Come explore us close-up look microbes highlights much n't know life planet microscopic diatom type protist hard porous cell wall Dennis Kunkel Microscopy/Science Photo Library/Alamy Stock Photo Susan Milius April 11 2024 6:30 Gumdrop earring ’ pops mind look photos creature Sebastian Hess found mossy pond Germany ’ kind plump one cell ’ also violent shape-shifting amoeba-like cell prowls algal cells attack curls long strand called flagellum earring-like loop Holding loop steady cell somehow glides “ look basically like tiny flying saucers ” Hess says Hess seeking tending single-celled wonders since young age teenager kept zoo microbes windowsill ’ biologist Technical University Darmstadt Germany still studies type specimens filled zoo protists Free educator resources available article Register access Already Registered Enter e-mail address Readability Score 7.1 Protists huge varied group one-celled organisms traditional “ tree life ” comprise whole kingdom alongside animals plants fungi bacteria archaea Protists among closest microbial cousins multi-celled life Like animals plants fungi wrap genetic material inside cell nucleus Yet ’ often overlooked drawn many science textbooks lower branch beneath crown many-celled life ’ becoming clear however small mighty outnumber us — lot fact single-celled microbes — protists among — dominate planet 2018 comparison estimates Earth ’ protists account twice many gigatons carbon ingredient life animals put together Add microbes together hold 40 times biomass animals may think see represents much world ’ life Yet eyes capture narrow — rather odd — sliver life ’ variety high-tech biology meets old-fashioned boots-in-mud exploration protists getting closer look scientists learning challenges old notions single cells simple microscopic world full breathtaking complexity diversity tiny protists giving us whole new view means live Earth Hess ’ flying saucers one amazing array protists kingdom showcases wide variety looks behaviors Daimonympha new species named last June one-celled equivalent rotating head cell roughly shaped like globe top somehow spins steadily around without ripping strangling