

Wild Things

Scientists discover hundreds of plants and animals in Asia.

Talk about hide-and-seek! Scientists in Asia recently discovered more than 350 plant and animal species. The species were found in the Himalayas (hi-muh-LAY-uhss). Those are mountains in southern Asia.



Leigh Haeger

One of the species has researchers hopping for joy. It is a “flying” frog. The bright green animal was found in India. It uses its long, webbed feet to **glide**, or float, through the air.

Another discovery is the leaf deer. It is the world’s smallest deer. It’s only about 25 to 30 inches tall. Researchers found the animal in the nearby country of Myanmar.

The scientists made the discoveries from 1998 to 2008. Besides India and Myanmar, they looked in **regions** of three other countries. A region is an area. Those countries are Bhutan, China, and Nepal.

The researchers uncovered flowers and a snake. They also found a monkey. It is the first new type of monkey to be discovered in more than 100 years.

Experts are excited about the discoveries, but they are also worried. The species’ **habitat**, or home, is in trouble. Loggers are cutting down trees in the Himalayas. To protect the mountains, nature groups are asking countries to guard the land from people trying to destroy it.

In the meantime, scientists are continuing to search the Himalayas for more plants and animals. “There will be close to 3,000 to 5,000 species that [could] be discovered ... over the next five years,” says wildlife expert Bittu Sahgal.

Spot the Species

Here's a look at some of the plants and animals that caught scientists' attention while they were studying the Himalayas.



WWF/Nepal

Meet Bambi's mini-me! The **leaf deer** is less than 3 feet tall. At about 25 pounds, the deer weighs as much as a medium-sized dog.



WWF/Nepal

Talk about flower power! The **blue diamond impatiens** (im-PAY-shehnz) changes color depending on the weather. When temperatures rise, this blue flower turns purple.



WWF/Nepal

Don't let its name fool you. The **orange-spotted snakehead** is actually a fish. The colorful creature lives in ponds and swamps.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is special about the monkey that was discovered in the Himalayas?

- A It can float through the air.
- B It changes color depending on the weather.
- C It is less than 3 feet tall and weighs 25 pounds.
- D It is the first new type of monkey to be found in over 100 years.

2. Which of the following does the author describe last in the passage?

- A The author describes where the new species were found.
- B The author describes three different new species that were found.
- C The author describes the dangers to the new species' habitats.
- D The author describes the plans to keep searching for more new species.

3. It can be inferred from the passage that

- A it is extremely cold in the Himalayas because they are mountains
- B there are probably species in the Himalayas that scientists will not find
- C the world's smallest deer is an excellent mountain climber
- D the blue diamond impatiens only changes color when the weather in the Himalayas gets colder

4. Read the following sentence: "Researchers found the animal in the nearby country of Myanmar."

In this sentence **researchers** means

- A doctors
- B scientists
- C loggers
- D mountains

5. This passage is mostly about

- A the discovery of new species in the Himalayas
- B the orange-spotted snakehead and its life in the Himalayas
- C what it is like to go hiking in the Himalayas
- D how experts plan to search the Himalayas for more species

6. What was recently discovered in the Himalayas?

7. Why could the search for new species in the Himalayas be described as a race against time?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Loggers are cutting down trees in the Himalayas _____ many species are losing their habitat.

- A although
- B but
- C because
- D so

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

Scientists found more than 350 new plant and animal species in the Himalayas and other regions in Asia.

Who? Scientists

(did) What? _____

Where? _____

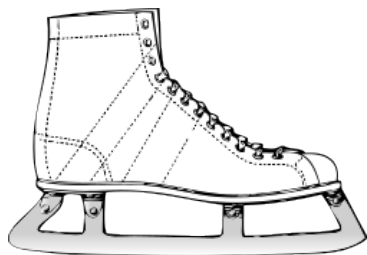
10. Read the vocabulary word and definition below and complete questions 10a, 10b, and 11.

Vocabulary Word: glide (glide): to move in a smooth way.

10a. Read the sentences below and underline the word **glide**.

1. The students loved seeing the paper airplanes that they made in science class glide through the air.
2. It must be fun for ice skaters to glide across the ice.
3. Once it stops snowing, I can't wait to glide down the hill on my sled.
4. The skydiver opened his parachute and glided safely to the ground.
5. The sailboat glides across the lake in the gentle breeze.

10b. Which shoe may be used to glide?



11. Does an elephant glide through the woods? Why or why not?
