

## New record for deepest fish, BBC News 19 December 2014

A new record has been set for the world's deepest fish.

The bizarre-looking creature, which is new to science, was filmed 8,145m beneath the waves, beating the previous depth record by nearly 500m.

The animals were discovered during an international expedition to the Mariana Trench, which lies almost 11km down in the Pacific Ocean.



The 30-day voyage took place from the Schmidt Ocean Institute's research vessel, Falkor, and is the most comprehensive survey of world's deepest place ever undertaken. The Hadal Ecosystem Studies (Hades) team deployed unmanned landers more than 90 times to depths that ranged between 5,000m and 10,600m. They studied both steep walls of the undersea canyon.

Dr Jeff Drazen, co-chief scientist from the University of Hawaii, US, said: "Many studies have rushed to the bottom of the trench, but from an ecological view that is very limiting. It's like trying to understand a mountain ecosystem by only looking at its summit." The University of Aberdeen's Hadal Lander - the UK's deepest diving vehicle - recorded more than 100 hours of deep-sea footage.

Until this expedition, the deepest fish had been found in the Japan Trench, also in the Pacific Ocean. A 17-strong shoal of pink, gelatinous snailfish (*Pseudoliparis amblystomopsis*) were recorded 7,700m down. Dr Alan Jamieson, from Oceanlab at the University of Aberdeen, said: "After we found these, we started seeing them in other deep trenches. Each trench has its own snailfish species. And we saw one in the Mariana Trench at more than 8,000m, and we think it's a new species."



The team thought they had broken the deepest-fish record, but then another pale pink species came to feed at the lander, which is loaded with bait, even further down at 8,145m. Dr Jamieson said: "We think it is a snailfish, but it's so weird-looking; it's up in the air in terms of what it is. It is unbelievably fragile, and when it swims, it looks like it has wet tissue paper floating behind it. And it has a weird snout - it looks like a

cartoon dog snout."

Without catching the fish and bringing it back to the surface, the team is unable to confirm that it is a new species, but Dr Jamieson said it did not look like anything he'd seen before or knew of. The new record-breaking creature is close to the depth-limit at which scientists believe fish can survive. Prof Patricia Fryer stated "So much of the ocean floor is unexplored; every time we go down we find something new."

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The dives made during the expedition were all conducted by unmanned vehicles, but humans have visited the world's deepest place. In 1960, US Navy Lt Don Walsh and Swiss oceanographer Jacques Piccard made an incredibly risky journey to the bottom of the Mariana Trench in a bathyscaphe called the Trieste.

And in 2012, Hollywood director James Cameron made a solo descent to the seafloor in his sub called the Deepsea Challenger. He described the place as a desolate, alien world.

1. Was the new fish found at the bottom of the Mariana Trench?
2. Why is bizarre-looking hyphenated?
3. What is meant by an "international expedition"?
4. Explain with an example and a quote, the term comprehensive.
5. How was the new fish observed?
6. Find a synonym for used in the passage.
7. Explain what Dr Jeff Drazen means when he says "It's like trying to understand a mountain ecosystem by only looking at its summit."
8. Have scientists found a new species?
9. Do scientists think that they will find fish at greater depths?
10. What is the effect of saying of the fish that it looks like it "has wet tissue paper floating behind it"?
11. What is a co-chief?
12. What is a bathyscaphe?
13. Why has this fish not been seen before?
14. How does the writer suggest that the fish does not look like a real animal?
15. What is meant by a "solo descent"?
16. What did James Cameron call his sub? Suggest a reason why.
17. Was James Cameron impressed by the Mariana Trench?
18. Why is it risky for people to travel to the bottom of the Mariana Trench?
19. What reasons are suggested in the passage for the fish being called a snailfish?
20. What reasons are there for visiting the bottom of the Mariana Trench?

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