

**The best newspaper is a nation's best asset**



To advertise here call: 444 11 300

**P5 Community**  
 College of Islamic Studies at Hamad Bin Khalifa University organises Ethics Co-Lab.



**P12 Community**  
 Tortoise species believed to be extinct for over 100 years found on island in Galapagos.

**Aim for the Top**



Advertise with us  
 Call: 444 11 300

**GULF TIMES** Friday, March 15, 2019  
 Rajab 8, 1440 AH  
 Doha today 27° - 19°

# COMMUNITY




## Pocket dynamo

When it comes to tidying up, Japanese Marie Kondo is a sensation, but she's not without her share of detractors. **P2-3**

**GARDENING**

Flowers that make a lovely, tasty treat for your spring garden.

Page 10



**SHOWBIZ**

College cheating scandal shatters Huffman's down-to-earth image.

Page 11





**PRAYER TIME**

Fajr	4.28am
Shorooq (sunrise)	5.44am
Zuhr (noon)	11.43am
Asr (afternoon)	3.08pm
Maghreb (sunset)	5.45pm
Isha (night)	7.15pm

**USEFUL NUMBERS**



Emergency	999
Worldwide Emergency Number	112
Kahramaa - Electricity and Water	991
Local Directory	180
International Calls Enquires	150
Hamad International Airport	40106666
Labor Department	44508111, 44406537
Mowasalat Taxi	44588888
Qatar Airways	44496000
Hamad Medical Corporation	44392222, 44393333
Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation	44845555, 44845464
Primary Health Care Corporation	44593333
Qatar Assistive Technology Centre	44594050
Qatar News Agency	44450205
	44450333
Q-Post - General Postal Corporation	44464444
<b>Humanitarian Services Office</b>	
(Single window facility for the repatriation of bodies)	
Ministry of Interior	40253371, 40253372, 40253369
Ministry of Health	40253370, 40253364
Hamad Medical Corporation	40253368, 40253365
Qatar Airways	40253374

**Quote Unquote**

"A man's character may be learned from the adjectives which he habitually uses in conversation."  
— Mark Twain

**Community Editor**

Kamran Rehmat

**e-mail:** community@gulf-times.com

**Telephone:** 44466405

**Fax:** 44350474

# The giant world of tiny Marie Kondo

The buzz surrounding her Netflix series, *Tidying Up with Marie Kondo*, which was released January 1, has made Kondo 'a hot-button issue among local organisers'. **By Daysi Calavia-Robertson**



**Marie Kondo is great in that she's cute and adorable and is creating a lot of publicity, bringing awareness to the organising community. But when we watch her show, a lot of us (local professionals) cringe at many of her methods**

— Cynthia Braun, professional organiser





**F**or some professional organisers on the Island, Japanese tidying queen Marie Kondo's methods do not spark much joy.

Even so, Kondo — a lively, bright-eyed, 4-foot-7 organisational dynamo — whose fame in the United States first came in 2014 following the release of her bestselling book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, is inspiring many Americans, including scores of Long Islanders, to declutter their homes by sorting their belongings and keeping only the ones that “spark joy.”

The buzz surrounding her Netflix series, *Tidying Up with Marie Kondo*, which was released January 1, has made Kondo “a hot-button issue among local organisers,” said Cynthia Braun, a professional organiser who owns a decluttering business, Organize Your Life in Lake Grove.

Kondo's “KonMari” method encourages people to “thank” items they choose to discard, introduces a new method of folding clothing and addresses clutter by category instead of by room.

“Marie Kondo is great in that she's cute and adorable and is creating a lot of publicity, bringing awareness to the organising community,” Braun said. “But when we watch her show, a lot of us (local professionals) cringe at many of her methods.”

Braun said she and some of her colleagues gnash their teeth the most about one Kondo technique: “She gives clients a seemingly quick tutorial, gives them a ‘homework assignment’ and then — poof! — she's gone.”

On the show, Kondo returns to clients' homes about a week later to review their progress and share more tidying tips.

Braun, who started her business 16 years ago after reading an Oprah magazine article on professional organising, said, “It's a whole different approach here in the US.”

“Our clients would get anxiety, panic and just give up if we were to do that,” said Braun, 56, a longtime member of the National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals.

“People on Long Island need a lot more hand-holding; they need someone who is there with them, teaching them and helping them every step of the way.”

Organize Your Life customers pay \$75 an hour or \$450 for a six-hour package of Braun's time.

When organising, “time flies by,” said Braun, who last year spent more than 2,500 hours helping clients from Manhattan to Montauk organise their homes. “I have my trusted label maker with me, and I keep things fun, motivating and piecemeal, so it's not overwhelming.”

And regarding Kondo's method of laying every single item of clothing on the bed and going through the pile, garment by garment, Braun said: “Can you imagine? With the amount of clothes people on Long Island have, their beds would break.”

Christine Krass, 28, owner of



**Marie Kondo whose fame in the US first came in 2014 following the release of her bestselling book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, is inspiring many Americans to declutter homes by sorting their belongings and keeping only the ones that “spark joy”**

Klutter Free Me in Huntington, said that although she appreciates Kondo's energy and ideas, her own clientele and organising style also differ from the Japanese tidying guru's.

“Kondo's style is very minimalistic,” she said. “Long Islanders have a lot of stuff and really like their stuff. For the most part, they don't want to get rid of it. They just need help organising it.”

Krass, who calls herself a natural-born organiser and has been in business for three years, charges \$70 an hour or \$800 for a six-hour session with two cleaners, one organiser and one complimentary donation bin drop-off.

Thanks to an uptick in demand, Klutter Free Me is growing, Krass said.

“We're hiring lead organisers,” she said. “The great thing about organising is that it's not a one-size-fits-all art. Some methods might not work for some people, and others can work wonders.”

Jean Linder, owner of Jean Linder Organizing, an East Quogue company that serves the East End, agrees.

Linder, who has been decluttering homes and offices for almost a decade and charges \$120 an hour, said it was another celebrity organiser, Hellen Buttigieg, host of HGTV's *Neat*, who inspired her to pursue professional organising.

“Throughout my career, I've gleaned from other professionals and developed my own style and

sense of what works for me and what works for my customers,” she said.

“Kondo is this sprightly thing, and her recipe has really made her a sensation, but what I think is important when working with an organiser is to choose someone who is knowledgeable and passionate about their craft.”

Huntington resident Patty Morrissey, a full-time KonMari consultant who offers different types of tidying sessions ranging from \$150 per hour to \$7,500 for a five-day intensive session, said organisers, whether old-school or not, are rarely short of passion.

