

GENTLE.NEWS

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"let me live, love, and say it well in good sentences"

— Sylvia Plath

Scientists Dive Deep to Check on Pacific Coral Reefs

A team of ocean scientists has just finished a big trip across the Pacific Ocean. They were checking on coral reefs to make sure these beautiful underwater worlds are healthy.

The scientists work for NOAA, a group that studies the ocean. They visited many islands, including American Samoa and other remote spots in the Pacific. The trip covered thousands of kilometers of open sea.

The team made over 1,000 scuba dives during the journey. They counted fish, took photos of coral, and collected water samples. They will use these photos to build detailed 3D models of the coral reefs. What a wonderful use of technology!

While docked at one island, the scientists welcomed students aboard their ship. Over 100 young people from seven schools came to learn about ocean science. The students got to see real diving gear and explore how scientists study the sea. It was three hours of exciting discovery for the next generation.

Coral reefs are home to thousands of sea creatures. They are sometimes called the rainforests of the ocean. This important work helps scientists protect these colorful and magical underwater places for years to come.

Kelp Farms and Ocean Life Get Along Just Fine

Scientists in Alaska have great news about seaweed farms. These underwater farms grow kelp, a large ocean plant. Researchers wanted to know if kelp farms were good or bad for local fish and sea creatures.

The answer turned out to be very good news. Scientists compared areas with kelp farms to areas without them. They found that the same fish and sea life lived in both places. The farms did not disturb the animals at all.

Kelp farms are growing in popularity across America. Alaska is a perfect place for them. Its waters are cold, clean, and full of nutrients that help kelp grow strong and healthy.

Most kelp farms in Alaska are small and peaceful. They only operate in fall, winter, and spring. The farms provide jobs for people in coastal towns. They also help produce healthy, sustainable seafood for everyone to enjoy.

This research helps us understand how to care for our oceans wisely. Scientists and farmers are working together as a team. That teamwork is helping coastal communities thrive while keeping the ocean healthy and beautiful for years to come.

Young Students Design the Future of Flight

Young students across America are taking on an exciting challenge. They are helping shape the future of air travel. And their ideas could change how we all fly one day.

NASA has teamed up with the FAA and universities for a special contest. It is called the "Fueling Flight Design Challenge." Middle and high school students are invited to take part. Teams will think about new ways to power aircraft.

Right now, most planes use the same kind of fuel they have used for decades. But a cleaner fuel called liquid natural gas is gaining attention. It could make flying safer and more affordable. It may also be better for our air and environment.

Students will explore how this new fuel could work in real planes. They will also think about changes needed at airports. It is a big task, but young minds are up for it. Their fresh ideas are welcomed by experts in aviation.

It is wonderful to see young people thinking about tomorrow. Their creativity and curiosity give us all reason to feel hopeful. The skies of the future may be shaped by students working hard today.

Tiny Blind Fish Gets 35 Years of Protection

Deep in the caves of Missouri lives a very unusual fish. It is tiny — just over two inches long. It has no eyes and pink-white skin. It is called the Ozark cavefish.

This little fish needs special care to survive. It lives in dark underground caves and springs. No sunlight ever reaches its home. These hidden places must stay clean and undisturbed.

Back in 1991, a wildlife refuge was created just for this fish. It is called the Ozark Cavefish National Wildlife Refuge. It covers 40 acres of land in Missouri. This year, it celebrates 35 years of protecting the fish and its cave home.

Wildlife workers and state partners work together at the refuge. They carefully limit who can enter the protected cave. They also help nearby landowners keep the water clean. All of this quiet, steady work has made a real difference.

It is a wonderful reminder that small creatures matter too. Even a tiny blind fish living in the dark deserves care and protection. Thanks to many dedicated people, the Ozark cavefish has a safe home — and a bright future.

Tiny Robot Hops and Swims Just Like a Frog

Scientists have built a tiny robot that moves like a frog. It can hop on land and swim through water. The secret is a clever spring-like shape inside the robot.

Researchers at UCLA and the University of Michigan made this discovery. They studied what happens when you bend and twist a flexible rod. At just the right moment, the rod snaps quickly from one shape to another. That snap creates a powerful burst of movement.

Think of it like a coiled spring that stores energy. When it releases, it gives the robot a strong push. The robot can then hop over bumps or paddle through water. Best of all, it resets quickly and is ready to snap again.

This design is very efficient. The robot does not need a big motor or lots of power. The shape of the spring does most of the hard work. Scientists say the same idea works for robots of many different sizes.

One day, small robots like this could explore hard-to-reach places. They might squeeze through tight spaces or cross rivers. Researchers hope these little hoppers will help people in many exciting ways.

Activity Time - Word Search

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

Words to Find:

CAVEFISH SEAWEED AIRPORT FLIGHT
DIVER OCEAN FUEL

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