

World's smallest reptile discovered in Madagascar

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Scientists say they have discovered what could be the smallest reptile in the world. It is a kind of chameleon and is the size of a sunflower seed. Chameleons are usually around 35-40cm long.

Scientists found two of the tiny lizards - a male and a female - in the mountains in northern Madagascar. They are just 22mm long from nose to tail. The length of the male's body is 13.5mm. At first, the scientists thought the tiny reptiles were juveniles, but later realised they were fully-grown adults. The scientists called the miniature creatures nano-chameleons. The scientists tried to find more of the nano-chameleons, but "despite great effort" could not find any others.

Madagascar is home to two-thirds of the world's chameleon species. Scientists believe they may have originated there. However, the chameleon's survival is threatened by deforestation on the island. One of the scientists said the nano-chameleons are lucky to survive. He said: "The nano-chameleon's habitat has unfortunately been subject to deforestation, but the area was placed under protection recently, so the species will survive." A study published by the journal "Nature Climate Change" stated that nearly all of Madagascar's eastern rainforest could disappear by 2070 if deforestation and climate change does not slow down. This would put many of the island's unique species in danger.

Sources: theguardian.com / dw.com / yahoo.com

Writing

It is important to spend money on discovering new species. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scientists / reptile / size / sunflower / seed / lizard / mountains / adults / miniature / home / species / survival / lucky / habitat / deforestation / protection / rainforest

True / False

- a) Scientists discovered tiny chameleons the size of sunflower seeds. T / F
- b) The chameleons were just 35mm long. T / F
- c) Scientists found two chameleons - one was male and one was female. T / F
- d) Both of the chameleons were juveniles. T / F
- e) Around two-thirds of the world's chameleons live in Madagascar. T / F
- f) A scientist said the chameleon's future survival is in great danger. T / F
- g) Madagascar could lose all of its rainforest by 2070. T / F
- h) Deforestation could endanger many of Madagascar's unique species. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. kind | a. emerged |
| 2. tiny | b. in spite of |
| 3. juvenile | c. surroundings |
| 4. creatures | d. adolescent |
| 5. despite | e. die out |
| 6. originated | f. animals |
| 7. threatened | g. type |
| 8. habitat | h. special |
| 9. disappear | i. very small |
| 10. unique | j. endangered |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think about reptiles?
- c) What do you know about chameleons?
- d) How can we reverse the effects of deforestation?
- e) What do you think of animals becoming endangered?
- f) How would you feel if rainforest disappeared?
- g) How can we stop animals from dying out?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the scientists?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. discovered what could be the | a. world's chameleon species |
| 2. the size of a sunflower | b. nose to tail |
| 3. Chameleons are usually around | c. change |
| 4. They are just 22mm long from | d. 35-40cm long |
| 5. they were fully- | e. protection recently |
| 6. home to two-thirds of the | f. smallest reptile in the world |
| 7. chameleons are lucky | g. species in danger |
| 8. the area was placed under | h. to survive |
| 9. climate | i. seed |
| 10. put many of the island's unique | j. grown adults |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about reptiles?
- What reptiles do you like?
- How are reptiles different from other animals?
- What do you think of the nano-chameleon?
- How important is this discovery?
- Would you like to be a scientist?
- Would you like to see the nano-chameleons?
- Should more money be spent on finding more nano-chameleons?

Spelling

- the size of a sfroewnul seed
- in ernhtonr Madagascar
- The lneght of the male's body
- the tiny reptiles were senuivelj
- the aniertmiu creatures
- peesidt great effort
- they may have ogretiidna there
- the chameleon's varvilus
- dtteahnree by deforestation
- The nano-chameleon's btihtaa
- the area was placed under opctorntie
- the island's euuqni species

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. i	3. d	4. f	5. b
6. a	7. j	8. c	9. e	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Deforestation

You think deforestation is the biggest threat to animals. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their threats aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): global warming, plastic or deforestation.

Role B – Global Warming

You think global warming is the biggest threat to animals. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their threats aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): deforestation, plastic or deforestation.

Role C – Plastic

You think plastic is the biggest threat to animals. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their threats aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): global warming, deforestation or deforestation.

Role D – Hunting

You think hunting is the biggest threat to animals. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their threats aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): global warming, plastic or deforestation.

Speaking – Threats

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest threats to animals at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| • Deforestation | • Fur trade |
| • Invasive species | • Hunting |
| • Trade in animal parts | • Disease |
| • Global warming | • Plastic |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.