“Most people who dedicate their lives to organising do it because they truly love it. But when it comes to the KonMari method and Marie herself, there are so many misconceptions. It's not about making people get rid of all their stuff. It's about helping them become better curators of their homes,” she said.

“It's about leading them to choose joy and live better lives, and that's something that we should all want for our clients.”

Regarding the popularity of Kondo's methods on Long Island, Morrissey, who said since the show's release she's been flooded with requests for speaking engagements, workshops and other teaching opportunities at public libraries and private workplaces, said: “The KonMari way is not for everybody, but are Long Islanders ready for it? Absolutely.”

“I've been nonstop busy,” she said. — *Newsday/TNS*

## The KonMari Method - Categories

**1 - CLOTHES:** Go through them in the following order - tops, bottoms, clothes that should be hung (like suits, jackets, coats), socks, underwear, handbags, accessories, clothes for specific events (swimsuits, uniforms etc.), shoes

**2 - BOOKS:** general (books you read for pleasure), practical books (reference, cookbooks etc.), visual (photography etc.), magazines

**3 - PAPERS:** this category includes all of the papers in your home, including general paperwork, bank statements, warranties, takeaway menus, magazine clippings, payslips.... the goal is to get rid of as much as possible!

**4 - MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS ('KOMONO'):** CDs and DVDs, skincare products, makeup, accessories, valuables (passports, credit cards etc), electrical equipment and appliances (cameras, electric cords etc.), household equipment (stationery, sewing kit etc.), household supplies (medicine, detergent, tissues etc.), kitchen goods/food supplies, hobby related items, 'other'

**5 - MEMENTOS:** sentimental items like diaries, old cards and photos, letters



DISTINCT: Shrimp Gassy Curry.

Photo by the author

# On unique, diverse Mangalore cuisine

**M**angalore now officially known as Mangaluru is a port city in the state of Karnataka. People not familiar with the region often confuse it with Bengaluru, the capital city of Karnataka, which is about 350km apart.

Rome is known for its historic architecture and monuments like Colosseum, Acropolis and churches. Mangaluru and Goa are denoted as Rome of the East due to their historic architectures and beautiful buildings. Talking about Mangalorean cuisine, it is a collective name given to the cuisine of Mangalore which comprises cuisines like Udupi as well as communities like Tuluvas, Saraswat Brahmins, Goud Saraswat Brahmins, Mangalorean

Catholics and Bearys. Mangalorean cuisine is largely influenced by the south Indian cuisines with several cuisines being unique to the diverse communities of the region. Coconut and curry leaves, mustard seeds, ginger, garlic and chili are the common ingredients to the most Mangalorean curry dishes. Mangalorean fish curry is a popular dish not only in Karnataka but all over the country and internationally. Pomfret, king fish and local fish is also used to prepare the fish curry. Well known Tuluva dishes include neer dosa, masala dosa, chicken ghee roast, chicken sukka, kori roti to name a few. Tulu vegetarian cuisine is known as Udupi cuisine and is popular for its vegetarian dishes. Udupi cuisine is sattvic in nature, i.e. apart from being vegetarian it

avoids the use of onions and garlic. There is a common misconception about Udupi cuisine that it entails only tiffin and breakfast items, well in fact it has a wide variety of full course meal options including curries, saar or Rasam side dishes, sweets and salads. One of my team members is from Karnataka and I am constantly talking to her about their local cuisines and delicacies to know the authentic taste, flavours and cooking practices of the region.

Mangalorean cuisine mainly encompasses non-vegetarian dishes consisting of chicken ghee roast, kori roti, and shrimps sukka. Being a coastal city, it also includes a variety of seafood delicacies and other meat dishes by Mangalorean Catholics which have a Portuguese influence. The Beary (Muslims) in the region have their own unique

recipes for dishes like biryani and meat dishes. Mangalorean cuisine and Udupi cuisine are collectively known as the cuisine of Dakshin Kannada or South Canara. It is not difficult to spot Udupi restaurant in any corner of the world serving mouthwatering delicacies from the region.

Now you'll ask the difference in Kerala shrimp curry or Goan shrimp curry and Mangalorean shrimp curry, let me state the differences and similarities. All three are coconut-based curries from the western coastline of India but they are different in number of ways. For starters- Goan shrimp curry gets the tanginess from vinegar, which is more of a Portuguese effect, whereas the Mangalorean shrimp curry derives its signature double layer of sourness from both kokum



and tamarind.

## Shrimp Gassi Curry (Yeti Gassi) (Gluten free)

### Ingredients

Serves 4  
 Shrimp 800 gm  
 Green chili 2 no.  
 Tamarind 2 tbsp  
 Kokum 1 tbsp  
 Red onion sliced 1 no.  
*For the masala*  
 Coconut Grated 1 no.  
 Kashmiri red chili 10 no.  
 Turmeric 1 tsp  
 Green chili 1 no.  
 Onion 1 no.  
 Garlic 3-4 cloves  
 Coriander seeds 1 tbsp  
 Cumin seeds 1 tsp  
 Black peppercorn 5 no.  
*For tempering*  
 Oil 1/2 tbsp  
 Curry leaves 1 sprig  
 Mustard seeds 1/2 tsp  
 Red chili 2-3 no

### Method:

Peel, devein and wash the shrimps and keep aside.

Soak the tamarind and kokum in warm water and keep aside.

Marinate with salt and turmeric and keep refrigerated for 30 minutes.

Lightly roast the ingredients for the masala and grind them and keep aside.

Add a little water to wash out the spice paste, and use that water to gently cook the onion and green chili in a pot.

Add in the spice paste and a little more water if needed to reach a thick consistency.

Add in the marinated shrimps and simmer over slow flame for 8-10 minutes or until the shrimp is cooked.

Add tamarind pulp, kokum water and adjust seasoning.

For the tempering, heat oil in a pan and add mustard seeds and let it splutter.

Add red chili whole and curry leaves, let the curry leaves turn dark green.

Add this tempering to the above prepared shrimp curry and serve hot with steamed rice.

**Note:** You can replace the shrimp in the recipe with fish like king fish, tilapia, pomfret or fish of your choice to make a fish version of the curry. To make a vegetarian version of this recipe replace the shrimp with vegetables like carrot, cauliflower, beans, broccoli, potato.

