

Welcome, Leaf-Tailed Gecko!

Read the science article.

Then follow the directions in the Text Marking box.

What do the Cape Melville leaf-tailed gecko, the raccoon-like olinguito, and Kaweesak's dragon tree have in common? Not much, other than that they are among the thousands of new species scientists discover annually.

Generally, people sense that much of the news about wildlife species is discouraging. Dr. Camilo Mora and other scientists know that, due to habitat loss, as many as 20,000 species go extinct each year. As they see it, new arrivals are a cause for celebration.

The International Institute for Species Exploration works to educate people about biodiversity challenges and what can be done about them. To spark interest, it has come up with a top-ten list of new species. It presented its list to the public on May 23, 2014. Why then, exactly? It was to honor the birthday of the 18th-century botanist Carl Linnaeus, whose species-naming system is used to this day. Furthermore, the Institute estimates that as many as 18,000 new species are discovered each year.

Dr. Mora's view is that this may be too high a figure. But to scientists, no matter what the number, more new species are bound to be identified in the future. One of this year's top ten, a tiny bacterium, was found in a sterilized room where NASA works on spacecraft. This discovery—in a sanitized place—makes them assume that new species can pop up just about anywhere!



Leaf-tailed gecko from eastern Madagascar

Text Marking

Identify the facts and opinions in the article.

- Box at least three signal words or phrases.
- Circle at least three facts.
- Underline at least three opinions.

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► Answer each question. Give evidence from the article.

- 1 Which of the following is *not* a synonym for the word *sanitized* (paragraph 4)?
- A. clean B. germ-free C. unhealthy D. disinfected

What in the text helped you answer? _____

- 2 Why did the International Institute for Species Exploration come up with a top-ten list of new species?

- A. Scientists are fond of making lists.
- B. They wanted to honor Carl Linnaeus.
- C. There were only ten new species discovered in 2013.
- D. They hoped this idea would draw people's attention to biodiversity.

What in the text helped you answer? _____

- 3 Paragraph 2 begins like this: "Generally, people sense that much of the news about wildlife species is discouraging." What fact contributes to this attitude?

- 4 What fact makes scientists hopeful that they will discover many more species in the future?
