

Scientists plan to bring back the woolly mammoth

Vocabulary Match

- reviving ● embryos ● characteristics ● resurrection ● endangered ● altering ●
- traits ● changing ● at risk ● early-stage baby ● rebirth ● bringing back

Article

Colossal Biosciences, a Texas-based biotech company, is working on reviving extinct animals, including the woolly mammoth. As part of their research, they have genetically modified mice embryos to create a "colossal woolly mouse" with thick, woolly fur. This experiment is a step towards altering Asian elephants to develop mammoth-like characteristics.

However, some scientists question the project's goals. Christopher Preston from the University of Montana argues that this is not true resurrection, as it only modifies living animals.

Beth Shapiro, Colossal's chief scientist, explains that the cold-resistant genes already existed in mice and were simply combined. Despite their progress, the project faces major challenges, especially since Asian elephants, the planned genetic base, are already endangered.

Quiz

1. What is Colossal Biosciences working on?
2. What animal did they genetically modify to create a "colossal woolly mouse"?
3. Who questions the project's goals?
4. What challenge does the project face regarding Asian elephants?

Conversation

- A: Did you hear about the woolly mouse?
B: The woolly what? Woolly mammoth?
A: No, woolly mouse. The woolly mammoth is extinct.
B: I know that! So, what's a woolly mouse?
A: It's a mouse with fur. Scientists are practising.
B: Practising what? Knitting clothes for mice?
A: No! They want to bring back the woolly mammoth!

Discussion

1. Would you like to see a woolly mammoth in real life?
2. What extinct animal would you bring back if you could?
3. Do you think animals should be brought back from extinction?
4. Would you like to be woolly human?
5. What other animals could we make woolly?