

Despite choppy waters brought on by the tailwind effects of a cyclone, researchers on a pioneering deep-sea expedition in the waters off the southern coast of West Java uncovered many living treasures some 500m to 2km under the sea. At least three were previously unknown to science. [Samantha Boh](#) looks at some of these intriguing creatures uncovered by the team led by scientists from Singapore and Indonesia.



DEEP-SEA DECORATOR CRAB (left)

This is a new species of deep-sea decorator crab of the genus *Tunepugetia*, one of more than 30 crab species found so far. This crab places objects on the rows of hairs on its body to camouflage itself from predators as it scavenges for food on the ocean floor. It is 5cm long and is found from 400m to 800m underwater.

PHOTOS: SJADES 2018



ICE CREAM CONE WORM (above)

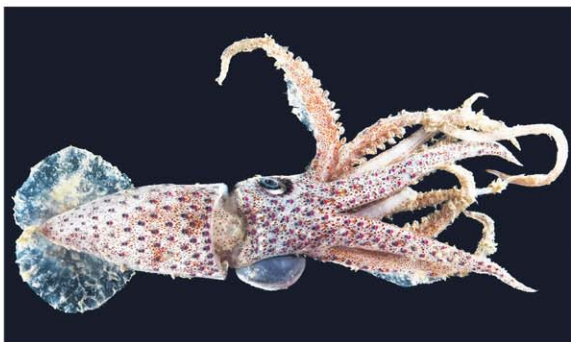
This 6cm-long deep-sea tubedwelling worm uses its tentacles to paste sediment grains to the conical tube as it grows, forming a structure which resembles an ice cream cone. It has a characteristic set of golden spines surrounding the mouth, which it uses to dig into soft sediment. It can be found 300m underwater.

Creatures of the deep



DUMBO OCTOPUS (left)

Nicknamed the Dumbo octopus because of its resemblance to a Disney character, this specimen was trawled from about 900m underwater, off the coast of south-west Java. It feels like jelly to the touch and had a dark purple hue when first collected. It swims using two large flaps on its head and is 15cm to 20cm long.



COCK-EYED SQUID

Measuring some 8cm long excluding its tentacles, this squid is peculiar because one eye is naturally much larger than the other. It apparently swims with the larger eye

looking downwards for food, while the smaller eye peers upwards, presumably on the lookout for predators. It can be found from 300m underwater.



CHAIN-SAW LOBSTER

Thaumastocheles massonktenos is a rare deep-sea blind lobster with a right claw that is lined with sharp teeth. Scientists, however, suspect the claw is not a predatory device

but acts to sieve bottom substrates from the small animals they eat. The lobster is rarely collected, as it digs deep burrows and can be found only from depths of 500m.



SEA TULIP

The glass sponge, *Hyalonema sp.*, is the blob on top which resembles a tulip, hence its common name "sea tulip". It is supported by a twisted tuft of glass fibres which is anchored to the seabed. The "tulip" sways with the current, filtering the water for organic matter. It is about 1m long and is found at depths of 300m to 2km.



DARTH VADER OF THE SEAS

Of two species of this giant sea isopod, *Bathynomus* found, one is almost 30cm long. This one pictured is believed to be new to science. These

important deep-sea scavengers have not been officially observed in Indonesia. They can be found from 800m below the water surface.



SNOW WHITE

The deep-sea *Munidopsis nitida* is a squat lobster that is ghostly white, and is nicknamed Snow White by the expedition team. It lives on

sunken wood, an important deep-sea habitat, and is believed to feed on rotting wood. It is 4cm long and lives from 800m underwater.