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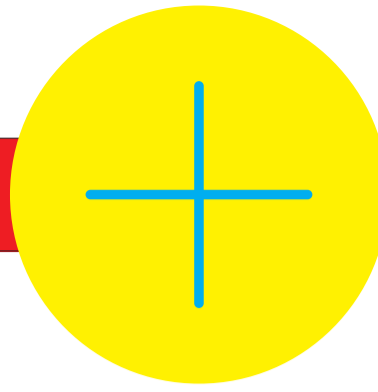
Rare clam thought to be extinct found alive



SCITECHDAILY – A tiny clam, previously only known from fossil records, has been discovered alive in the tidepools of Santa Barbara by researchers from the University of California, Santa Barbara and the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.

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Afifabad Garden: An eye-catching tourist destination in Shiraz



apochi.com



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Afifabad Garden, with an area of approximately 127,000 square meters, is one of the most beautiful historical gardens in Shiraz, in the southwestern province of Fars. Initially called Golshan Garden, the garden was first established in the Safavid Era (1501-1736 CE). It was always one of the favorite places of the Safavid kings for spending their leisure time. Afifabad Garden has been known as

one of the oldest and most beautiful gardens of this majestic city, apochi.com reported. Yaqoob Khan Zolqadr, ruler of Fars Province in the Safavid Era, constructed a citadel in the garden, which was later ruined and the garden lost its attractions. Mirza Ali Khan Qavam-ol-Molk purchased the garden during the Qajar Era and brought the lively and fresh atmosphere back to it. He built a breathtaking

mansion to add more magnificence to it. At the end of the Safavid Era, Afifabad Garden was inherited by Qavam-ol-Molk's niece, Afifeh Khanom. She cared a lot about the garden and found herself responsible for preserving its beauties. Therefore, the name of the garden was changed to Afifabad as a memory of her contributions to it. It turned into a leisure resort to army seniors during the

Pahlavi Era. Afifabad Garden is a symbol of the Iranian art of planting flowers. Located in a wealthy area of Shiraz, it contains a royal palace, a museum of old weapons, and an Iranian garden. The garden has been registered on Iran's National Heritage List, seeiran.ir reported. A traditional brick wall is built around the garden. Colorful flowers of various kinds are there for everyone to enjoy. There

is a wooden door in the northern wall of the garden. As soon as one enters the garden, one sees a big rectangular pond with tall trees around it. The majestic mansion is located right in the center. The wooden ceiling of the mansion is decorated with spectacular carvings and paintings. Stained glass, sash windows, wooden doors, marble fireplace, priceless Persian carpets and expensive furniture give this man-

sion a special aura. There are luxury rooms in the corridors around the main hall, which function as a changing room, sitting room, study room, conference room, and welcoming room. The architecture of the garden is a mixture of the architectural features of the Achaemenid, Sassanid, and Qajar eras. The lower floor of the palace, with a nice fountain in its midst, is now a military museum.

Among the various weapons showcased on the lower floor, or the military museum, there are precious personal guns that belonged to the Qajar and Pahlavi kings. Shiraz is always so amazingly beautiful in every season, but the best time to travel to Shiraz is in the spring. The weather is breezy and the pleasant aroma of orange blossoms is generously spread into the air.

Iran, Afghanistan universities keen on expanding cooperation



IRNA

IRNA – Iran's Birjand University in eastern Iran and two Afghan universities of Ashna and Maiwand signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on expansion of educational, research, and technology ties. The agreement was signed for the active participation of university professors and researchers to develop scientific ties between these

universities. University student exchange in the agreed fields, exchange of information, books, scientific publications, scientific and research documents, theses, microfilm and computer software in the fields of education, research and technology are among the provisions of the MoU. According to the agree-

ment, Birjand University announced its readiness for the participation of students of Maiwand Higher Education Institute in short-term Persian language courses. In addition, three gender-specific universities in Iran expressed readiness to enroll hundreds of Afghan women after the Taliban barred female students from attending

private and public universities in Afghanistan. Iranian Deputy Science Minister for International Affairs Vahid Haddadi-Asl announced that three female-only academic centers in Iran, namely Alzahra University of Tehran, Kosar University of Bojnurd, and Hazrat-e Masoumeh University of Qom, will accept Afghan female students as long as they are deprived of education in their country, Tasnim News Agency reported. The Alzahra University is ready to enroll up to 50 Afghan girls. However, the quota will be increased if more dormitories become available, he added. Haddadi-Asl also noted that Hazrat-e Masoumeh University of Qom is prepared to accept at least 300 Afghan female students, both in offline and online courses. The Taliban-run Higher Education Ministry announced in December 2022 that female students would not be allowed access to the country's universities until further notice.



Iran's Armenian Christians celebrate New Year at the Surp Targmanchats Church in Tehran on Saturday night – December 31, 2022.
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