

Three new species of mites are found

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Three new species of mites have been found in the Adirondack Park tree canopy, along with a species of lichen not seen in New York State in 40 years.

Graduate student Heather Root said she found the tiny arachnids high in sugar maples at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry's Adirondack Ecological Center in Newcomb, N.Y. She also found a species of lichen never before reported in the Adirondacks. The only time it was reported in New York was in the 1960s on Long Island.

Gregory McGee, Root's co-major professor, said the discovery raises questions about what other secrets the forest holds.

"The surface area she worked with was really small. She sampled small areas of a few trees in a small area of the Adirondacks and she found three species of mites we hadn't seen before," said McGee. "Heaven only knows what else is out there that we don't know about. We just haven't looked."

She presented a paper on her discovery last week in Albany, N.Y., during the Ninth Annual Northeast Natural History Conference.

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