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最新发表在《科学》期刊里的一项研究指出所有的植物和动物物种的名称可在本世纪内被列出。以下是BBC科学记者 *Rebecca Morelle* 的报道：

We've already found more than a million species, but **unearthing** the rest was thought to be an impossible task. But now it seems an army of amateur scientists have **taken up the cause**. A new study concludes that, thanks to them, we're in a **golden age** of discovery, with 20,000 new finds **charted** each year.

There could also be far fewer plants and animals left for them to find. The researchers say rather than tens of millions of species living on Earth, there could be between two and eight million. If the **appetite for discovery** continues to grow, they say a full **ecological audit** could be a possibility within the next 100 years. The scientists also looked at the numbers of species going extinct, and said this had been **overestimated**.

Professor Mark Costello, from the University of Auckland, is the lead author of the study:

*"Suddenly people say we're in the middle of a **mass extinction** crisis well that's a bit **premature** because when we look at the extinction rates that are actually happening they're not as bad as people have been letting on"*

But the International Union for the Conservation of Nature disagreed with the team's conclusion that the rate of new species found was higher than the numbers being lost. The organisation's deputy director said it was more important to save species than to count them.

Questions

1. True or False? *Over one million species have been unearthed already.*
2. True or False? *The International Union for the Conservation of Nature doesn't believe the rate of new species found was higher than the numbers being lost.*
3. How many new species are being found each year?
4. Why do the researchers think it would be possible to name all the species on earth within the next 100 years?

Vocabulary and definitions

unearthing	发掘，挖出
taken up the cause	积极投身于（某事业）
a golden age	黄金时期
charted	被记载，被列出
appetite for discovery	（想）发掘的欲望
ecological audit	生态审计
overestimated	对（数量）估计过高，超估
mass extinction	大量灭绝
premature	草率的

Answers to the questions

1. True or False? *Over one million species have been unearthed already.*

Answer: True.

2. True or False? *The International Union for the Conservation of Nature doesn't believe the rate of new species found was higher than the numbers being lost.*

Answer: True.

3. How many new species are being found each year?

Answer: 20,000 new species are being found each year.

4. Why do the researchers think it would be possible to name all the species on earth within the next 100 years?

Answer: Because they believe if there are only two to eight million species left to unearth and that the appetite for discovery keeps growing, then a full ecological audit could be a possibility within the next 100 years.