

SCIENCE NEWS

AT LAST BLAST OFF!



Doug Hurley (far right) and Bob Behnken (second right) with other crew on board the ISS



The SpaceX craft blasts into space to link up with the ISS

THE SpaceX spacecraft has taken astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS) for the first time.

The company's Crew Dragon spacecraft was supposed to launch on Wednesday but it was postponed with just 15 minutes to go, due to bad weather.

However on Saturday (30th May), crowds in Florida, USA, witnessed the spectacular sight of the rocket soaring into a blue sky. It was also watched live around the world.

This was a special and historic flight. It was the first time that astronauts have left Earth from the USA for nine years. Since 2011, NASA has been using Russian rockets to take its astronauts up to the ISS.

It was also the first time that astronauts have been taken into space by a private company.

NASA, the US Government's space agency, bought the seats for the two astronauts in the same way that we buy seats on aeroplanes! Except the cost is thought to be around \$55 million (about £43m) per seat!

On Sunday, the spacecraft successfully docked with the ISS, which orbits the Earth 250 miles above us. The American astronauts will stay there for about three months, carrying out experiments.

SpaceX is owned by the billionaire businessman Elon Musk.

Questions on: 'At last blast off!'

1) Who built the Crew Dragon spacecraft?

2) Why didn't the launch happen on Wednesday 27th May?

3) The launch went ahead on Saturday. When did the spacecraft dock with the International Space Station?

- Later that day
- The next day
- Three days later

4) Can you find the **two reasons** why this was a "historic flight"?

1: _____

2: _____

5) How have American astronauts been getting to the International Space Station for the last nine years?

6) NASA paid SpaceX to take the astronauts to the ISS. What does the journalist compare this to?

7) How much has NASA paid SpaceX for this flight?

- More than £80 million
- £43 million
- £55 million

8) Several companies are planning 'space tourism' – where people pay to have a flight in space.

Do you think this will ever happen and will it be successful?

Would you pay to go into space?

ANIMAL NEWS

STAG beetle season is here and experts need your help to monitor this rare and magnificent insect.

Stag beetles are the UK's largest beetle. They used to be common in the south of England, but are sadly now quite rare. For years they live underground as larvae (see below). But in May and June, the adult beetles emerge in order to find a mate.

The PTES (People's Trust for Endangered Species) is asking for our help to spot stag beetles. It wants to map where the beetles are found and track their numbers.

The best time to spot stag beetles is on a warm, summer's evening, when the insects like to fly around. They are easily recognised by their large 'antlers', which are only found on the males. And don't worry, the antlers are used to battle other males and impress the females – they don't bite!

If you are lucky enough to spot one, record your sighting at www.ptes.org/stagbeetles. The website also has lots of useful information on how you can help this iconic insect.



Stag beetle larvae

The curious life of a stag beetle:

- Stag beetles spend up to seven years underground as a larvae.
- They feed on rotting wood.
- Once fully grown, the larvae build a cocoon in the soil and change into beetles.
- In the summer, the adults dig their way out of the soil.
- They fly around to find a mate and lay eggs.
- The beetles only live for a few weeks. By the end of August, most of them will have died.



Male and female stag beetles

Questions on: 'Beetle watch'

- 1) Why is this beetle called a **stag** beetle?
- 2) How does the PTES want you to help?
- 3) For how long is the insect a larvae?
For how long is it a beetle?
- 4) Put the four stages of a stag beetle's life in the correct order.
The first one has been done for you.
- 5) Why is this time of year 'stag beetle season'?
- 6) When is the best time to try to spot a stag beetle?
- 7) What does the writer say you shouldn't worry about?
- 8) Do you think the journalist likes these insects, or not? Which words or sentences give you the answer?

