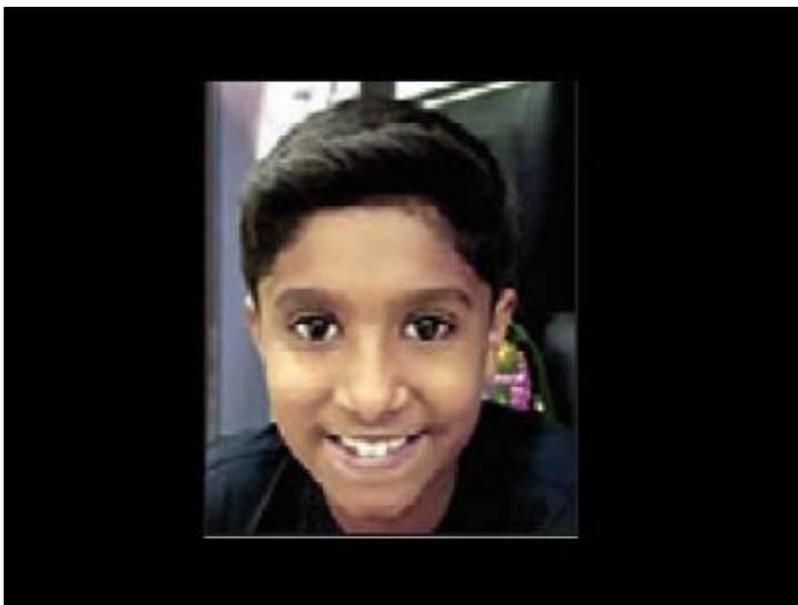


Printed from

THE TIMES OF INDIA

9-year-old TN boy discovers new species of jellyfish in Kodaikanal lake

TNN | Jul 3, 2017, 07.36 AM IST



COIMBATORE: A fun-filled boat ride on the cold lake and may be a chance encounter with a bison - Ishaan Abraham Pichamuthu had made his to-do list even before that trip to Kodaikanal. But little did the nine-year-old science enthusiast know that the pleasure trip would lead to the discovery of a new species of freshwater jellyfish thriving in the depths of Kodaikanal lake. His finding will be included in the Animal Discoveries records brought out by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) this year.

He has always been fascinated by marine creatures, Ishaan, a class IV student of Ida Scudder School in Vellore, told TOI. "I have always been curious about insects, fish and other such creatures. I love to read about them and collect specimens from wherever I go," he said.

It was during a family trip to Kodaikanal that he spotted the rare jellyfish. "When we were boating in Kodai, I was intently looking into the water to spot fish. When I saw small jellyfish, I became curious. My father told me it was rare to find them in freshwater. So I decided to collect some specimens," he said.

Ishaan's father Kishore Pichamuthu works in the Christian Medical College. The father-son duo collected some of the 1cm wide

creatures and brought them home. "We found that none of the literature had mentioned this particular species. A specimen was taken to the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management at Anna University in Chennai and the Christian Medical College, Vellore where they were studied for more than six months," Kishore said.

Former director of the Zoological Survey of India K Venkataraman confirmed that the jellyfish Ishaan discovered was the first of its kind discovered in India. "Freshwater jellyfish are extremely rare. The number of antennae and the reproductive system of this newly found creature is different from the earlier ones discovered from Khandala in Mumbai in 1912," he said.

Subsequently, the species was registered with the regional ZSI office in Chennai on February 22.