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**The story...**

Searching for the Loch Ness Monster

**Learn language related to...**

the unexplained

**Need-to-know language**

**mystery** – something which is unknown, unexplained or not understood

**definitive explanation** – certain and accurate information that tells us why something is

**plausible** – possible, reasonable or likely to be true

**unconvinced** – not sure or not persuaded that something is true

**unidentified** – not recognised, known or named

**Answer this...**

What kinds of environmental DNA are scientists collecting from the loch?

**Watch the video online:** <https://bbc.in/2kbzQ1o>

**Transcript**

It's a **mystery** which endures. Just what exactly lies beneath the murky waters of Loch Ness?

The sightings of Nessie stretch back hundreds of years - but as yet, no **definitive explanation** has been found. A team of scientists, led by New Zealand's Otago University,

has been testing water samples and collecting environmental DNA from all forms of life in the loch, including plants, insects, fish and mammals.

**Professor Eric Verspoor, University of the Highlands and Islands**

You basically take a litre or two of water and you filter it out, and in the stuff that's filtered out will be DNA. And using that DNA, you can then sequence it. And on the basis of the sequence, identify the types of organisms that are present in the water.

The world's media gathered at the loch side to hear exactly what they found.

**Professor Neil Gemmell, University of Otago**

This idea of a giant, extinct reptile... Well, we didn't find any reptilian DNA, so we don't think that seems very **plausible** based on the samples and the analysis that we've undertaken. And we also went looking for another idea, which is a giant eel. Well, we don't know if the eels are giant or not but we certainly found an awful lot of eel DNA. I guess, much more than I expected.

But one long-time Nessie hunter is **unconvinced** by today's news.

**Steve Feltham, Nessie hunter**

Eels in Loch Ness? Personally, I think a 12-year-old boy could tell you that. There could be some massive eels in there - that could be the explanation. But to say 'we have found evidence of eels' is like saying 'we've found evidence of fish in a Scottish loch'. Well done!

The sense of mystery here at the loch, though, remains. More than 20% of the DNA found was **unidentified** - meaning the search for Nessie goes on.

**Did you get it?**

What kinds of environmental DNA are scientists collecting from the loch?

Scientists are collecting DNA from all forms of life, including plants, insects, fish and mammals.