● *Chef Tarun Kapoor, Culinary Mastermind, USA. He may be contacted at tarunkapoor83@gmail.com*

## CIS at HBKU organises Ethics Co-Lab

College of Islamic Studies (CIS) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) recently organised Ethics Co-Lab to promote understanding of the United Nations (UN)'s 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and tie them into ethical practices and religion.

Dr M Evren Tok, Assistant Dean of Innovation and Community Advancement at CIS, said, "The Ethics Co-Lab is a fertile ground to bring together different programmes around Islamic studies and culture. Raising and shaping future leaders is important, but it is even more important to ensure that these leaders are imbued with values that equip them to take on global problems with a strong moral stance. This is also in tune with the philosophy of Qatar Foundation and all the entities here towards the greater goal of enhancing morally resilient human potential."

"As Muslims and students of the world, we are confronted by poverty, inequality, unsustainable practices, lack of peace, injustice, and countless other issues that affect our health, well-being, and security. We want to give students exposure to these problems so they are able to map and identify the underlying issues, and afterwards, offer solutions from perspectives fuelled by Islamic values, morality, and ethics," said Dr Tok.

The Ethics Co-Lab ran for six days and saw the participation of 21 students alongside 10 mentors. The initiative was open to all CIS students from each of the different programmes.

"There is a growing attentiveness to the United Nations' SDGs, especially at the high school level, and a good example is Qatar Academy's programmes - but at the postgraduate level, we are lagging behind. Through the Ethics Co-lab, we successfully created four innovative projects at the

end of six days, which support the SDGs in creative ways," said Dr Tok.

The event featured different sessions pulled together from each of the multidisciplinary programmes offered by CIS, including Islamic Finance and Economy, Islamic Arts, Architecture and Urbanism, and Islamic Studies. A session on blockchain technology highlighted how financial technologies are resonating well with Islamic banking financial products and instruments. In another session, five students representing CIS's Islamic Art, Architecture, and Urbanism programme suggested different ways of approaching issues related to urbanisation, cities, and increasing points of inequality.

At the conclusion of six intensive days, four projects featuring innovative solutions were put forward by the participating students. One was a toilet system for refugee camps that is compatible with Islamic values; this project was presented to the Qatar Fund for Development and will be part of their next incubation process. A second project was an environmental kit for children that included stories and games about sustainability and environmental issues portrayed through a religious perspective. The third project was a policy suggestion for governments and municipalities, specifically in sub-Saharan Africa, to invest in clean cooking ovens which reduce harmful emissions during food preparation.

"We gave participants the necessary mechanisms and perspectives, and they made the connection to the SDGs. We wanted them to engage with the problem or challenge, integrate their insights and values, then find a strategic solution that adds value," Dr Tok explained.



## GWS organises musical programme

Gulmi Welfare Society (GWS), Nepali community organisation, recently organised a musical programme at Al Doshari Resort and Zoo. The event was chaired by Gabindra Acharya, President of GWS. The event was attended by notable personalities, including Narendra Bhatt, Patron of Non Resident Nepali Association International Co-ordination Committee (NRNA ICC); Bimal Subedi, NRNA-ICC member; Tej Katuwal, Vice President of NRNA-NCC; and Samir KC, President of Province No 3.

Hari Khatri and Ganesh Adhikari, Nepali singers, performed on the occasion. The event was organised to raise funds for the orphans and street children in Nepal. The event kicked off with a dance performance by Laxmi Giri, Diplo Thapa, Janak Magar and Ismita Magar. Rama Timilsina, Tara Thapa and Anil BC also performed on the occasion.

Gabindra Acharya proposed a vote of thanks. The event was hosted by Kamal Aryal and Kumar Abirwal Panthi.

**- Text and photo by Usha Wagle Gautam**





# Tiny robotic tool to detect, kill cancer

**C**anadian scientists have developed a kind of magnetic tweezer that can precisely insert a minuscule bead robot into a live human cancer cell, pointing to a new option for diagnosing and killing cancer.

The study, published in the journal *Science Robotics*, described the design in which a magnetic iron bead about 100 times smaller than the thickness of a human hair can be coaxed into any desired position within the cell, the Xinhua reported.

The bead, about 700 nanometres in diameter, is placed on the microscope coverslip surrounded by six magnetic coils in different planes, and the cancer cell can swallow the bead into its

membrane. Then, the researchers from University of Toronto controlled the bead's position under a microscope, using a computer-controlled algorithm to vary the electrical current through coils and shaping the magnetic field in three dimensions.

The researchers used their robotic system to study early-stage and later-stage bladder cancer cells. Previously, they had to extract the cell nuclei to examine it.

The team measured cell nuclei in intact cells instead of breaking apart the cell membrane, showing that the nucleus is not equally stiff in all directions.

"It's a bit like a football in shape. Mechanically, it's stiffer along one axis than the other," said Professor Sun Yu.

"We wouldn't have known that without this new technique."

They were able to measure how much stiffer the nucleus got when prodded repeatedly, and thus find out which cell protein or proteins might play a role in controlling this response, which could work as a new method of detecting cancer in early stage.

In the later-stage cells, the stiffening response is not as strong as they are in the early stage, though both are seemingly similar, the researchers said.

Also, the team visualised using the tiny robots to either starve a tumour by blocking its blood vessels, or destroy it directly through mechanical ablation, although those applications are still a long way from clinical use – IANS



**STUDY:** The researchers used their robotic system to study early-stage and later-stage bladder cancer cells. Previously, they had to extract the cell nuclei to examine it.

## Diabetes drug may offer treatment for breast cancer

Repurposing a common diabetes drug as well as another used for treating a group of inherited and acquired disorders may also help in the fight against resistant breast cancers that currently have no targeted therapy, finds a study.

The study, led by the University of Chicago, showed that the two existing drugs named metformin and haemin suppress tumour growth in mice, Xinhua reported.

"This is the first joint use of these two drugs. We think we have elucidated a new mechanism, something basic and fundamental, and found ways to use it," said Marsha Rosner, Professor at the varsity.

The researchers found that the primary anti-cancer target for haemin is a transcription factor known as BACH1 (BTB and CNC homology1). This protein is often highly expressed in triple negative breast cancers and is required



**CURE:** Metformin, discovered in 1922 and used clinically since 1957, was developed to treat Type-2 diabetes. It decreases glucose production by the liver and increases insulin sensitivity.

for metastasis. BACH1 targets mitochondrial metabolism and can suppress a key source of cellular

energy. When BACH1 is high, this energy source is shut down, the report said. However, when cancer

cells were treated with haemin, BACH1 was reduced, causing BACH1-depleted cancer cells to

change metabolic pathways. This caused cancers that are vulnerable to metformin to suppress mitochondrial respiration.

