

The Tiniest Fish in the World 世界最小的鱼

Biologists have recently **come across** a new species of fish. Their find provides yet another example of our planet's amazing **diversity** of life. The [*Paedocypris progenetica*](#), a member of the **carp** family, was discovered in a forest swamp on the Indonesian island of [Sumatra](#). Its most remarkable characteristic is its size. A **full-grown** female fish is a mere 7.9 millimeters. This makes it not only the world's smallest fish, but also the smallest **vertebrate** on earth.

生物学家最近偶然发现一新鱼种。他们的发现为地球令人惊讶的多样物种又提供了另一个实例。鲤鱼科的 *Paedocypris progenetica* 是在印度尼西亚苏门答腊岛上的一处森林沼泽被发现。牠最值得注意的特征是其大小，一尾完全成熟的雌鱼仅有 7.9 厘米长。这不只使牠成为世上最小的鱼，同时也是地球上最小的脊椎动物。

It may be difficult to appreciate such a tiny fish **at first glance**. Viewing them under a **magnifying** glass, however, **reveals** their fascinating characteristics. The *Paedocypris* fish resemble **larvae** with a reduced head skeleton that leaves the brain unprotected. Their bodies are almost entirely **transparent**. Any coloration is due to the contents of their stomach, not the fish themselves. Also amazing are the male fish's unique [pelvic fins](#), which are used for **grasping**.

在惊鸿一瞥之下或许很难欣赏这么微小的鱼类。然而，从放大镜底下观察，牠们就显现了迷人的特征。*Paedocypris* 长得很像幼虫，发育不全的头骨使得脑部缺少保护。牠们的身躯几乎完全透明。有任何色彩都是因为胃容物所造成，而非牠们本身的颜色。同样令人吃惊的是，雄鱼独特的腹鳍是用来抓握。

The tea-colored swamp waters where the tiny fish were found are nearly as **acidic** as **vinegar**. Their **habitat** may look like an unfriendly environment, but the *Paedocypris* fish seem to thrive in it. Unfortunately, their habitat is threatened by fires, **logging**, and land development. Fearing their **extinction**, scientists are eager to learn as much as possible about the earth's tiniest fish.

小鱼被发现的茶色沼泽水差不多就像醋一样酸。牠们的栖地看来或许像是个不利的环境，但 *Paedocypris* 鱼群似乎在里头茁壮生长。不幸的是，牠们的栖地受到火灾、伐木和土地开发所威胁。担心牠们将会绝种，科学家急于尽可能了解地球上最小的鱼。

—By Amy Lovestrand

Vocabulary

diversity [daɪ ˈvɜːsəti] n. 多样性

transparent [træns ˈpærənt] adj. 透明的

habitat [ˈhæbi.tæt] n. 栖息地

extinction [ɪk ˈstɪŋkʃən] n. 灭绝；消灭

More Information

come across: 偶然碰见 to meet or find by chance

carp [kɑ:p] n. 鲤鱼

full-grown [fʊl ˈgrɒn] adj. 发育完全的，成熟的

vertebrate [ˈvɜ:tə,bret] n. 脊椎动物

at first glance: 乍看之下 when first looked at

reveal [ri ˈvil] v. 展现，显露出

larva [ˈlɑ:və] n. 幼虫；幼体 (名复: larvae, larvas)

pelvic [ˈpɛlvɪk] **fin** 腹鳍

grasp [græsp] v. & n. 抓牢；握紧

acidic [ə ˈsɪdɪk] adj. 含酸的，酸性的

vinegar [ˈvɪnɪgə] n. 醋

logging [ˈlɒɡɪŋ] n. 伐木

magnifying [ˈmæɡnəˌfaɪɪŋ] **glass** 放大镜