Malaria Mosquito Possible in Hawaii

A type of **mosquito that can carry malaria** could become established in Hawaii.

> *(msnbc) A shipment of mosquitoes bound for DNA tests in a London laboratory may never be found, so expanded trapping is needed to verify if a new type of malaria transmitting bug has established a foothold. . . . The Army said it sent away only 17 of the insects for DNA testing because many of the specimens were damaged after being collected in the traps. The number was considered small, so the military decided to send the mosquitoes to just one laboratory instead of multiple facilities. The military is still trying to track why the package was never received.*

See also: **Pertussis** (whooping cough) prevention

Chess Benefits New York City Children

The New York City Schools Chess Program Report

> *"The New York City Schools Chess Program Report is impressive, here is what Chrisine Palm writes in1990. In its four-year existence, NYCHESS has proven that:"*

> *"a. Chess instills in young players a sense of self-confidence and self-worth*

b. Chess dramatically improves a child's ability to think rationally

c. Chess increases cognitive skills

d. Chess improves children's communication skills and aptitude in recognizing patterns

e. Chess results in higher grades, especially in English and Math studies . . ."

(KSN) Some of the benefits of chess, for children, may be related to the tactical combinations that often happen in the **chess middle game**. Mental calculations are essential in these complex chess positions, for chess players need to imagine future positions of pieces on the board.

Smithsonian Blog Post Blasts Potential Discoverers of Living Pterosaurs

(KSN) According to Wikipedia, "The Smithsonian Institution was founded for the 'increase and diffusion' of knowledge." But a blog post on the Smithsonian site seems to condemn any person involved with searching for living dinosaurs or living pterosaurs. The author of the post, Brian Switek, mentions "hucksters," "overly-credulous wildlife enthusiasts," and "showmen," not mentioning names at first. When he does mention names, they are "Jim Blume" and "David Woetzel," and he dismisses them because they are "creationist explorers." Switek's post is evaluated on another blog: "**Ropen Dismissed by Smithsonian**."

At the end of the Smithsonian blog post, after seeming to condemn anyone who has searched for living pterosaurs, Switek admits the possibility that a long-tailed pterosaur might still be living.

Chinese Leader Surprised by Jet Test

During the visit of U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, the Chinese President, Hu Jintao, appeared surprised to learn that the Chinese military had just conducted a test of their new stealth fighter.

> *(NY Times, Jan 11, 2011) Staging the test flight of the long-secret **J-20** while Mr. Gates was in Beijing amounted to an unusually bold show of force by China. But the demonstration also raised questions about the degree of civilian control of the Chinese military, as President Hu Jintao and other civilian leaders gave their American visitors the impression that they were unaware that the test had been conducted only hours before they received Mr. Gates . . .*

The new Chinese jet may be similar to the U.S. F-22 Raptor.

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Long Beach, California, licensed child care

Houston Chronicle Denies Dinosaurs in Texas

(KSN) One of the largest newspapers in the United States, the *Houston Chronicle*, printed an article dismissive of dinosaurs flying over southwest Texas (mid-December, 2010, by Claudia Feldman). It did admit that something strange causes ***Marfa Lights***. But a cryptozoologist from California answered that dismissal with a bit of philosophy:

> *"Major newspapers rarely take any position directly opposing a basic cultural tradition of their society. It comes as no surprise that a staff writer for the Houston Chronicle would avoid giving credence to the idea that "dinosaurs" are flying in the respectable state of Texas."*

That cryptozoologist, Jonathan Whitcomb, wrote a book that included the suggestion that the mysterious *Marfa Lights* are caused by **bioluminescent** flying animals that may be extant pterosaurs. The *Houston Chronicle* prefers extinction.