"We found that this novel combination, haemin plus metformin, can suppress tumour growth, and we validated this in mouse tumour models," explained Jiyoung Lee from the varsity.

The findings can extend beyond breast cancer. BACH1 expression is enriched not only in triple negative breast cancers, but is also seen in many other cancers including lung, kidney, uterus, prostate and acute myeloid leukaemia, the researchers noted. However, neither of the drugs were originally designed to treat cancer.

Metformin, discovered in 1922 and used clinically since 1957, was developed to treat Type-2 diabetes. It decreases glucose production by the liver and increases insulin sensitivity. Haemin, marketed as panhematin, was first crystallised from blood in 1853. – IANS

## Eye check-up to detect Alzheimer's disease

A future non-invasive eye test may allow early detection of Alzheimer's disease before memory loss kicks in, say a team led by an Indian-origin researcher.

Retina being an extension of the brain, the optical coherence tomography angiography (OCTA) will check patients' vision as well as brain health, said the study published in the journal *Ophthalmology Retina*.

The researchers said that loss of blood vessels in retina would reflect changes in the brain, be it for both healthy people or Alzheimer's patients.

"We know that there are changes that occur in the brain in the small blood vessels in people with Alzheimer's disease, and because the retina is an extension of the brain, we wanted to investigate whether these changes could be detected," said lead author Dilraj S. Grewal, ophthalmologist at Duke

University. Using the OCTA that uses light waves that reveal blood flow in every layer of the retina, the researches checked more than 200 people.

They found that in people with healthy brains, microscopic blood vessels form a dense web at the back of the eye inside the retina, as was seen in 133 participants in a control group.

Conversely, in the eyes of 39 people with Alzheimer's disease, that web was less dense and even sparse in places.

The OCTA machines, relatively a new non-invasive technology, measures blood vessels that cannot be seen during a regular eye examination.

"It's possible that these changes in blood vessel density in the retina could mirror what's going on in the tiny blood vessels in the brain, perhaps before we are able to detect any changes in cognition," added Sharon Fekrat, ophthalmologist at the Duke University in the US. – IANS



**TECHNOLOGY:** The OCTA machines, relatively a new non-invasive technology, measures blood vessels that cannot be seen during a regular eye examination.



**INCREASING RISK:** Low-carb diets were associated with increased risk of AFib regardless of the type of protein or fat eaten.

# Low-carb diets could cause common heart disorder

By Najja Parker

**M**any doctors have warned against low-carbohydrate diets, and now they believe they could cause a common heart disorder.

According to the American College of Cardiology, scientists from health institutions in China recently conducted a study to determine the relationship between carbohydrate intake and AFib, the most common heart

rhythm disorder.

To do so, they examined the health records of nearly 14,000 people for more than two decades. The participants were asked to complete a questionnaire, where they reported their daily intake of 66 different food items. They then estimated the subjects' daily carbohydrate intake and the proportion of daily calories that came from carbohydrates.

"Researchers then divided participants into three groups representing low, moderate and high carbohydrate intake, reflecting diets in which

carbohydrates comprised less than 44.8 percent of daily calories, 44.8 to 52.4 percent of calories, and more than 52.4 percent of calories, respectively," the team explained in a statement.

After analysing the results, they found people in the low-carb group were more likely to develop AFib. In fact, they were 18 percent more likely to have the condition compared to the moderate-carb group and 16 percent more likely to have it compared to the high-carb group.

"The long-term effect of carbohydrate restriction is

still controversial, especially with regard to its influence on cardiovascular disease," co-author Xiaodong Zhuang said in a statement. "Considering the potential influence on arrhythmia, our study suggests this popular weight control method should be recommended cautiously."

The analysts also said low-carb diets were associated with increased risk of AFib regardless of the type of protein or fat eaten.

While the team didn't determine why restricting carbohydrates might lead to AFib, they believe people on such diets consume

fewer vegetables, fruits and grains, which are foods known to reduce inflammation. "Without these foods people may experience more inflammation, which has been linked with AFib," they wrote.

They also explained that eating more protein and fat to replace carbohydrate-rich foods can cause oxidative stress, which has also been associated with AFib.

Despite their findings, the team noted they cannot prove cause and effect. They said more investigations are needed to confirm their results. — *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution/TNS*

## Green tea helps combat obesity, inflammation

Want to cut that extra flab? Drinking green tea can help reduce obesity as well as inflammation in the gut, finds a study.

The findings, published in the *Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry*, showed that mice fed a high-fat diet supplemented with green tea gained about 20 per cent less weight and had lower insulin resistance than mice fed an otherwise identical diet without tea.

Mice fed a diet of two per cent green tea extract had an improved gut health including more beneficial microbes in the intestines and less permeability in the intestinal wall, a condition called 'leaky gut', than those that ate a diet without it.

Leaky gut is a problem in humans that contributes to widespread low-grade inflammation. Drinking green tea has also been linked to a lower risk of cancer, heart and liver disease.

"This study provides evidence that green tea encourages the growth of good gut bacteria, and that leads to a series of benefits that significantly lower the risk of obesity," said lead author Richard Bruno, Professor at the Ohio State University.



**LINK:** Drinking green tea has also been linked to a lower risk of cancer, heart and liver disease.

For eight weeks, the team fed half of the male mice a high-fat diet that causes obesity and half were fed a regular diet. In each of those groups, half ate green tea extract mixed with their food.

Female mice were not included as they are resistant to diet-induced

obesity and insulin resistance.

Green tea also protected against the movement of endotoxin, the toxic bacterial component, out of their guts and into the bloodstream.

"Consuming a little throughout the course of a day with food might be better," Bruno said. — IANS

## Excessive hygiene can cause antibiotic resistance

While maintaining hygiene is good for health, excess cleanliness could lead to antibiotic resistance often resulting to death and illness as well, suggests a new study.

Comparing all existing microorganisms and antibiotic resistances, the researchers at Austria's University of Graz, showed that microbial diversity decreases in areas with high levels of hygiene and the diversity of resistances increases.

The team compared the intensive care unit of the institute with clean rooms subject to strong microbial control in the aerospace industry and with public and private buildings which have hardly any microbial controls.

"In environments with strong microbial control in the intensive care unit and industrially used clean rooms, there are increasing antibiotic resistances which show a high potential for combining with pathogens," said Alexander Mahnert, Director at the varsity. The number of

people who become ill and die from antibiotic-resistant germs is increasing worldwide, said the study, published in *Nature Communications*.

