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Press Release

In Plankton collected in the arctic, temperate and tropical regions of the oceans, the enigmatic Y-larva form a significant and diverse component. Researchers have discovered the next step in the Y-larva's life, and the transformation is extreme — the many-legged, flea-like larva turns into a balloon-like eyeless, brainless blob known as Ypsigon that lacks both digestive and nervous systems. This unusual devolution from sophisticated to simple provides clues to how the final adult form of the animal, which still remains unobserved, makes a living.

"From a shrimplike animal it became a sacklike structure," says lead author Glenner.

The new stage is slug-like, unsegmented and lacks both limbs, a functional gut and almost all other traits except an elongated, dark mass of cells filled with fat globules. Within the Ypsigon body, the muscles and compound eyes of the preceding Y-larva stage are in a state of advanced degeneration. The body motions of the Ypsigon persists after escape from the Y-larva and allow it to crawl on the bottom of the culture vessel and move several body lengths away from the spent Y-larva within a few minutes. Because this Ypsigon lacks all the organs necessary for surviving independently however, researchers conclude that the animal is a parasite.

Creep is the tendency of otherwise solid materials to move or to deform with certain stresses or properties. This deformity may be permanent and may also represent a potential or imminent defeat, depending on the material that is represented. Creep is almost always more severe in the types of materials that are subjected to strain for long periods. There are some materials where a fair amount of creep is considered to be a good thing.

The creep flows like a liquid in certain situations but performs like a solid in others and is meant to flow under heavy loads like a liquid. A small amount of creep prevents stress build-up that can crack or otherwise damage heavy loads. Soaring over two hundred feet in the air, creep displaces wind energy that could cause the whole load to topple.

Creep also reduces noise transmissions which makes working in factories safer and more pleasant for the employees. Noise reduction can also reduce the amount of down time in the factory, which can lead to increased productivity and efficiency and an overall happier workforce. That translates to an improvement for the factory, the employees and the surrounding areas.

The creep-wash complex shows the influence of low vegetation on morphology. A stream of attractors can be manipulated where the boundary between creep and wash domains on given particles creeping on the surface cause rocky situations. Both wash and creep are regulated by the negative feedback of the Plankton.

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