

GENTLE.NEWS

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"In the beginning there was nothing, which exploded."

— Terry Pratchett

Scientists Use Tiny Gas to Find Ocean Treasures

Deep beneath the ocean lies a hidden world. It sits miles below the waves. Scientists are now finding new ways to explore it.

A team of researchers recently set out on an exciting expedition. They traveled to the waters near American Samoa. Using a special underwater robot, they explored the deep seafloor.

This robot, called an ROV, can dive very deep. It goes places no human can safely reach. It takes pictures and collects samples along the way.

The team was looking for minerals on the ocean floor. These minerals are called polymetallic nodules. They look like small rocks but are full of useful metals. They take millions of years to form naturally.

To find these mineral treasures, scientists are trying something clever. They are using a natural gas called radon as a guide. Radon occurs naturally in seawater near the seafloor. Where radon levels are higher, minerals may be nearby. This could help scientists make better maps of ocean riches. The deep seafloor covers almost half of our entire planet. There is still so much left to discover down there. Each new expedition teaches us something wonderful and new.

Watching Over Thousands of Satellites in Space

A scientist in New Mexico has turned a childhood love of stars into important work. Allen Schnibben grew up reading books about the solar system. In middle school, he got his first telescope. He has loved space ever since.

Today, Schnibben works at Sandia National Laboratories. He watches satellites from a small dome-shaped observatory. The dome is about 12 feet wide. From there, he tracks objects orbiting high above the Earth.

There are now more than 45,000 human-made objects circling our planet. That number keeps growing. Universities and other groups can now build small satellites and send them into space. Space is more open to everyday people than ever before.

Keeping track of all these satellites is very important. Satellites travel at very high speeds. If two satellites got too close, they could crash into each other. That kind of crash could create dangerous debris in space.

Schnibben's work helps prevent that from happening. His observatory collects data and helps predict where satellites will be. It is a bit like being an air traffic controller, but for outer space. His childhood dream turned into a job that helps protect our skies.

Webb Telescope Finds Baby Stars Hiding in Space

A wonderful space discovery has been made. NASA's James Webb Space Telescope has taken an amazing new picture. It shows a place in space where new stars are being born.

This special region is called NGC 7129. It is a giant cloud of dust and gas floating in space. It sits about 3,300 light-years away from Earth. That is incredibly far away!

Young stars hide inside thick clouds of dust. Most telescopes cannot see through all that dust. But the Webb telescope is very special. It can see a kind of light called infrared light. This lets it see right through the dust clouds.

The new Webb image is truly beautiful. It shows golden and red glowing gases. Many young stars are tucked inside. Scientists call these young stars protostars. They are still growing and forming. One day they will shine bright like our own Sun.

Learning how stars are born helps us understand our universe. It even helps us understand how Earth and our Sun were formed long ago. The Webb telescope keeps giving scientists wonderful new surprises. Every new image teaches us something amazing about the sky above us.

Tiny Ferrets Find New Homes in the Wild

A very special animal is getting a second chance in Arizona. The black-footed ferret is one of America's rarest creatures. Thanks to a team of caring people, more of these little animals are living free again.

Workers from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service go out at dusk to release the ferrets. They carry them in small pet carriers to grassland areas. Prairie dog burrows make perfect homes for these tiny animals.

One ferret made everyone smile. It kept popping in and out of different burrows. It tried one hole, then another, for nearly half an hour. The team said it was simply "burrow-shopping" for just the right home!

This spring, the team released 19 ferrets into the wild. Many groups work together to make this happen. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Phoenix Zoo all lend a helping hand.

"Black-footed ferret recovery is a team effort," said one coordinator. These ferrets were raised with loving care by people. Now they get to live wild and free. It is a beautiful success story for all of nature.

Scientists Work to Keep Our Modern World Running

Did you know that tiny minerals help power our modern world? These special materials are inside your phone, your TV, and even medical machines at the hospital. Scientists are working hard to make sure we always have enough of them.

These minerals have names like lithium, cobalt, and nickel. They help make batteries that store energy. Other minerals help doctors take pictures inside the body. Some even help treat cancer. They are truly amazing little building blocks.

The challenge is that many of these minerals are hard to find. Some are mixed in with rocks and dirt. Others exist only in tiny amounts spread across large areas. Getting them out safely takes a lot of skill and effort.

Scientists at a famous lab in California are finding smart new ways to collect these minerals. They are looking at new places to find them, like special types of clay found in the ground. They are also finding ways to recycle old materials so nothing goes to waste.

This important work means that future doctors will have better tools. It means cleaner energy for our grandchildren. And it means the things we love and rely on every day will keep working well. It is wonderful to know that smart, caring people are working on this every day.

Activity Time - Word Search

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

Words to Find:

SEAFLOOR

NICKEL

FERRET

NEBULA

SPACE

OCEAN

DUST

