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**The coelacanth: "fossil" fish that's alive and well**

In 1938 a coelacanth (SEE la kanth)—a fish scientists thought had been extinct for 80 million years—was captured off the coast of South Africa. In the years since, a few hundred specimens have been collected, mostly off the Comoro Islands, and the species has been studied intensively.

A twist to the story came in 1997, when a coelacanth was discovered in an Indonesian fish market—6,000 miles from the only known coelacanth population.

Although scientists have only recently discovered coelacanths in Indonesia, local fishermen know them quite well. They have a common—and fitting—name for this species, which has roamed the oceans for 360 million years. They call it *raja laut*: "king of the sea."

Coelacanth (model)  
*Lutimeria chalumnae*  
Still alive today  
Comoro Islands and Indonesia

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