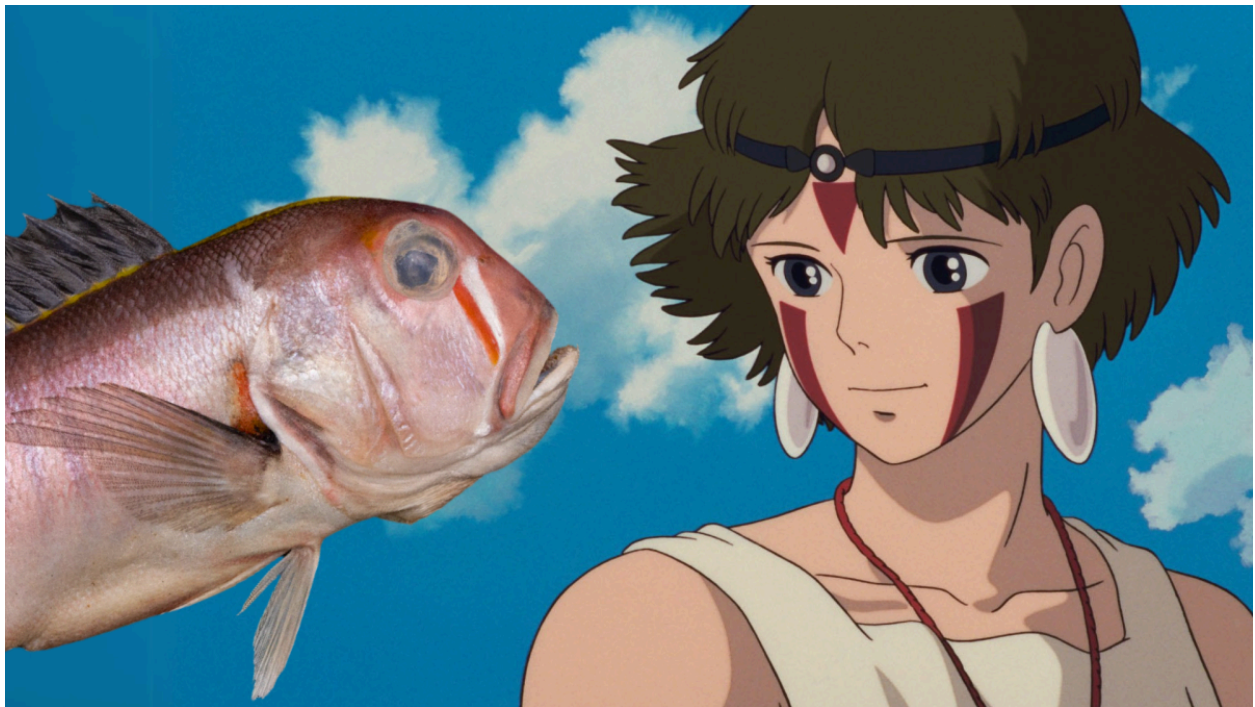


Fish Named After Anime Character

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. **reference** (verb): to mention or refer to someone or something. Example: Australian musician Nick Cave often references Biblical stories and classic literature in his lyrics.
2. **delve** (verb): to research or examine something in detail. Example: The documentary delves into the impact of climate change on wildlife around the world.
3. **complex** (adjective): having many different connected parts; complicated or difficult to understand. Example: The Space Shuttle was one of the most complex machines ever built.
4. **harmonious** (adjective): peaceful and without disagreement. Example: My partner and I have a harmonious relationship and rarely argue.
5. **coexistence** (noun): the fact of existing together in the same place or at the same time. Example: The coexistence of good and evil is a common theme in literature.
6. **echo** (verb): to share the same ideas, opinions, etc. that someone else expressed. Example: The ambassador's comments about the crisis echoed those from other world leaders and diplomats.



"I stink like a human," San says after helping a human in Hayao Miyazaki's 1997 animated film Princess Mononoke. San, also known as Princess Mononoke, is a human herself, but she was raised by wolf gods and learned to hate humans. She even fights humans while wearing red war paint on her cheeks. Well, now maybe we can ask San which is worse—to stink like a human or

to stink like a fish! Researchers in China have named a newly discovered species of fish after San, because the fish has a red line on its face that looks similar to San's war paint.

The new fish, a type of deepwater tilefish, has been named *Branchiostegus sanae*, with the "sanae" coming from San's name. Deepwater tilefish are usually found deep in the ocean, with some species found 600 meters underwater. They're also popular to eat and are commonly found in seafood markets in East and Southeast Asia. Explaining the choice to reference Princess Mononoke, the study's lead author, Haochen Huang, said: "The film delves into the complex relationship between humans and nature, promoting a message of harmonious coexistence between the two: something we hope to echo through this naming." The researchers suggest that the common English name for the fish should be the "Mononoke tilefish."

This isn't the only animal scientists have named after a character from a Miyazaki movie: there's also a worm named after his 1988 film *My Neighbor Totoro*. In fact, scientists seem to love naming things after characters in movies, and they've been inspired by everything from science fiction to Disney animation. Among the many examples, there are insects named after Darth Vader from *Star Wars*, lizards and insects named after the movie monster Godzilla, and even a type of leech named after Buzz Lightyear from *Toy Story*. This trend of naming newly discovered species after popular culture characters highlights the influence of these movies and characters on scientists.

DISCUSSION

1. What are your thoughts on the new fish being named after Princess Mononoke?
2. Have you seen Princess Mononoke? If so, what did you make of it? If not, would you like to watch it?
3. If you discovered a new animal species, who or what would you name it after?
4. Have you heard of any other unique or unusual names for a plant or animal?
5. Did you study biology in school? Did you enjoy it?
6. What other popular culture characters do you think would make interesting names for new species?
7. How do you feel about the influence of movies and characters on scientific discoveries?