

Mononoke Tilefish

Why in News?

A Chinese research team has discovered a new fish species, named Mononoke tilefish.

- **Mononoke Tilefish** - It is a new species of **deep-water tilefish**.
- **Discovered in** - South China Sea, the continental slope area between Hainan Island and Xisha Qundao at a depth of about 200 meters.
- **Taxonomy**
 - **Scientific name** - Branchiostegus sanae.
 - **Genus** - Branchiostegus, are 19 species only 3 species have been discovered.
- It is known as Ghost Horsehead Fish.
- **Size** - 40 centimeters.
- **Habitat** - Sandy and muddy bottoms on the edges of continental and oceanic plates.
- **Distribution** - South China Sea, East and Southeast Asia.
- Found from warm temperate to tropical oceans.
- **Morphology** - Large body with an eyes close to its head, nostril oval-like shape, mouth terminal and jaws rows with canine-like teeth.
- Its upper part pale orange mixed with yellow stripes, and lower part dark grey with inconspicuous yellow blotch near base.



- **Uniqueness** - Cheek markers are red and white stripes that run vertically from the eyes to the cheeks.
- Approximately light 16 vertical stripes present along the body.
- It is the **only one with vertical stripes** on the body.
- **Behavior** - It lives at great depths, with some found 600 m below the surface.

Did You Know?

Mononoke Tilefish's distinctive cheek stripes, earning it the name of a character from the animated movie "Princess Mononoke."

- **Threats** - People consume and sell in markets in East and Southeast Asia.
- **Conservation status** - It hasn't yet been concluded.

References

1. [English News| Mononoke tilefish in South China Sea](#)
2. [Zookeys| Branchiostegus Sanae](#)

