nine new kinds of sea sponges in Alaska. They were discovered in the Gulf of Alaska and near the Aleutian Islands. This brings the total number of known Alaskan sponge species to 232. That is a wonderful number!

Sea sponges are amazing creatures. They have lived on Earth for more than 600 million years. That is long before the dinosaurs! They have no brain, no heart, and no organs. Yet they survive and thrive on the ocean floor.

Sponges work like natural water pumps. They pull in huge amounts of seawater and filter it clean. They come in many shapes, like vases, tubes, and barrels. These shapes create cozy hiding spots for young fish and crabs on the seafloor.

Scientists say sponges are like trees in a forest. Just as trees give shelter to forest animals, sponges give shelter to ocean animals. Young rockfish hide inside sponges at night to stay safe from danger.

Each new discovery helps build a library of ocean life. Researchers can use this knowledge to better understand and protect sea creatures. Finding these sponges reminds us how much wonder still waits to be found beneath the waves. The ocean continues to surprise and delight us every single day!

Scientists Work to Keep the Chesapeake Bay Healthy

The Chesapeake Bay is a very special place. It is the largest estuary in the United States. An estuary is where a river meets the sea. Fresh water and salt water mix together there.

This mixing creates a rich and busy ecosystem. Many fish, birds, and plants call the bay home. The bay also brings joy to millions of people who fish, boat, and explore its shores.

Scientists are working hard to keep the bay healthy. They study the fish, the water, and the wetlands. They watch birds like the osprey to see how well the bay is doing. Osprey are large, beautiful fishing birds.

Researchers are also helping marshes recover and grow stronger. They add sediment, which is like sandy soil, to wetland areas. This helps the land stay above rising water. One place they are helping is Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

All of this careful science helps the bay thrive for years to come. Every September, people across the country celebrate National Estuaries Week. It is a wonderful time to appreciate these amazing places where rivers meet the sea.

New Memory Tech Could Make Computers Use Less Power

Scientists at a research lab in California have made an exciting discovery. They created a new kind of computer memory that could change how our devices work.

Most computers store information as ones and zeros. Think of it like a light switch — either on or off. But this new memory works more like a dimmer switch. It can store many different values, not just two.

The new memory is called ETCRAM. It uses small bursts of heat and electricity to store information. This lets it hold far more detail than older memory types. In fact, it is 100 times more precise than current memory.

Why does this matter? Computers around the world use a huge amount of electricity. Scientists hope this new memory could help computers do their work using much less power. That would be good for everyone.

The team is led by researchers Elliot Fuller and Alec Talin. They are continuing to test the technology with new materials. Each step brings us closer to smarter, greener computers for the future. It is an exciting time for technology — and good news for our planet.

Drawing Together Helps Brains Sync Up, Study Finds

Scientists have made a warm and wonderful discovery. When people draw together, their brains start to work in harmony. The more time they spend creating together, the more their brain activity matches up.

Researchers in Switzerland studied 61 pairs of people. Some pairs were young adults aged 18 to 35. Others were older adults aged 70 to 85. Some pairs mixed young and older people together. Each pair met six times over six weeks to draw together.

At first, the people in each pair were strangers. They drew side by side and chatted as they worked. Over time, something special happened. Their brains began to "sync up" more and more with each session.

Scientists used small, wearable brain sensors to track this. The sensors let people move freely and act naturally. This made the results very true to real life. The findings were published in a respected science journal.

The study shows that making art with others is good for the brain. It also helps build new friendships at any age. Whether young or old, our brains respond to human connection in beautiful ways. Picking up a pencil and drawing with a friend may be one of the best things we can do.

Young Poet Wins National Contest With Heart and Words

A young woman from Indiana has won one of America's top poetry prizes. Jayda Dawn, a high school student, was named the 2026 Poetry Out Loud National Champion. She won a grand prize of \$20,000.

Jayda recited poems by famous poets like Langston Hughes. She stood on stage as rainbow confetti fell around her. Happy tears rolled down her cheeks. Even other students in the contest cried with joy for her.

Poetry Out Loud is a national program for students. Young people choose poems to memorize and recite aloud. They study their poems for many months. Jayda says the poems began to feel like dear friends. "Being able to live with these words is a wonderful opportunity," she said.

What makes this program special is not just winning. Students form warm bonds with teachers, coaches, and each other. Even competitors hold hands backstage to calm their nerves. That kind of friendship and support is what Poetry Out Loud is truly about.

Jayda's love of poetry grew stronger through this journey. She hopes others will discover the joy of reading and speaking beautiful words aloud. Her story reminds us that words have the power to connect us all.

Activity Time - Word Search

Find the words below in the puzzle. Words go across or down only.

Words to Find:

CHAMPION ALASKA POETRY DEVICE
OCEAN WORDS BRAIN

A	W	O	R	D	S	K	R	L	V	Q
L	V	D	E	V	I	C	E	F	P	I
A	O	N	U	G	E	Z	C	Z	S	B
S	X	P	O	E	T	R	Y	V	F	R
K	X	P	I	C	R	J	M	B	T	O
A	H	E	M	V	S	S	X	K	U	C
I	S	E	E	J	C	T	X	L	O	E
V	E	L	G	T	B	R	A	I	N	A
E	G	M	M	J	R	B	Z	S	U	N
S	C	C	H	A	M	P	I	O	N	A
X	R	R	I	G	T	Z	B	G	M	T