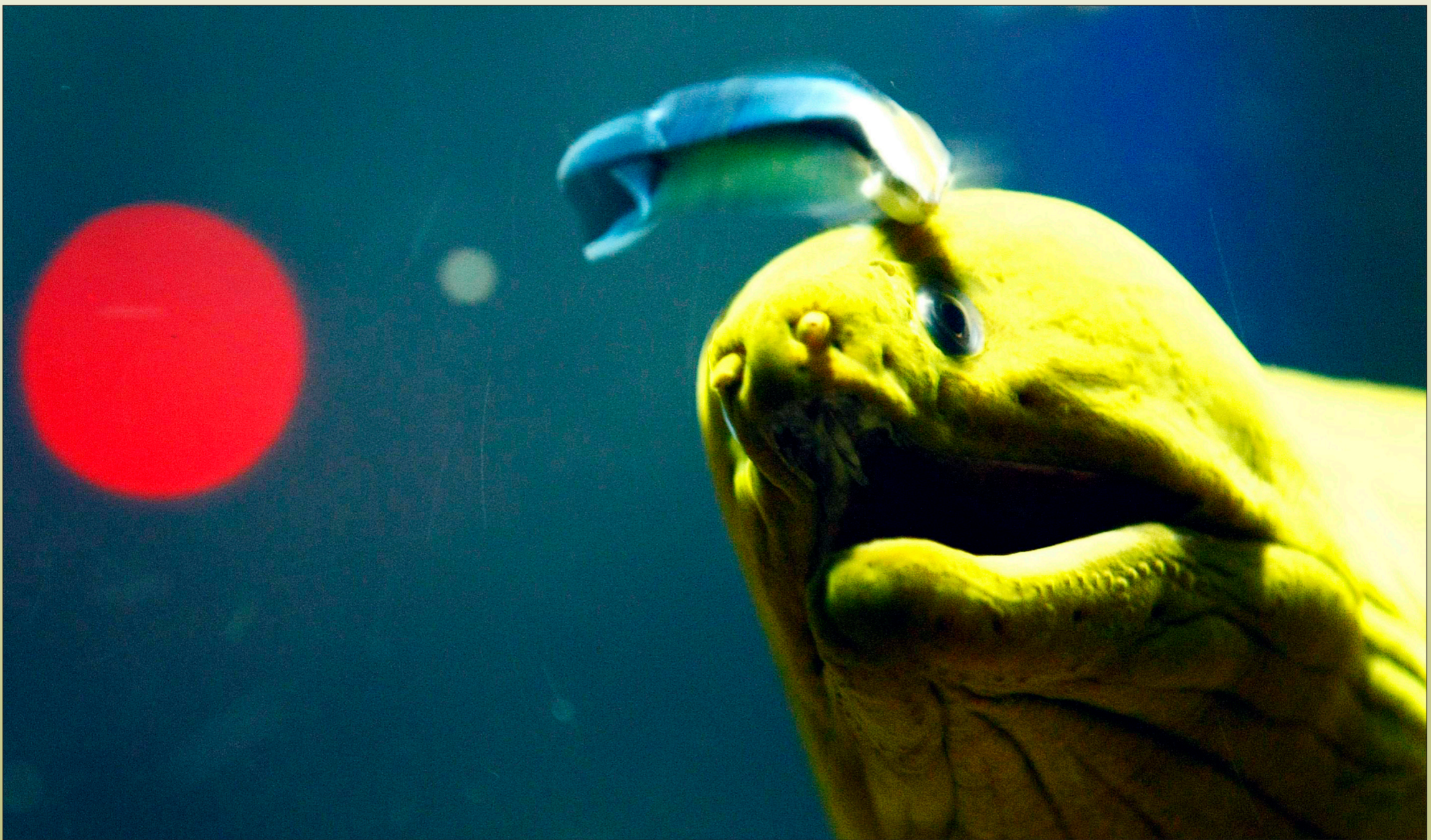


Male cleaner fish bag the best part of meal

狡詐雄魚暗擷「私房美食」



Among some cleaner fish species, it appears that it is the males who are more **devious** than the females, a researcher at the University of Neuchatel in Switzerland has found.