Hence, the results indicated that a stable microbial diversity in clinical areas counteracts the spread of resistances.

With the microbial control of pathogens already being used in cultivated plants and also in humans in the framework of stool transplantation, pursuing such ideas in indoor areas in future is recommended, said Gabriele Berg from the varsity.

The team suggested regular airing, houseplants, deliberate use of useful microorganisms and reduction of antibacterial cleaning agents could be the strategies in maintaining or improving microbial diversity. — IANS





# Travel like a local in Cuba

No matter what kind of vehicle picks you up, from an old Mercury to an MZ motorcycle taxi, taking a Colectivo is the most authentic and affordable way for tourists to get around in Cuba's villages and cities. **By Bernd Kubisch**



**MEANS OF TRAVEL:** Many Cubans travel using shared taxis and buses which stop to pick passengers up if they have space.

Anyone who has pictured themselves on holiday in Cuba probably imagines sitting in the back of an old Cabrio, being driven past the Havana seafont and the Plaza de la Revolucion with the wind in their hair as the driver tells tales while puffing on a cigar.

But anyone seeking a more authentic experience might want to consider a different mode of transport: the Colectivo.

These communal vehicles can be found all over the country and in many forms, from horse-drawn carriages in Cuba's small villages to motorbike taxis in the east – and the best thing: They are extremely cheap.

Essentially, a Colectivo is a bit like a bus in that it travels along a specified route, either within a city or between two different cities.

But it's not always easy to locate where they stop, not least because these places are not usually signposted, according to Gioacchino Cinquegrani of the Cuba Tourism Board. "If you see a lot of people waiting on the street, and there is no bus stop, then the chances are that a Colectivo will stop there," he explains.

They can also be flagged down like taxis, as long as there is space for an extra passenger. Travellers can disembark between stops, as long as they let the driver know. Colectivos can also be cars, in which case they usually have a taxi sign and will tend to stick to main roads, Cinquegrani says.

Passengers will be asked to pay a fixed price. Cubans pay in their local currency, the peso – and tourists can too, which is a bonus because most things must be paid



**STOP:** At Parque Central in the Cuban capital, Havana, Colectivos wait for their passengers. Photo: Bernd Kubisch/dpa

for in the Cuban convertible peso (CUC), a more expensive tourist currency.

It's a hot November day in Havana. A tourist is standing near the Hotel Deauville with an outstretched arm. A blue Mercury pulls up.

"Línea y paseo," says the foreigner. The driver nods. There are already five people inside. Two of the window levers are missing and there is a crack in one of the panes.

The drivers of these ancient route taxis, who also rent out their vehicles, generally earn more than factory workers or teachers, but less than their colleagues who drive the classic old-timer taxis, which scoop up tourists from outside hotels.

An hour in a flash old convertible will set a group of tourists back about 40 dollars.

The blue Mercury is stuck in traffic in front of the Habana Libre, one of the city's most

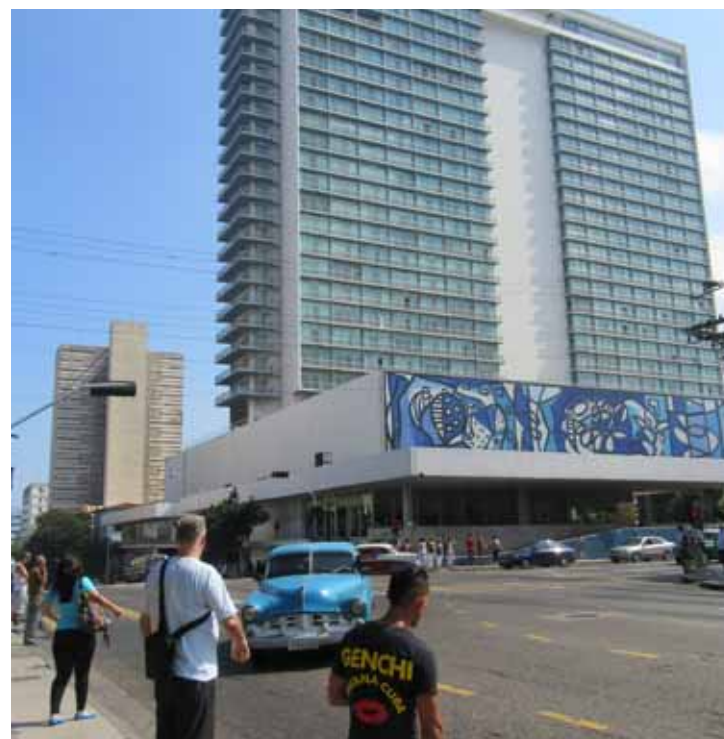
exclusive hotels. One of the vehicles in the jam is an open-top red tour bus, cameras clicking. A day pass for the bus costs 10 CUC (10 dollars).

After about 5 kilometres, the Mercury stops at the intersection of Línea and Avenida Paseo. The tourist gets out and hands the driver a 10-peso note (about 40 cents). He wanders to the nearby John Lennon Park and later visits a local cafe.

And the return journey? Perhaps a Dodge or a Pontiac – a truly authentic experience, surrounded by chaos and gesticulating Cubans.

Tourists must only be careful not to be taken advantage of. Martin Staub, director of a local bicycle rental company, advises agreeing the price before you get on board. His customers often ride back to their accommodation in Colectivos after their e-bike tours.

In Havana, there are also



**SET ROUTES:** Colectivos follow set routes in Cuba, though where they stop is generally not marked by a sign. However, they can be flagged down.

small yellow buses known as taxis ruterros. They have air conditioning, and even traditional reggaeton music blasting from speakers, a little piece of Cuban luxury that will set you back just 5 pesos (20 cents). The downside is you might have to wait a long time in the hot sun to flag one down.

In another part of town, Bernd Herrmann waves down a Studebaker taxi at the Parque Central. The tourism worker like to take an old-timer back home from his office in the historic Edificio Bacardi.

"It's my lucky day," he says, and

driver Joan agrees – you don't get Studebakers much anymore these days, he says.

Its costs about 25 CUC to ride to the airport in one of these old classics. Many other vintage car varieties can still be seen on the streets of Cuba, including Volkswagen Beetles and Opel Rekords, both with and without taxi signs.

