

Our doors are closed for now as Toronto remains in lockdown. We have reconfigured our halls and modified some exhibits, so we are ready to welcome you back when we can. Take a peek at our comprehensive plan.

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Science stories of 2020 you won't want to miss!



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COVID-19 and climate change may have dominated the news coverage, but there were other discoveries, inventions and observations that you will want to know about, like glow-in-the-dark platypuses, wound-healing 3D-printable skin and earthbound bits of Benu.

As 2020 draws to a close, the Ontario Science Centre has rounded up 10 science gems you'll want to see. We chose these stories because they push the boundaries of science to help us learn about our past, benefit our future and add wonder to our present.



High-tech gloves can translate signs into sound

Gloves embedded with thin stretchy sensors can turn the hand motions of American Sign Language (ASL) into audible English, via a smartphone app, while sticky sensors on the face capture the facial components of ASL.

Photo credit: Jun Chen Lab/ UCLA
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A "blade-like" coral reef, almost as tall as the CN Tower, is discovered amid the Great Barrier Reef

A detached coral reef, which had until now gone unnoticed, stands almost 500 metres high, and is the first new find of its stature in over 120 years. It was discovered while scientists were out mapping part of the ocean floor. [Read the story](#)



Platypuses have fluorescent fur

The platypus is a mammal that lays eggs, has venomous spurs on its hind legs, and hunts at night with its eyes closed. It turns out it has a glow-in-the-dark coat too.

[Read the story](#)



Bits of asteroid Benu will be coming to Earth for examination

NASA's OSIRIS-REx mission met one of its goals just two days after landing on the asteroid Benu: it collected more than 60g of rocks and dust off the asteroid face—enough to keep scientists busy for decades to come.

Photo credit: Courtesy NASA
[Read the story](#)



A beaked whale sets a record with its 222-minute underwater dive

Cuvier's beaked whales already held the record for the deepest and the longest mammalian dives ever. But an even longer dive by the same species has now clocked in at 3 hours 42 minutes.

[Read the story](#)



Young alligators can grow back lost tails—but not the way you'd expect

When a juvenile alligator loses a piece of its tail in an accident, the appendage grows back. But the replacement tail is a bit of a fake—with no bone or muscle, just cartilage. [Read the story](#)



Shy planets caught on camera orbiting their star

The European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope has snapped a rare photo of a star that resembles our Sun in its younger years, with two planets moving around it. It's the very first time we've captured multiple planets orbiting a star similar to our own.

Photo credit: ESA [Read the story](#)



A beetle that can withstand being run over by a car can teach us a thing or two about structure

Engineers are studying the body of the "diabolical ironclad beetle" in an effort to design sturdier aircraft gas turbines and other machinery. [Read the story](#)



A hand-held 3D printer can print wound-healing skin at the bedside

Printed skin, which can roll off the printer and be put in place within just two minutes, contains stem cells that help real skin grow back after a serious burn.

Photo credit: Daria Perevezentsev/ University of Toronto Engineering
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Twenty species—until now completely unknown to science—were discovered in Bolivia

A tiny frog, a poisonous snake, four orchids and four butterflies were among the 20 entirely new species identified by scientists during 14 days of very intense fieldwork in the forests of Bolivia's Zongo Valley in the Andes.

Photo credit: © Trond Larsen
[Read the story](#)