By protecting their clients from being bitten by **over-zealous** female cleaner fish, the males bag some tasty dessert for themselves.

The cleaner fish *Labroides dimidiatus*, which measures about 10cm, feeds on parasites found on larger fish.

But the females can sometimes **upset the applecart** by being too greedy and "bite the flesh of the fish they are cleaning in a bid to get to the mucus, which is more tasty than the parasites on the surface," researcher Redouan Bshary found.

The male fish, which are bigger in size, would then step in to chase the females away.

By protecting the fish they are cleaning from being bitten by the female cleaners, the male cleaners keep the

client from leaving the cleaning station.

Fearful of **incurring** the wrath of the males again, the females also no longer dare to go near the mucus.

After the cleaning is done on the surface, the males can then move on to the mucus for dessert, without having to share it with the females.

The male fish is therefore the "main winner," said the researcher, whose findings are published in the journal *Science*. (AFP)

瑞士紐夏特大學的一名研究學者發現，在某些種類的清潔魚中，公魚似乎比母魚更為狡詐。

這類公魚會保護牠們的客戶不被過度積極的母魚咬傷，隨後自己獨享這些美味的點心。

裂唇魚這種清潔魚體長約十公分，以大型魚類身上的寄生生物為主食。

研究學者雷多安·夏瑞發現，母魚有時候可能會因為太貪心而壞了好事，「為了嚐到比表面寄生生物更美味的黏液，她

們會咬破清理中的魚的肉。」

體型較大的公魚會介入趕走母魚。

為了不讓母魚咬傷正在清潔的魚，公魚會把客戶留在清潔服務站內。

母魚因為怕再次惹怒公魚，便不敢再靠近黏液一步。

清理完表面後，公魚會接著清理黏液當作點心，不跟母魚分享。

研究學者說，因此，公魚才是「最大的贏家」：該發現刊載於《科學》期刊上。

(法新社/翻譯：袁星塵)

A cleaner fish swims out of the mouth of a green moray at the tropical aquarium of the Hagenbeck Zoo in Hamburg, on Dec. 29, 2009. PHOTO: REUTERS

二〇〇九年十二月二十九日，德國漢堡哈根貝克動物園熱帶水族館裡的一隻清潔魚，從一隻綠色海鱔的嘴裡游出來。 照片：路透

TODAY'S WORDS

今日單字

1. **devious** /'diviəs/ adj.

欺詐的 (q1 zha4 de5)

例: Nelson's colleagues thought he was devious and didn't trust him to deal with sensitive projects.

(奈爾森的同事覺得他為人狡詐，所以不放心把敏感的企劃交給他負責。)

2. **overzealous** /'ovə-'zeləs/ adj.

過度激動的 (guo4 du4 ji1 dong4 de5)

例: The security guards were employed to stop overzealous fans getting on stage.

(警衛的職責是要防止過度激動的歌迷衝上舞台。)

3. **incur** /'ɪn'kɜ:/ v.

招致 (zhao1 zhi4)

例: Ian incurred huge debt on his round the world trip.

(伊恩的環遊世界之旅讓他欠下大筆債務。)

IDIOM POINT

重要片語

upset the applecart
擾亂計畫、製造麻煩

If you **upset the applecart**, you ruin someone's plans or spoil a good thing. In the article, the female fish **upset the applecart** by being too aggressive in their feeding habits.

Example: "Pauline **upset the applecart** when she suggested it was time to put an end to paid overtime."

如果說你「**upset the applecart**」，就表示你毀了某人的計畫，或是糟蹋了一個好東西。上文中提到，母魚因進食習慣過於激烈而搞砸事情。

例如：「寶琳提議終止發放加班費，壞了大家的好事」。