



Cave-Dwelling Fish Discovered in Meghalaya

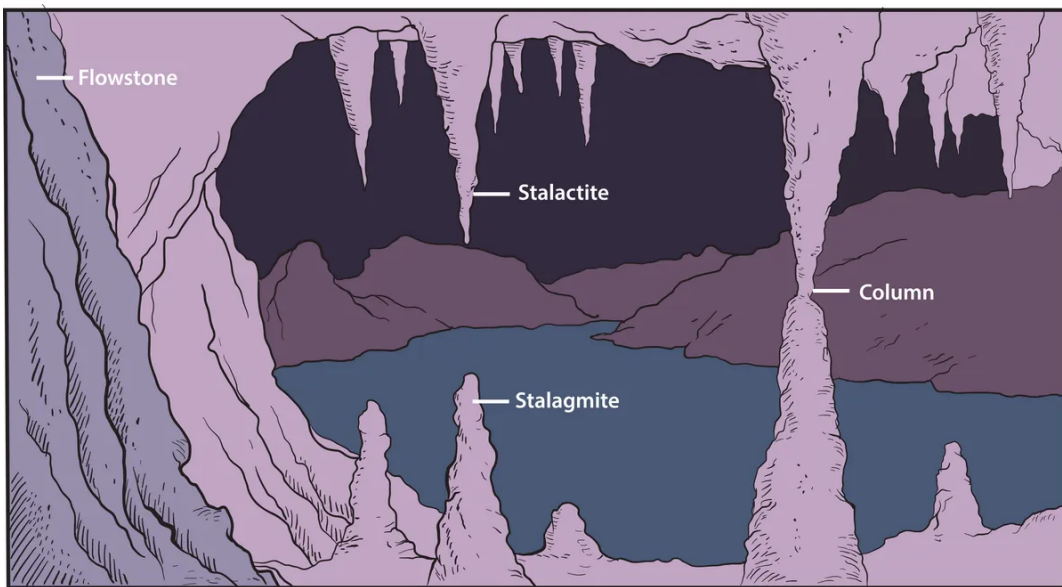
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A **new species** of **cave-adapted fish**, *Schistura densiclava*, has been discovered in **Krem Mawjymbuin cave** in **Meghalaya (East Khasi Hills)**.

- **About:** *Schistura densiclava* is a **troglophile species**, meaning it can live in both **underground** (subterranean) and **aboveground** (epigean) habitats.
 - It belongs to the **Nemacheilidae family**, and is the **6th cave fish species** recorded from Meghalaya.



- **Habitat:** It is found **60 meters** inside **Krem Mawjymbuin cave**, in a **cool, fast-flowing stream** (18°C, low oxygen).
 - The species' presence is restricted to the cave, indicating it is **endemic** to this **cave system**.
- **Adaptation:** Unlike fully blind cavefish, it retains **pigmentation and eyesight**.
- **Morphology:** It has a **pale yellow-green body** with 14-20 grey-black bars, a thick dorsal stripe (*densiclava*), and shows sexual dimorphism with **slimmer males and sturdier females**.
- **Krem Mawjymbuin (limestone cave)** is carved out of **calcareous sandstone** and adorned with elegant **stalactites** and **stalagmites** formed by mineral-rich **calcium carbonate**.
 - Inside the cave lies **Symper Rock**, a striking **dome-shaped structure** characterized by its **unusually flat summit**.



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