

A batfish and a blind eel: Deep sea creatures discovered by researchers in remote ocean

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Deep-sea batfish. Credit: Museums Victoria

Hair-raising photos of newly discovered sea creatures that evolved to survive the world's deepest depths reveal an extraordinary look at life from the abyss.

Images were released earlier this month of several previously unknown

fish discovered in the Indian Ocean off of Australia's remote Cocos (Keeling) Islands Marine Park. A blind eel with transparent, gelatinous skin was among the never-before-seen specimens.

The [research vessel](#) operated by CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, mapped the park area in detail for the first time, collecting samples from as deep as three miles below the surface. The vessel's 35-day journey covered nearly 7,000 miles and ended Nov. 3.

The science team found "massive" ancient sea-mountains, canyons formed from avalanches of sand and "an amazing number of potentially new species living in this remote marine park," said Tim O'Hara, Chief Scientist of the expedition.



Blind eel. Credit: Museums Victoria

CSIRO Hydrographic Surveyor Nelson Kuna said that very little high-resolution mapping had been done in the park prior to this voyage.

"It's truly an honor to see, for the first time, these stunning features revealed from the deep," Kuna said.

The voyage is a [collaboration](#) between Museums Victoria Research Institute and CSIRO, in partnership with Bush Blitz, Parks Australia, Australian Museum Research Institute and the Western Australian Museum.

Jason Mundy of Parks Australia said the voyage is important to better understand the unique habitats and species of remote waters.

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