And there are two-wheeled varieties, too – in Santiago de Cuba, the streets are peppered with countless MZ motorcycle taxis. They are even used for pizza deliveries. – DPA





**TREATMENT:** Try using one of the shampoos mentioned daily or every other day until your dandruff is controlled; then cut back to two or three times a week.

# Home remedies: Tips for dealing with dandruff

**D**andruff is a common chronic scalp condition marked by flaking of the skin on your scalp. It isn't contagious or serious, but it can be embarrassing and sometimes difficult to treat.

The good news is that dandruff usually can be controlled. Mild cases of dandruff may need nothing more than daily shampooing with a gentle cleanser. More-stubborn cases of dandruff often respond to medicated shampoos.

## Remedies:

In addition to regular shampooing, you can take steps to reduce your risk of developing dandruff:

### - Learn to manage stress.

Stress affects your overall health, making you susceptible to a number of conditions and diseases. It can even help trigger dandruff or worsen existing symptoms.

### - Shampoo often.

If you tend to have an oily scalp, daily shampooing may help prevent dandruff.

### - Get a little sun.

Sunlight may be good for dandruff. But because exposure to ultraviolet light damages your skin and increases your risk of skin cancer, don't sunbathe. Instead, just spend a little time outdoors. And be sure to wear sunscreen on your face and body.

### - Alternative medicine.

Small studies have found that tea tree oil can reduce dandruff, but more study is needed. Tea tree oil, which comes from the leaves of the Australian tea tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*), has been used for

## HAIR CARE

**DOUBLE-SET WIDE TEETH COMB**  
Natural curls frizz up when using a regular brush. Use this special kind of comb and it's smooth sailing through wet ringlets.

**FLAXSEED**  
The oil helps strengthening hair and helps growth. It also keeps the moisture content in the hair.

**1 CARROTS**  
A good source of vitamin A which promotes a healthy scalp.

**2 DARK LEAFY GREENS**  
Packed with vitamins A and vitamin C. They also provide iron and calcium.

**3 OYSTERS**  
Boost your hair with zinc, a mineral that helps regulate the production of androgens. Lack of androgens results in dandruff and slow hair growth.

**SUMMER**

Waxing moon, this is a growing moon, making its way to becoming full. Skin and hair are more absorbent so moisturise them. Bear in mind that a hair cut won't really hinder your locks from flowing, it's likely to encourage healthy growth instead.

centuries as an antiseptic, antibiotic and antifungal agent. It's now included in a number of shampoos found in natural foods stores. The oil may cause allergic reactions in some people. When regular shampoos fail, dandruff shampoos you can buy at a drugstore may succeed. But dandruff shampoos aren't all alike, and you may need to experiment until you find one that works for you.

If you develop itching, stinging,

redness or burning from any product, stop using it. If you develop an allergic reaction – such as a rash, hives or difficulty breathing – seek immediate medical attention.

Dandruff shampoos are classified according to the medication they contain:

### - Pyrithione zinc shampoos.

These contain the antibacterial and antifungal agent zinc pyrithione. This type of shampoo

can reduce the fungus on your scalp that can cause dandruff and seborrheic dermatitis.

### -Tar-based shampoos.

Coal tar, a by-product of the coal manufacturing process, helps conditions such as dandruff, seborrheic dermatitis and psoriasis. It slows how quickly skin cells on your scalp die and flake off. If you have light-coloured hair, this type of shampoo may cause discoloration.

### - Shampoos containing salicylic acid

These "scalp scrubs" help eliminate scale, but they may leave your scalp dry, leading to more flaking. Using a conditioner after shampooing can help relieve dryness.

### - Selenium sulphide shampoos

These shampoos slow your skin cells from dying and may also reduce malassezia. Because they can discolour blond, grey or chemically coloured hair, be sure to use them only as directed, and rinse well after shampooing.

### - Ketoconazole shampoos.

Ketoconazole is a broad-spectrum antifungal agent that may work when other shampoos fail. It's available over-the-counter as well as by prescription.

Try using one of these shampoos daily or every other day until your dandruff is controlled; then cut back to two or three times a week, as needed. If one type of shampoo works for a time and then seems to lose its effectiveness, try alternating between two types of dandruff shampoos. Read and follow the directions on each bottle of shampoo you try. Some need to be left on for a few minutes, while others should be immediately rinsed off. If you've shampooed faithfully for several weeks and there's still a dusting of dandruff on your shoulders, talk to your doctor or dermatologist. You may need a prescription-strength shampoo or treatment with a steroid lotion.

- Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research/ TNS



# Flowers that make a lovely, tasty treat for your spring garden

Some edible flowers are from vegetable plants which can be stuffed with cheese, rolled up and quickly sautéed in butter, and they're just delicious. **By Jeanette Marantos**



**GARDENER:** Certified organic gardener Tom Yost cuts the roots of a plant for replanting in the spring.



Lavender ice cream

**W**ith their abundant colours and diversity of shapes, flowers are a buoyant feast for the eyes, and often our noses as well, with their varied perfumes.

But many flowers aren't just pretty. They pack a punch for the palate too, with flavours that are surprisingly intense and addicting. They might make a tasty addition to your spring garden. Some edible flowers are from vegetable plants, like summer squash blossoms, which can be stuffed with cheese, rolled up and quickly sautéed in butter, and they're just delicious, says Tom Yost of Carol Gardens in Riverside, a grower of organic herbs and vegetables.

But Yost's favourite edible flowers are from herbs, with subtler or deeper flavours than the stems and leaves.

Herbs are relatively easy to grow. They don't need super nutrients in their soil or tonnes of water, Yost said, and they can thrive in containers or the ground.

"They're not picky about their soil," he said, "but if you have a clay soil or decomposed granite, they can get stressed during the super-

hot months, so compost or mulch can help."

As anyone who's grown basil knows, the herbs will start to flower unless you cut them back regularly. That's what makes them good companion plants in the vegetable garden, because the flowers attract all kinds of beneficial pollinating insects. (And a bonus: When you're working in the garden, their fragrance is a little gift when you brush against them.)

Herbs like at least six to seven hours a day of full sun, too much shade and they'll get leggy and spindly, but they're also very hardy, Yost said.

"Right now, we have a mass of flowering arugula that's about 3 feet tall and 5 feet wide. It went through the freeze and frost and finally fell over during these last heavy rains," Yost said. "But my wife, Linda, won't let me cut it back because she loves snacking on the flowers."

