

Zombie ants, mummified seals and a gorilla punch

February's sharpest science shots, selected by *Nature's* art team.

[Daniel Cressey](#)

05 March 2015 | Corrected: [06 March 2015](#)

Deep-sea anglerfish, netted birds and the far side of the Moon are among *Nature's* picture choice for February 2015.

Trappings of science



Disappearing smile



[michaelsbecker.com](#)

Lost in the McMurdo Dry Valleys of Antarctica, kilometres from the sea, seals have no hope of survival. But when they perish their bodies can become mummified by the arid conditions. Photographer [Michael Becker](#) captured this image of one unfortunate mummified pinniped being buried by a glacier. By now, even these shiny teeth may have vanished under the cold ground.

Stamp of approval



Royal Mail

The Royal Mail, the UK postal service, has issued a series of delightful stamps that celebrate 'Inventive Britain'. Among the eight inventions highlighted: the Colossus computer from the Second World War code-breaking site Bletchley Park; stainless steel; carbon fibre; and DNA sequencing.

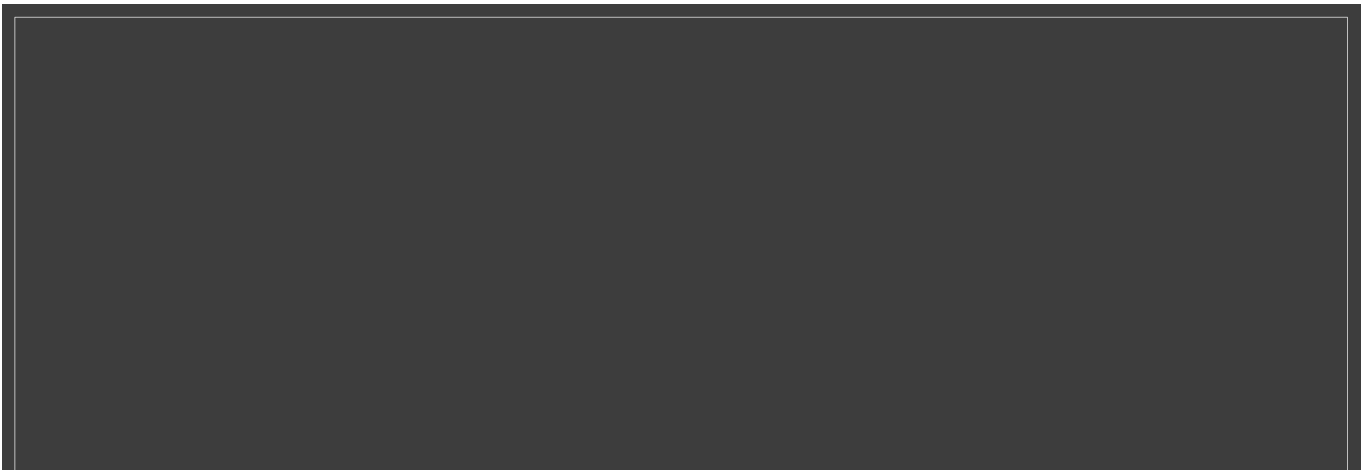
Chemical cloud



Ramon Costa/Demotix/Corbis

Three people were injured when a chemicals factory in Igalada, Spain, exploded this month. A brightly coloured cloud formed above the site, and residents in nearby towns were told to stay indoors until the toxic miasma dispersed, which took several hours.

Shedding light on the dark side



The Moon's invisible face

The side of the Moon that cannot be seen from Earth is documented in this NASA video, constructed by the space agency's Scientific Visualization Studio from data collected by the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter.

Emie Wight (USRA), David Ladd (USRA), John Keller (NASA/GSFC), Noah Petro (ORAU)/NASA's Scientific Visualization Studio.

Zombie ant close-up



Anand Varna/National Geographic/worldpressphoto.org/awards/2015

The fungus *Ophiocordyceps* hijacks unsuspecting ants, forcing them to leave their nests and climb, zombie-like, into trees, where they die. The fungus then grows out of their bodies and rains down spores onto other ants. This image of the horrific process is part of a series of pictures on parasite mind control that won Anand Varna first prize in the nature-stories category of the [World Press Photo 2015 contest](#).

No pictures!



Christophe Courteau/Caters News Agency

This gorilla took offence at wildlife photographer Christophe Courteau trying to snap him in the Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda. Such rambunctious behaviour is probably due to the animal, called Akarewuro, having a stomach full of fermenting bamboo stems — in effect getting drunk.

The world at night



© Babak Tafreshi

Babak Tafreshi/TWAN; twanight.org/tafreshi

Photographer [Babak Tafreshi](#) took this image of the night sky above Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. The Milky Way, with the Carina Nebula (the red cloud), and the Magellanic Clouds, a duo of dwarf galaxies, are visible.

Fantastical anglerfish



Carl Berto/Australian Museum

This little critter is a *Chaunacops melanostomus* anglerfish, also known as the tadpole coffinfish, the first underwater observations of which were [reported last month](#) in the *Journal of Fish Biology*. In a bonus for deep-sea anglerfish fans, the paper also reports an entirely new species, *Chaunacops spinosus*, or eastern tadpole coffinfish.

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Corrections

Corrected:An earlier version of this story mis-identified the Brown-backed solitaire (*Myadestes occidentalis*). The text has been corrected.