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Newly Discovered Deep Sea Lobster

Some scientists receive prizes for their contributions to science, others find themselves on postage stamps. Rockefeller University's Jesse Ausubel name is now immortalized in the scientific name of a newly discovered, rare new genus of deep water lobster. Ausubel was given this honor as a tribute to his contributions to the success of the Census of Marine Life, which he co-founded.

Discovered by an international trio of scientists, the lobster, *Dinorchelus ausubeli*, lives in the deep ocean water near the Phillipines. The lobster has movable, well-developed eyestalks and an inverted T-plate in front of its mouth. But its most striking feature is a mighty claw with a short, bulbous palm and extremely long, spiny fingers for capturing prey. *Dinorchelus* is derived from the Greek words *dino*, meaning terrible and fearful, and *chelus*, meaning claw. All told, the Census of Marine Life sponsored 540 expeditions over 10 years, carried out by 2700 researchers from more than 80 countries. It was, Ausubel says, the biggest project in the history of marine biology.

"Like editors of 18th century encyclopedias and almanacs and dictionaries, the Census of Marine Life has made much more accessible a lot of preexisting but poorly organized information," says Ausubel, who is the director of the Program for the Human Environment at Rockefeller. "It has also led to the discovery of many new things."

In addition to the discovery of *Dinorchelus ausubeli*, notable contributions from scientists involved in the Census include:

- * a diagram correlating the genetic relatedness of 5000 marine species from 10 phyla;

- * a map of highways and neighborhoods of about 20 species of top predators in the Pacific, revealed from birds, fish, whales, and other animals carrying small tags; and

- * unprecedented estimates of deep ocean marine biomass, drawing on about 200 studies carried out under the Census, that show surprising abundance of seafloor biomass at high latitudes.

The Census also exposed many gaps in our knowledge of what is known and unknown. For example, the Arctic Ocean remains strikingly unobserved. "The Russians may plant a flag, but neither they nor anyone else knows what lives near the North Pole," says Ausubel.

Findings from the project are linked to the Barcode of Life database and pages on the Encyclopedia of Life (EOL), as well as being published in open access papers at the Public Library of Science. *Dinorchelus ausubeli* already has its own page in the EOL (<http://www.eol.org/pages/17924149>).