

# Bizarre Science: Ig Nobel Prize [B1]

È arrivato il momento della cerimonia di consegna degli Ig Nobel, i premi assegnati ai dieci più insoliti, bizzarri e irrilevanti risultati scientifici di quest'anno!

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Scientific **achievements** often amaze or fascinate us. Then there are some, such as the discovery that mammals can potentially breathe through their anuses or that dead **trout** can swim, that are so unexpected, bizarre or **downright dubious** that it makes us laugh **in disbelief** and **delight**. It is these type of **achievements** that are celebrated at the 35th annual Ig Nobel Prize ceremony held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge, Massachusetts in September.

## IGNOBLE AWARDS

Created in 1991, the Ig Nobel (a play on the word '**ignoble**') Prize ceremony is organised by the scientific humour magazine Annals of Improbable Research (AIR). It **awards** ten prizes that "honour **achievements** so surprising that they make people LAUGH, then THINK," according to AIR. The prizes are intended to celebrate the unusual, honour the imaginative — and **spur** people's interest in science, medicine and technology.

## HOW DO YOU SAY...?

Rendersi ridicolo. To make a fool of yourself.

## PLEASE STOP, I'M BORED!

Nobel laureates (mostly) present the **awards**, which come in the form of **banknotes** for **ten trillion** Zimbabwean dollars (equivalent to less than 50 cents.) The winners then give a public **lecture**. But if they speak for too long, they are interrupted by Miss Sweetie Poo, a little girl who repeatedly shouts "Please stop, I'm bored!" This is one of several eccentric traditions at the

ceremony, which concludes with the announcement “If you didn’t win a prize — and especially if you did — better luck next year!”

## PAST WINNERS

One of the most famous winners of the satirical science award is Sir Andre Geim, who is the only person ever to have won an Ig Nobel Prize and a Nobel Prize. He won the Ig Nobel Prize in 2000 for levitating a [frog](#) by magnetism, and a Nobel Prize in 2010 for his work on the electromagnetic properties of graphene. The work of fictional scientists has also been honoured. Real-life past winners include Michigan-based televangelists Jack and Rexella Van Impe, for their [claim](#) that black holes meet all the technical requirements to be the location of hell; British [poultry farmers](#), for their discovery that [ostriches](#) are sexually attracted to humans; and high-school student Jillian Clarke for her research exploring the belief that food [dropped](#) on the floor can be safely eaten if picked up within five seconds — a belief colloquially known as the ‘Five-Second Rule’. [www. improbable.com](http://www.improbable.com)

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# Glossary

- **poultry farmers** = allevatori di pollame
- **dropped** = cadere
- **trout** = trota
- **downright** = decisamente
- **in disbelief** = per l'incredulità
- **spur** = stimolare
- **banknotes** = banconote
- **ten trillion** = diecimila miliardi
- **achievements** = risultati scientifici
- **awards** = premiare
- **lecture** = conferenza
- **dubious** = discutibili
- **delight** = con piacere
- **ignoble** = ignobile
- **frog** = rana
- **claim** = dichiarazione
- **ostriches** = struzzi