

Scripps Oceanography Invites Donors to Name an Ocean Species

Scripps collections offer opportunities to name newly discovered marine life

April 9, 2008

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Every year scientists discover new species of marine life from deep within the vast global oceans. Each of these new discoveries adds to the catalog of known organisms on Earth, and deepens the knowledge of ocean biodiversity.

Several of the most important libraries of ocean specimens in the world are housed at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego. Known as the Scripps Oceanographic Collections, and referenced by scientists all over the world, these holdings of biological and geological marine specimens tell a unique and evolving story of life on Earth, and provide answers to questions about Earth's future.

In response to severe budget cuts to the collections over the past several years, Scripps is introducing a novel way for donors to show their support for these valuable and irreplaceable science and teaching resources: by naming a newly discovered marine species.

Every year collections staff and researchers discover new species of marine creatures. Some specimens set new records, such as the stout infantfish (*Schindleria brevipinguis*), co-described by Scripps as the world's smallest fish in 2004.

Traditionally, the person who first describes a newfound plant or animal is entitled to name it, but now, Scripps is inviting the public to share in the process by naming select newly discovered species acquired by the institution. The names can be selected by a donor for themselves or a friend or family member, and are then introduced in scientific publications that establishes the new species name permanently.

Currently, the Scripps Oceanographic Collections hold several new marine species that are available for naming. They include a rare hydrothermal vent worm (\$50,000), two types of worms found living on deep-sea whale bones (\$25,000), an orange, speckled nudibranch (\$15,000), and a spiny worm found in the kelp forests of La Jolla cove (\$10,000). Several fishes from the Gulf of California as well as several new species discovered in local La Jolla waters are also available to be named.

The cost to name Scripps' newly discovered creatures starts at \$5,000. Donors who name a species will receive a framed print of their named organism, as well as a copy of the scientific publication in which it is first described.

"By supporting the collections through species naming, donors have an opportunity for their name, or the name of a person they love or respect, to be immortalized forever," said Greg Rouse, curator of the Scripps Benthic Invertebrate Collection. "This type of unique gift highlights the vast unknown diversity in the sea that Scripps scientists are working to document and describe."

While offering the rights to name species may be a relatively new trend, naming species after people is not. For example, a feather-duster worm from Australia was named in honor of Rouse, *Pseudofabriziola rousei*.

Funds raised through this new naming opportunity will be used to help maintain and build upon the Scripps Oceanographic Collections for future generations of scientists.

To learn more about supporting the Scripps Oceanographic Collections through a naming gift, contact the Scripps Development Office at 858-822-1865 or supportscripps@ucsd.edu.

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