

Ancient DNA found hidden below sea floor

The following is an excerpt of a longer story. Find a link to the full story below.

In the middle of the South Atlantic, there's a patch of sea almost devoid of life. There are no birds, few fish, not even much plankton. But researchers report that they've found buried treasure under the empty waters: ancient DNA hidden in the muck of the sea floor, which lies 5000 meters below the waves.

The DNA, from tiny, one-celled sea creatures that lived up to 32,500 years ago, is the first to be recovered from the abyssal plains, the deep-sea bottoms that cover huge stretches of Earth. In a separate finding published this week, another research team reports teasing out plankton DNA that's up to 11,400 years old from the floor of the much shallower Black Sea. The researchers say that the ability to retrieve such old DNA from such large stretches of the planet's surface could help reveal everything from ancient climate to the evolutionary ecology of the seas.

View the full story here: [Ancient DNA Found Hidden Below Sea Floor](#)