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Eyeless Crustaceans Discovered in Undersea Tunnel off Canary Islands

A previously unknown species of an eyeless crustacean was discovered lurking inside a lava tube beneath the seafloor.



During a cave diving expedition to explore the Tunnel de la Atlantida, the world's longest submarine lava tube on Lanzarote in the Canary Islands, a team of scientists and cave divers have discovered a previously unknown species of crustacean.

Source: Journal of Marine Biology | Anchialine fauna of the Corona lava tube | 10-12-2009

The creature, named *Speleonectes atlantida*, lives in the Tunnel de la Atlantida, the world's longest submarine lava tube on Lanzarote in the Canary Islands off the western coast of northern Africa. The discovery, which has implications for the evolution of an ancient group of crustaceans, will be detailed in September in a special issue of the journal *Marine Biodiversity*.

The Corona lava tube is a 21,000-year-old cave located near the northern tip of Lanzarote (Canary Islands). It extends more than 6,000 m from the Corona volcano to the shoreline and continues a further 1,618 m into the sea as the Túnel de la Atlántida. The cave exhibits diverse geological features, but the majority of the studies on this system have addressed the extraordinarily high aquatic faunal diversity.

In this cave a team of scientists and cave divers have discovered a previously unknown species of crustacean, belonging to the remiped genus *Speleonectes*.

The tunnel's newly identified inhabitant, which is less than an inch long, belongs to the class Remipedia, whose crustacean members live only in cave systems. Like this species, most other remipedes lack eyes and are hermaphrodites.

Instead of eyes, predatory crustaceans of the class Remipedia rely on long antennae which search the lightless void in all directions. Like some type of science fiction monster, their head is equipped with powerful prehensile limbs and poisonous fangs.

Source ► Anchialine fauna of the Corona lava tube

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24 Oct 2009 - 03:00 - 25 Oct 2009 - 06:00

Divescapes Conference Calgary, Alberta, Canada

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXPOS

29 Oct 2009 - 10:00 - 1 Nov 2009 - 20:00

36th World festival of Underwater Pictures Marseille, France

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXPOS

4 Nov 2009 - 17:00 - 8 Nov 2009 - 00:00

DEMA 2009 Orlando, Florida

EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS

9 Nov 2009 - 00:00 - 14 Nov 2009 - 22:00

World of Underwater Images - Eilat, Red Sea Eilat, Israel (Red Sea)

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXPOS

23 Jan 2010 - 10:00 - 31 Jan 2010 - 18:00

Boot 2010 Dusseldorf, Germany

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18 Feb 2010 - 09:00 - 21 Feb 2010 - 21:00

Golden Dolphin 2010 Moscow

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXPOS

24 Apr 2010 - 05:00 - 1 May 2010 - 17:00

Underwater Festival - Christmas Island 2010 Christmas Island

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXPOS

15 Jul 2010 - 06:00 - 18 Jul 2010 - 12:00

Diving & Resort Travel Expo 2010 Hong Kong

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30 Jul 2010 - 04:00 - 30 Jul 2010 - 04:00

Malaysia International Dive Expo Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

WORKSHOPS AND GUIDED TRIPS

3 Sep 2010 - 05:51 - 3 Sep 2010 - 05:51

Tony White workshop - USS Liberty Bali Indonesia Bali