Linda Yost is the chef in the family, and frequently incorporates flowers into her meals. Here are six of the Yosts' favourite edible flowers:

**Anise hyssop:** is a humble herb with a lovely violet flower

that offers a gentler version of the plant's strong anise/licorice flavour. Yost recommends pulling off the little flowerettes and sprinkling them in salads. "It's very subtle, so you're not getting a big flash of licorice," he said. The flowers are also a nice addition to desserts or to expand the sensory experience of a drink. "Use it as a garnish on top, so what you do is sip and smell!"

**Lavender:** is a key ingredient in herbs de Provence, the dried mixture of herbs that imparts that distinctive "je ne sais quoi" quality to the cuisine of the South of France, but the tiny fragrance-packed buds also add flavour to a variety of dishes, from lavender ice cream to meat rubs to jasmine rice, said Linda Yost. "I sprinkle in four or five little flowers at the start of cooking, and it just makes the flavour pop." Be sparing, Yost said, because too much makes food taste soapy, and he recommends using only certain varieties for eating, basically the French varieties of Grosso, Munstead, and De Provence.

**Arugula flowers:** are a little homely, but if you're a fan of this

peppery green, the flowers have a taste that's absolutely addictive, nutty with a more subtle flavour of pepper and spice. "They're good for people with nut allergies, because they give you that nutty tannin flavour without the allergic reaction," Yost said. Add them to salads or as toppings to ice cream or yogurt, or just eat them straight as a snack. "They pair well with sweet dishes, mixing savoury with sweet, like chocolate and pretzels."

**Borage:** is another pedestrian-looking plant that creates eye-popping, otherworldly flowers, all the more remarkable because, of all things, they taste like cucumbers. The leaves and stems have that flavour too, but they also have little hairs that make eating unpleasant. The flowers, on the other hand, are smooth and lovely to behold in salads. "Linda likes to put them in ice cube trays, cover them with water and freeze them," Yost said. "They make great flavoured waters."

**Lemon verbena:** is a boring-looking plant until you brush against its leaves and the smell of lemon nearly knocks you out. The

flowers are tiny but pack a wallop. "They're the only plants you can add to water without boiling and get an intense flavour," Yost said. The flowers make great flavoured water and ice cubes, he said, and they're delicious in ice cream. "I put crushed flowers and leaves in heavy cream, bring it to a simmer for just 10 minutes and then let it cool and strain the leaves out," said Linda Yost. "That's how strong it is."

**Nepitella:** also known as lesser calamint, is an essential herb in Italian cooking but little known in the United States. Yost discovered it a few years ago, when the owner of Riverside's popular Mario's Place restaurant asked if he had any to sell. Now it's one of his most popular plants, he said, and usually sells out every year. It looks like a large-leafed oregano, "but when you eat it, it rolls across your palate four beautiful flavours, savoury, thyme, oregano and mint," he said. "Oregano has a strong peppery finish, but nepitella ends in mint." The deep-throated violet flowers are an excellent garnish on meats, pasta and sauces, and add a savoury minty punch to drinks. - TNS



Borage



Lemon verbena



Anise hyssop



Nepitella



Arugula flowers

# College cheating scandal shatters Huffman's down-to-earth image

By Mary McNamara

**W**hy did it have to be Felicity Huffman? You would think at this point we would be inured to revelations that even the “nicest” celebrities feel entitled to free passes – to events, gifting suites, in traffic court. But why did one of the “stars” of the college admissions scandal have to be Emmy winner Huffman?

Tuesday was not a good day for parents. Those who did not allegedly pay a very high-priced and utterly unscrupulous admissions company to lie, cheat and steal so their kids could get into the college of their choice spent the day feeling outraged and, depending on the number of wait-lists endured or athletic scholarships that never happened, ripped off.

Those parents who allegedly did spend the day in jail.

Which may be the fairest thing to come out of the college admissions process in years.

The Edge College & Career Network went above and beyond the tutoring and multiple practice-test-taking typical of most private prep classes. According to federal prosecutors, owner William Rick Singer oversaw a full buffet of collegiate chicanery. In some cases, school officials were bribed to mark certain students as super-athletes, often in sports the student didn't even play. In others, students' SAT or ACT test results were rigged, with proctors who provided the correct answers or simply impostors who took the test in the student's place.

On Tuesday, Singer pleaded guilty to money laundering, obstruction of justice, racketeering and conspiracy to defraud the United States. Prosecutors also charged 50 people with being knowing participants.

One of them was Felicity Huffman.

She allegedly chose the proctor-with-correct-answers option.

She and Lori Loughlin (Google her, non-*Full House* fans) led the headlines. Loughlin's husband, popular fashion designer Mossimo Giannulli, was also charged though Huffman's husband, *Shameless* star William H Macy, was not.

Huffman was not the richest nor most powerful person on the list, but she was certainly the most famous.

And the most shocking.

Look, we all know that the rich and famous are different. Their houses are bigger, their clothes are nicer, they never fly coach and their kids go to schools like Crossroads or Harvard-Westlake.

This doesn't make them bad people or an alien race; money and fame are often well-earned and for years Huffman seemed proof of that. She was a serious character actor, and though she came to Hollywood via David Mamet at the height of his powers (which is a pretty good way to come to Hollywood), many people felt the need to root for her. She was so good, people would say, in *Sports Night*, in *Magnolia*, in *Frasier*, for God's sake, but for years she seemed destined to play the best friend or older sister.

Then *Desperate Housewives* and *Transamerica* made her a big star. But still she seemed normal, which was even more endearing. She and Macy have been together forever, and married for 22 years. They talked about their kids the way everyone talks about their kids – equal measure adoration and exhaustion, with some charming bewilderment on the side.

When I interviewed Huffman almost 15 years ago, we discovered we had daughters of the same age and she really did seem like every other working mother I knew. Even if she could afford more help and spent a bit more time on the red carpet.

“I am very cognizant of the shelf life of the spotlight,” she told me then. “If I start feeling I



**ACCUSED:** Felicity Huffman, left, with her husband William H Macy.

was anointed, all I have to do is remember how many times I've been fired.”

She was very convincing, and it might even have been true. Even as her fame grew, she maintained a down-to-earth image, especially when it came to motherhood. After *Desperate Housewives* ended, she started the website *whattheflicka.com*, where women – some famous, some not – could share their experiences and seek advice.

“There's no conversation for parenting, no one to say ‘it's hard to,’” she told *Mashable* in 2013, adding that motherhood “is a heroic profession.”

Uh-huh. Tell it to the jury, Felicity. According to prosecutors, Huffman knew what she was paying for, which included getting extended time for her daughter to take the test and providing a

proctor who would ensure she scored well by changing wrong answers to correct ones.

