

New praying mantis named after US Supreme Court justice

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One of the US Supreme Court's justices has extended her influence to the insect world, inspiring the name of a newly discovered praying mantis species.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the second woman to sit on the nation's top court, is the namesake for the new "Ilomantis ginsburgae" [species](#), the Museum of Natural History in Cleveland announced Wednesday.

The museum identified the new species by creating a classification system based on characteristics of its females.

Researchers said they wanted to honor 83-year-old Ginsburg for her "relentless fight for gender equality."

The diminutive Jewish grandmother, just over 5 feet (1.5 meters) tall, has a strong pop-cultural following, especially among young people. She gained particular notoriety as a top ally of the women's rights movement in the 1960s and '70s.

"Traditionally in praying mantis taxonomy we use the male genital characters to help delimit and describe [new species](#)," said researcher Sydney Brannoch in a video posted online by the museum.

"However we were curious to see if we could use female genital characters to do the same thing," she added.

After dissecting out the genitalia, researchers examined the specimens under a microscope and could "unambiguously differentiate between the two species of ilomantis."

The reference to Ginsburg is additionally a nod to the jabot she favors, an old-fashioned lace ornament that adorns the collar of the judge's robe.

Jabot is also a term used to describe esophagus swelling in some insects and birds.

The progressive justice was nominated to the Supreme Court by president Bill Clinton in 1993, where the octogenarian continues to serve despite several battles with cancer.

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