

Arachnophobes look away now: Stunning BLUE tarantula is one of 30 new species discovered in Guyana's Kaieteur National Park

- Kaieteur National Park is known to have huge value globally for conservation
- It shelters species on the verge of extinction, including Tepui swifts and jaguars
- Researchers discovered 30 new species, including aquatic beetles and fish
- The most distinctive discovery was a blue tarantula, which is yet to be named

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A stunning blue tarantula is one of 30 new species discovered by scientists in Guyana.

Researchers found a wealth of new creatures while searching the Kaieteur National Park, including six species of fish, 15 aquatic beetles and five dragon flies.

The incredible findings highlight the unbelievably rich biodiversity in Guyana.



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Researchers from the Global Wildlife Conservation discovered the new species in Kaieteur National Park and the Upper Potaro area in Guyana – areas that are part of a largely intact forest landscape.

The region is known to have huge value globally for conservation, and shelters several species that are vulnerable or on the verge of extinction, including Tepui swifts, Guianan cock of the rock, white-lipped peccary and the golden rocket frog.

A spokesperson for Global Wildlife Conservation said: 'Guyana is one of the world's most important countries for biodiversity conservation with the second highest percentage of forest cover on Earth, high levels of biological diversity and species that are found nowhere else.'

THE NEW SPECIES

Researchers from the Global Wildlife Conservation discovered the new species in Kaieteur National Park and the Upper Potaro area in Guyana.

More than 30 new species were found by the researchers, including:

- Six species of fish
- Three plants
- 15 aquatic beetles
- Five odonates (insects including dragon flies and the damselfly)
- One blue tarantula



Researchers from the Global Wildlife Conservation discovered the new species in Kaieteur National Park (pictured) and the Upper Potaro area in Guyana – areas that are part of a largely intact forest landscape

More than 30 new species were found by the researchers, including six species of fish, three plants, 15 aquatic beetles and five odonates.

One of the most interesting finds was a new species of tarantula, with a distinctive blue hue. While scientists have established that there are at least 40 species of blue spiders in the world, they are still unsure why the creatures have evolved to have this colouration.



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In 2015, researchers from the University of Akron, Ohio suggested that it was unlikely the colour evolved due to sexual selection - which is the case with other coloured spider species.

Mr Bor-Kai Hsiung, lead author of the study, told the [BBC](#): 'It evolved from multiple origins and different mechanisms produce the very same blue colour.'

'That's very strong evidence to suggest that this blue colour has a very important visual signalling function.'

'But if it's not for other tarantulas, then it must be to some other receivers out there.'

The researchers suggest that the colour may help the spiders to hide from predators at night, although Mr Hsiung concluded: 'We don't know

POECILOThERIA METALLICA

The discovery of the new species comes shortly after a video emerged online showing another species of blue tarantula, called *Poecilotheria metallica*.

The *Poecilotheria metallica* is a species of spider that is bright blue with white stripes.

The spider can be found solely in a 38 square miles (100 square kilometre) area of India, called Andhra Pradesh.

According to IUCN Red List, *Poecilotheria metallica* is listed as critically endangered, because of its range restriction, single location and decline in habitat quality.



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The incredible video was uploaded to ViralHog by Barcelona-based medical student, Daniel Valcarcel, although it is unclear where it was filmed.

It shows the tarantula, which is bright blue with white stripes, crawling up and down a man's hand.