	Cocoon
	Larva
	Beetle
1	Egg

MARINE DISCOVERIES

LOUD LOBSTERS

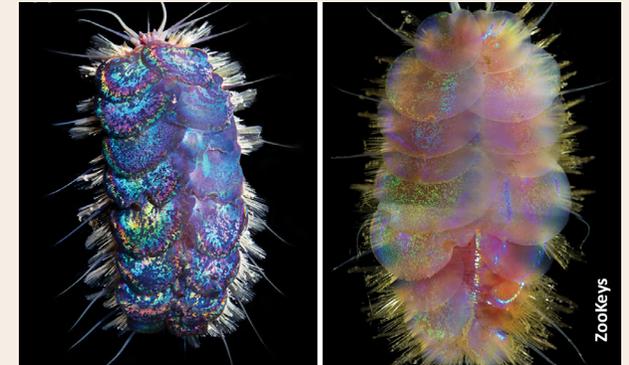
A new study has found that European spiny lobsters are really loud. And we mean really loud! The creatures make a rasping sound by rubbing their antennae (feelers) against a rough spot beneath their eyes. Amazingly, the sound is so loud it can be heard almost two miles away!



DEEP DEEP DOWN

An octopus has been discovered swimming at a record depth. The Dumbo octopus was filmed swimming almost 7,000 metres down! It was caught on camera at the bottom of the Java Trench, in the Indian Ocean. It is known as the Dumbo octopus because of its ear-like fins, which make it look a bit like the famous Disney elephant!

GLITTERY WORMS!



Scientists have discovered four new species (kinds) of scale worms that are all glittery and glamorous! The spangly worms were found deep in the sea off the coast of California, USA.

The worms belong to a group nicknamed 'Elvis worms', after the famous American singer Elvis Presley. Their shiny scales look like the sequins on some of the singer's suits.

However, their behaviour is not so glamorous! The experts saw the worms "wiggling and then fighting and biting each other". The leader of the study said: "It's hard to believe that the deep sea is still largely unexplored and teeming with mysterious animals."

Questions on: 'Marine discoveries'

1) Name three marine creatures in the news this week.

1: _____
 2: _____
 3: _____

2) What is similar about the discovery of the worms and the octopus?

Look at the story 'Loud lobsters'.

3) How do the lobsters make this loud noise?

4) What is "a **rasping** sound"?

a harsh, grating noise a loud ringing sound
 a big popping noise

Look at the story about the worms.

5) Find three words or descriptions that help you to understand what these worms look like.

1: _____
 2: _____
 3: _____

6) What comment does the writer make about the worms. **behaviour**, and why?

Consider all the stories.

7) Match the word to the correct definition.

spangly

full of creatures

teeming

a deep valley at the bottom of the ocean

trench

the feelers on a creature

antenna

shiny and glittery

8) Two of the creatures have nicknames. What are they and why do they have them?

Nickname	Reason for the nickname

The poor old lobster has a very boring name.

Can you think of a good nickname for this creature?

NEWS IN PICTURES



It seems almost impossible to believe that this is not a real bull lying on a beach, but a sculpture made of sand! It was made by Andoni Bastarrika, a sand sculpture artist. His lifelike creations have given pleasure to people on the beach for many years, but are now gaining fame thanks to the internet. His works of art include a bull, a wolf and an octopus.

KENT CLIFF FALL

A cliff fall in Kent has left a house dangling over the cliff. Surf Crescent in the Isle of Sheppey has seen several cliff falls in recent weeks. Luckily, the family who live in the house left when an earlier fall caused the road to collapse. "They are just waiting for the house to fall," said neighbour Malcolm Newell.



A view of low water levels in a reservoir in Wales. Not surprising, as we've just had the driest May in England ever recorded, and the second driest in Wales. On top of that, it's been the sunniest spring on record in the UK. Only three summers have been sunnier than the spring we've just had. Sadly, the record-breaking weather could be caused by global warming.

Questions on: 'News in Pictures'

1) Match the news story to the correct part of the world.

ENGLAND

Record-breaking weather

SPAIN

Sand sculptures

WALES

Cliff fall

Look at the news from Spain.

2) Who is Andoni Bastarrika?

3) What **adjective** used in the story has a similar meaning to 'realistic'?

Look at the news from Wales.

4) Why is the water so low in this reservoir?

5) Choose the most powerful fact to explain how sunny our spring has been.

Look at the news from England.

6) Why weren't the family in the house when the cliff collapsed and left it teetering on the edge?

7) Newspaper articles usually have a title called a headline. Which of the options below do you think would make a good headline for this story? Explain your choice.

- Lucky escape
- Cliff fall leaves house hanging over the edge
- Cliff collapse calamity

Consider all the news.

8) Do you think it would be possible to understand these news stories with words only – without the pictures?

Which picture do you think is the most helpful?