

Golden Wonder-ful

You wouldn't think an animal this colorful (below) could hide for long. But after the Jackson's climbing salamander was first discovered as a new species in 1975 by scientists in Guatemala, it seemed to disappear. People made expeditions to search for the little amphibian, which is also known as the "golden wonder." When they couldn't find any, they thought the species might have gone extinct. A conservation group even added it to its list of 25 Most Wanted Lost Species.

Then, last year, a guard out on patrol at a wildlife preserve in Guatemala spotted a small, bright golden salamander. He took a photo and scientists confirmed the wonderful news: The missing golden wonder had been found!



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Planting Poop

The black bears at Rocky Mountain National Park may not be helping to plant a garden on purpose.

But thanks to the bears' scat, or poop, people have planted tens of thousands of new plants all around the park!

In the Rockies, berries from native plants such as Oregon grape and chokecherry are an important part of black bears' diets. So when those bears poop, the scat they leave is full of the plants' seeds. Workers at the park decided to collect some of that seedy scat and try to use

it to grow plants. Why? For one thing, it's much easier to collect a single pile of scat than to collect all the seeds from the native plants that make them.

Also, some of those seeds have tough coatings. A quick trip through a bear's digestive system softens up the seeds and gets them ready to sprout. The workers plant the seeds inside a greenhouse. And once the seedlings are big and strong enough, they replant them throughout the park.