



“Newly Identified Shark Species: Cal Poly Humboldt Instructor Assists in Discovery of Ancient Shark-Like Fossil from 326 Million Years Ago” | Lost Coast Outpost.

Description

A sophisticated study was recently promulgated in the scientific journal 'Geodiversitas', recounting the discovery of a new, antediluvian species of shark, cosmic in its infusion into our understanding of a cryptic and peculiar assembly of primeval aquatic life. The fossil, unearthed in Arkansas approximately 45 years ago, supplies a noteworthy piece to the puzzle.

"The unusual, almost alien-like, anatomy of these creatures depicts the remnants of a once thriving ecosystem, which blossomed post an extinction event that devastated fish species at the culmination of the Devonian Period," elucidates Allison Bronson, a Biology instructor at Cal Poly Humboldt, and the frontrunner of this groundbreaking study.

The newly discovered species, coined as 'Cosmoselachus mehlingi', inhabited Earth 326 million years in history's rearview mirror. As an homage, it is named after Carl Mehling, a seasoned specialist at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), revered for his more than three-decade-long dedication to the institution's Paleontology Division.

"He's a man with an insatiable curiosity for the quirkiest and most mysterious products of evolution, and has been an indispensable mentor to countless paleontology students," claims Bronson. Pleasingly, recognizing his passion, the team named this 'weird old dead fish' after him.

Contrarily, the moniker 'Cosmoselachus' is derived from Mehling's nickname, "Cosm". It symbolizes a tribute to his relentless zeal for uncommon vertebrates, numerous commendable discoveries of fossil chondrichthyans, along with his indomitable service to paleontology.

Professor Bronson, alongside peers from the AMNH, University of Florida, and the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle in France, meticulously scrutinized a fossil specimen, excavated back in the 70s. Its collectors, the husband-wife duo of Royal and Gene Mapes, were research scientists and academicians at Ohio University, who bequeathed their collection to the AMNH in 2013.

The anatomical breakdown of 'Cosmoselachus' involved CT-scanning the fossil at AMNH and a digital reconstitution at AMNH and Cal Poly Humboldt. This arduous task entailed the identification of dozens of minuscule cartilage fragments. Eventually, the researchers successfully nestled the specimen into the phylogenetic tree of incipient cartilaginous fishes.

Suddenly, the importance of 'Cosmoselachus' became apparent. It uncovered clues towards comprehending the development of a nebulous group called symmoriiforms, a subspecies suspected to have affiliations with both sharks and ratfish. While 'Cosmoselachus' displayed predominantly sharklike traits, the extended cartilage forming the gill cover is a feature usually exclusive to ratfish.

The structure and position of these fauna remains are critical to Bronson's team, who has concentrated their



recent research on fishes from this fossil-rich formation. "We're thrilled to orient our investigation around this formation due to the exceptional preservation of the fossils and their pivotal stance in history," Bronson states.

Teaching courses in Biology and Fisheries at Cal Poly Humboldt, Bronson emphasizes evolution, zoology, and a distinct class on Ichthyology tailored towards the study of Sharks and Rays. "It's an honor to share my research discoveries with my students, who not only grasp these intricate concepts but display an avid interest in learning about these creatures," she expounds.

Reveling in the opportunity to christen the species after someone like Mehling who has contributed so much to paleontology, Bronson says, "Science, for many of us, is ultimately about the joy of unearthing new knowledge and collaborating with friends. Naming a species after someone who's been an integral part of our community is an extraordinary privilege."

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Vocabulary List:

1. **Promulgated** // (verb): Formally proclaimed or declared.
2. **Antediluvian** // (adjective): Belonging to the time before the biblical flood.
3. **Infusion** // (noun): The act of introducing something into something else.
4. **Cryptic** // (adjective): Having a meaning that is mysterious or obscure.



5. **Peculiar** // (adjective): Unusual or distinctive.
6. **Devastated** // (verb): Caused severe and overwhelming shock or grief.

Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. What term refers to the origin or beginning of something?
Option: Quintessential
Option: Genesis
Option: Prodigious
Option: Antediluvian
2. Which word means the quality of being powerfully and mysteriously attractive?
Option: Quintessential
Option: Metabolic
Option: Devastated
Option: Allure
3. Which term describes actions that are wicked or criminal?
Option: Promulgated
Option: Nefarious
Option: Infusion
Option: Surreptitious
4. Which word means extremely large or great?
Option: Physiological
Option: Colossal
Option: Quintessential
Option: Ecological
5. What term is related to the branch of biology that deals with the relations of organisms to one another and to their physical surroundings?
Option: Anticipated
Option: Ensare
Option: Covertly
Option: Ecological
6. What type of software is specifically designed to disrupt damage or gain unauthorized access to a computer system?
Option: Anticipates



- Option: Colossal
- Option: Quintessential
- Option: Malware

7. Which term refers to the normal functions of living organisms and their parts?

- Option: Quintessential
- Option: Physiological
- Option: Malware
- Option: Prodigious

8. Which word means kept secret especially because it would not be approved of?

- Option: Quintessential
- Option: Surreptitious
- Option: Malware
- Option: Devastated

9. Which term means to promote or make widely known?

- Option: Promulgated
- Option: Antediluvian
- Option: Genesis
- Option: Allure

10. What term means destroyed or ruined?

- Option: Devastated
- Option: Scrutinize
- Option: Revered
- Option: Quintessential

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

11. _____ farming emphasizes sustainable practices and natural methods.

12. The _____ of new technology into the company's operations improved efficiency.

13. Fans _____ the release of the new album from their favorite band.

14. The little black dress is considered the _____ of style and elegance.

15. The message was so _____ that it took hours to decipher its meaning.

16. There was something _____ about the old house that made people uneasy.



17. The doctor explained the patient's _____ rate and how it affected their weight loss.
18. The young artist showed _____ talent beyond her years.
19. The cunning villain plotted to _____ the hero in a trap.
20. The spies operated _____ to gather intelligence without being detected.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. The detective needed to carefully examine the evidence to solve the case.
22. The ancient monument was deeply respected and honored by the locals.
23. The photograph perfectly captures the essence of the joyful moment.
24. The actor made his first appearance on the stage in the famous play.
25. The national flag is symbolic and representative of the country.
26. The mystery novel had a plot full of twists and turns that kept readers engaged.
27. The magician performed an extraordinary trick that amazed the audience.
28. The highly awaited movie generated excitement among fans before its release.
29. The explorer discovered ancient artifacts from a civilization that existed before the great flood.
30. Users should be cautious of malicious software that can harm their computers.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Genesis 2. Allure 3. Nefarious 4. Colossal 5. Ecological 6. Malware 7. Physiological
8. Surreptitious 9. Promulgated 10. Devastated

Gap-Fill: 11. Organic 12. Infusion 13. Anticipated 14. Quintessential 15. Cryptic 16. Peculiar 17. Metabolic
18. Prodigious 19. Ensnare 20. Covertly

Matching sentence: 1. scrutinize 2. revered 3. encapsulates 4. debut 5. emblematic 6. intriguing 7. prodigious
8. anticipated 9. antediluvian 10. malware

CATEGORY

1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL5



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