

Torquigener albomaculosus occultarum

This particular fish was first 'discovered' in 2013, [off of the coast of Japan](#). Sort of. In boring, mundane terms it's a species of pufferfish whose males attract mates by drawing remarkably symmetrical and elaborate patterns in the sand. *Torquigener albomaculosus occultarum* will even decorate the pattern with pieces of shell and seafloor debris; it is presumed that all of this is due to the usual blind, aimless iterations of the evolutionary process.

...Unless you're a professional arcane practitioner, of course . If you are, then you immediately realize that the pattern is a sand drawing of the Third Mandala of Denial. You know, the one that they use to keep undersea demonic incursions under control. Apparently, Japan is a particular target, these days; and apparently, somebody's worked out how to automagic the mandala-drawing process.

Which is excellent, because auto-magery is one of those exciting new sorcerous disciplines that never seems to **quite** pan out. Being able to program fish to draw your

apotropaic designs for you sounds legitimately like the Next Big Thing, so... why is nobody taking credit for it? Why are the Japanese and Australian magical circles being so remarkably closed-mouthed on the subject? And why do individual *Torquigener albomaculosus occultarum* keep staring intently at any mage that comes by to do hand's-on research?

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