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Researchers find world's largest fish breeding ground – 17th January, 2022

Level 4

Scientists made a big discovery in Antarctica - the world's largest fish breeding ground. Researchers from a marine research institute found the fish while mapping the seabed. They discovered schools of around 60 million icefish breeding in an area 240 square kilometers in size. The researchers had been filming the seabed for months. One said the idea that a huge breeding area of icefish in the sea was previously undiscovered "is totally fascinating".

The researchers want the area to be a Marine Protected Area to preserve the unique habitat. They want to keep the waters pristine. A recent study found that fishing boats in Antarctica are bringing millions of species from all around the globe. These are threatening the area's fragile eco-systems. Another researcher said the remoteness and sea-ice in Antarctica have protected it, but we should "be much more ambitious with marine conservation".

Level 5

Scientists have made a surprising discovery in Antarctica - the world's largest breeding ground for fish. Researchers from a German marine research institute came across the fish while mapping the Antarctic seabed. They discovered schools of around 60 million icefish breeding in an area roughly 240 square kilometers in size. The researchers had been towing cameras to a depth of 530 metres under the sea for months. A deep-sea biologist said: "The idea that such a huge breeding area of icefish in the Weddell Sea was previously undiscovered is totally fascinating."

The researchers are hoping to establish the area as a Marine Protected Area. They say it is a unique habitat that must be preserved. They want to prevent fishing to keep the waters as pristine as possible. A recent study found that fishing trawlers in Antarctica are bringing millions of "hitch-hiking" species from all around the globe. These are threatening the area's fragile eco-systems. A researcher said: "The remoteness and difficult sea-ice conditions of this southernmost area...have protected it, but...we should be much more ambitious with marine conservation."

Level 6

Scientists in Antarctica have made a surprising and welcome discovery - the world's largest breeding ground for fish. Researchers from Germany's Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research came across the fish while mapping the seabed of the Antarctic Weddell Sea. They discovered schools of around 60 million icefish breeding in an area roughly 240 square kilometers in size. The research team had been towing a number of cameras to a depth of 530 metres under the Weddell Sea for months. Deep-sea biologist Autun Purser commented on the find. He said: "The idea that such a huge breeding area of icefish in the Weddell Sea was previously undiscovered is totally fascinating."

The researchers have been exploring the region hoping to establish it as an official Marine Protected Area. They say the seas are a unique habitat that must be preserved. They want to prevent fishing and invasive research to keep the waters as pristine as possible. A recent University of Cambridge study found that fishing trawlers in Antarctica are bringing millions of "hitch-hiking" species from 1,500 ports around the globe. These are threatening the area's fragile eco-systems. A researcher said: "So far, the remoteness and difficult sea-ice conditions of this southernmost area...have protected it, but...we should be much more ambitious with marine conservation."