

Eleven-foot 'giant herring' found off Sweden

May 12 2010



A man measures a rare specimen of a species known as the 'King of Herrings' or Giant Oarfish (*Regalecus glesne*) of 3.5 metres (11.4 feet) in length in Bovallstrand, on the western coast of Sweden, May 11. The fish was found near a Marine museum where a fish of this size has not been seen in 130 years.

A "giant herring" measuring 3.5 metres (11.4 feet) has been discovered off Sweden's western coast -- the first such fish found in the Scandinavian country in more than 130 years, a maritime museum said Tuesday.

The *Regalecus glesne*, known as the King of Herrings or Giant Oarfish, was found dead in the small fishing village of Bovallstrand on Sweden's

west coast, about 90 kilometers (56 miles) from the Norwegian border.

"Down at the water, there was something big floating. At first we thought it was a big piece of plastic. But then we saw an eye. I went down to check and saw that it was this extremely strange [fish](#)," Kurt Ove Eriksson, the passer-by who found the specimen, told daily Svenska Dagbladet.

The rarely seen regalecus, the world's longest bony fish, can reach up to 12 meters.

"The last time we saw a King of Herrings in Sweden was in 1879," the House of the Sea museum in Lysekil, where the fish was taken to, said in a statement.

"We don't know much about the species," it said, "but believe it lives in [deep waters](#), at least 1000 meters (3280 feet) deep, and many believe it's at the origin of the sea serpent myth," or stories of mythological [sea creatures](#) like the Loch Ness Monster.

The dead fish, which was frozen at the museum, had a deep cut through its body and was missing its beautiful, typical back fin, the museum said, adding the fish might be added to an exhibit on sea monsters planned later this year.

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