Look, everyone knows how insane the college application process can get, especially for parents who cannot afford to live in areas with good public schools or send their kids to private schools, parents unable to provide legitimate tutors or take time from their jobs to help fill out the voluminous application, parents who really can't pay for their kids to take the test multiple times or the application fees to the 12 colleges the guidance counsellor recommends. For people like Huffman and Macy? Please.

Imagine the references that kid had. The fawning tour guides. The possibility of large donations and naming opportunities.

But fame and fortune were not,

apparently, enough. Huffman allegedly had to pay for someone to guarantee a slot that should have gone to a student who maybe actually earned it.

So much for the woman so many of us rooted for over the years, most lately in *American Crime*, which is nauseatingly funny. The splendid actor who knows how hard it is to balance work and family doesn't live here, at least not anymore.

Instead the curtain was pulled back to reveal someone so used to wealth and privilege that it seemed acceptable to pay someone to cheat for her daughter so she could get exactly what she wanted.

A young woman who not even the most debt-laden student at the smallest community college can possibly envy now. – *Los Angeles Times/TNS*

## Neil's nostalgic moment on set of *Bypass Road*

Actor Neil Nitin Mukesh got nostalgic about his debut film *Johnny Gaddaar* while shooting for a sequence of his upcoming thriller *Bypass Road*.

The sequence, shot last week, took him back to a Juhu bungalow in Mumbai where the actor had shot for Sriram Raghavan's *Johnny Gaddaar*, which released in 2007.

“It was walking down memory lane for me during the shooting of *Bypass Road*. I had shot in Ashish Bungalow for my debut film *Johnny Gaddaar* but since it was almost 12 years ago, I didn't recognise the bungalow from the pictures. I was totally surprised when I found out and it brought back so many memories,” Neil said in a statement.

He essays the role of a paraplegic in *Bypass Road*, which marks the directorial debut of his younger brother Naman Nitin Mukesh. Neil has turned a writer and a producer with the film.

“Naman was a child back then and used to visit me



**CANDID:** Neil Nitin Mukesh says it was walking down memory lane during the shooting of *Bypass Road*.

on the set and now he is in charge of the set. I am sure Sriram will be thrilled to hear about this since he is someone both Naman and I look upto as an inspiration,” he added.

Neil continued: “I also wielded the camera for a scene in the sequence. I have operated the camera before, but not for Naman's film so that was a welcome change. It was a three-camera set-up so while the cinematographer and his assistant had taken over two of them, and the action director was managing another part of the sequence, I took over the third camera.”

It also stars Adah Sharma, Gul Panag and Rajit Kapur. The film is a thriller drama, which is jointly produced by NNM Films and Madan Paliwal of MIRAJ.

Opening up about the location, Naman said: “It's an action sequence involving a chase and we had a couple of locations in mind, when the production team brought pictures of this Juhu property. In fact both the scenes in *Johnny Gaddaar* and *Bypass Road* are the pre-interval scenes at the very same location.” – IANS



# How an 'extinct' species of tortoise was discovered

Chelonoidis phantasticus thought to be extinct was found in Galapagos after 100 years

By Kassidy Vavra

**A** species of tortoise thought to be extinct was found on an island in the Galapagos.

"She is old but she is alive!"

A species of tortoise thought to be extinct was found on an island in the Galapagos.

Wacho Tapia, Director of the Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative, found the female tortoise during an expedition on Fernandina Island, the Galapagos Conservancy announced recently.

Galapagos Conservancy's Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative and the Galapagos National Park Directorate worked together on the discovery, Johannah E. Barry, president of the Galapagos Conservancy wrote to the *New York Daily News*.

The tortoise is believed to belong to the species *chelonoidis phantasticus*, which translates to "the fantastic giant tortoise." Unique traits including "unusually prominent saddlebacking" of the tortoise's shell and "extreme flaring" on parts of the edge of shell are "unlike any other tortoise" seen in the Galapagos, and can help identify the species.

Genetic testing is needed to confirm the species' identity, Barry said.

A tortoise from this species has not been seen in 112 years, Tapia said in statement from the Galapagos Conservancy.

The previous sighting of the species was from a 1906 expedition by Rollo Beck with the California Academy of Science.

Beck followed tracks and fecal droppings that led him to the male tortoise.

In his journal, Beck wrote he "got his pack, ate supper, and skinned the tortoise by moonlight," according to the Conservancy.

Beck's discovery was the first and only



**GIANT:** The tortoise is believed to belong to the species *chelonoidis phantasticus*, which translates to "the fantastic giant tortoise."

**Fernandina is considered "the largest pristine island on Earth" and is home to an active volcano that is around 4,800 feet high. The island is around 100,000 years old**

account of a living organism from the species found on the island until the 2019 discovery.

Fernandina is considered "the largest pristine island on Earth" and is home to an

active volcano that is around 4,800 feet high. The island is only around 100,000 years old, the Conservancy said in a statement to the *Daily News*. Due to the island's "geological

youth," the fact that it is isolated, and "razor sharp lava," exploring can be difficult, and "few people" have gone beyond the island's coastline.

The odds of finding the animal had been extremely low, but a 1964 expedition by John Hendrickson found droppings that were assumed to be that of a tortoise, which renewed hope the species may still be alive. Decades later, more droppings were found on the island near Hendrickson's discovery.

Additionally, in 2009 a fly-over found a tortoiselike being from the air, according to the Conservancy.

The tortoise is listed as "critically endangered" on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species.

"To find a living tortoise on Fernandina Island is perhaps the most important find of the century," Tapia said.

Discovery of the tortoise in addition to the three previous incidents indicating a potential tortoise population has renewed hope that there may be more individuals from the species alive.

The Conservancy has proposed an expedition be launched to explore the island further and attempt to see if more of the species are alive - and determine through genotyping if they are native or moved from another location by humans.

If more of the species are discovered, a conservation plan will be developed. Conservation practices could include bringing some of the species into captivity, the Conservancy said. "Should we not find tortoises we will lay to rest the myth of tortoises on Fernandina Island. Either way we will finally resolve the mystery of the "fantastic" tortoises, one of the last great and perhaps long-running mystery of the Galapagos Islands," the Conservancy said. - *New York Daily News/ TNS*



**REMOTE ISLAND:** Fernandina Island is a remote, rocky, rugged island in the Galapagos with spectacular views of the Pacific - and plenty of strange wildlife.