

## Robert Zhao Renhui: A guide to the flora and fauna of the world

The Singaporean artist has created an alternative encyclopaedia of genetically modified species of animals and plants



World Goldfish Queen. At the International Goldfish Championships, goldfish are judged by breed, body, shape, colour and overall impression. The winner in 2012 was this giant specimen, which weighed in at almost 4lb © Robert Zhao Renhui  
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The Singaporean artist Robert Zhao Renhui belongs to the Institute of Critical Zoologists, whose mission is “to develop a critical approach to the zoological gaze, or how humans view animals”.

Its research involves “perspectives typically ignored by animal studies, such as aesthetics”.

For a recent project Zhao Renhui considered the increasingly ill-defined boundaries between the natural and the man-made.



Painted Molly, Rainbow Star Warrior variant © Robert Zhao Renhui

“Why, for example, doesn’t the goldfish have a scientific name?” he asks. “Bred as pets for thousands of years, it is not included in any natural history encyclopaedia.”



World's smallest man-made frog © Robert Zhao Renhui

So he created an alternative encyclopaedia in which a decorative aquarium fish can have right of place.



Zhou's Migration Turtle © Robert Zhao Renhui

It includes animals and plants affected by aesthetic and genetic modification, ecological conservation, evolution and pollution.

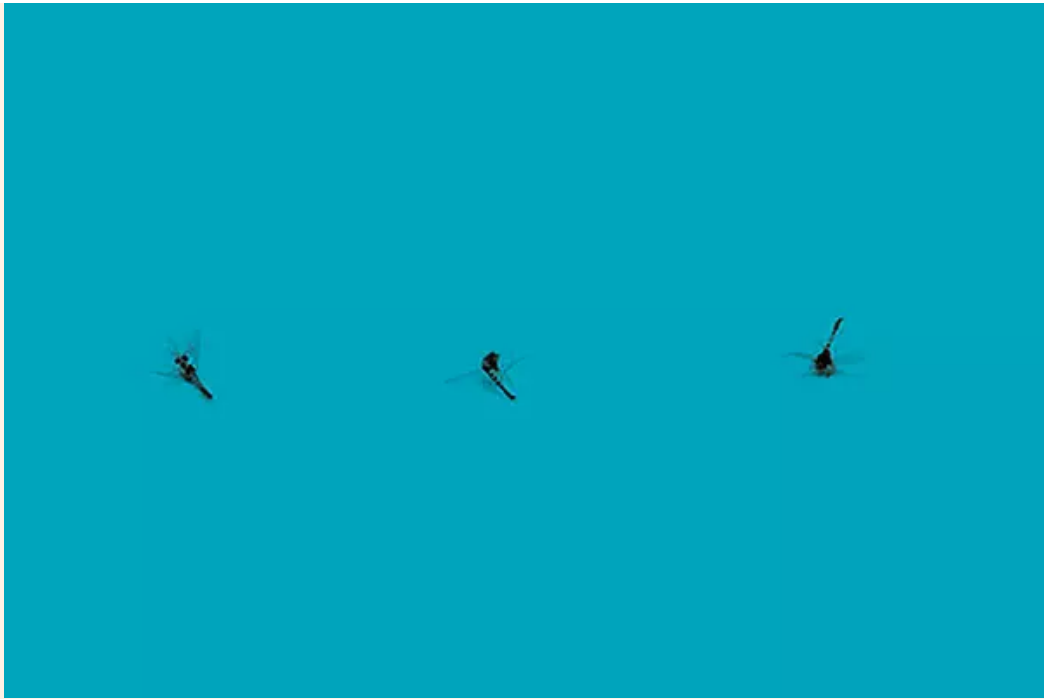


Remote-controlled cockroach © Robert Zhao Renhui

The specimens here are the result of, or under consideration for, some form of scientific modification.



Oriental White-eye that died from light pollution © Robert Zhao Renhui



First tiger mosquitoes found in Norway © Robert Zhao Renhui



Artificial grapes made from gelatin, grape flavouring and artificial colouring have been passed off as real in roadside markets in China © Robert Zhao Renhui



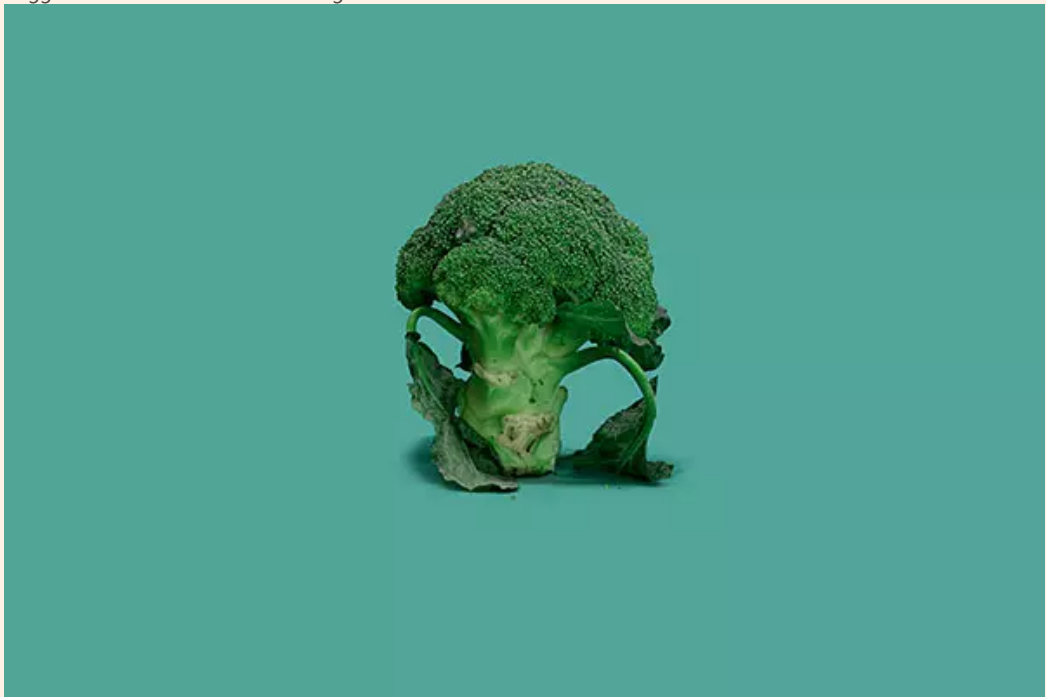
Square apple. Sold in a South Korean department store as a gift for students taking the College Scholastic Ability Test, these cubic fruits are sometimes inscribed with the word 'pass' or 'success'. They are created by stunting their growth under glass cubes © Robert Zhao Renhui



Fake beef. In China, pork has been made to look and taste like beef by adding 'beef colouring' and beef extracts © Robert Zhao Renhui



Medicinal eggs with extractable antibodies against cancer © Robert Zhao Renhui



The broccoli is a man-made plant, derived from careful breeding from about 2,000 years ago. It comes from genus of plants in the mustard family © Robert Zhao Renhui



Sugar cane engineered with human gene © Robert Zhao Renhui

‘A Guide to the Flora and Fauna of the World’, by Robert Zhao Renhui, is published by The Institute of Critical Zoologists, Tokyo; [criticalzoologists.org](http://criticalzoologists.org)

Photographs: Robert Zhao Renhui

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