

# Slime Mold Biodiversity: local, national, global



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## Hunting slime molds in the National Parks

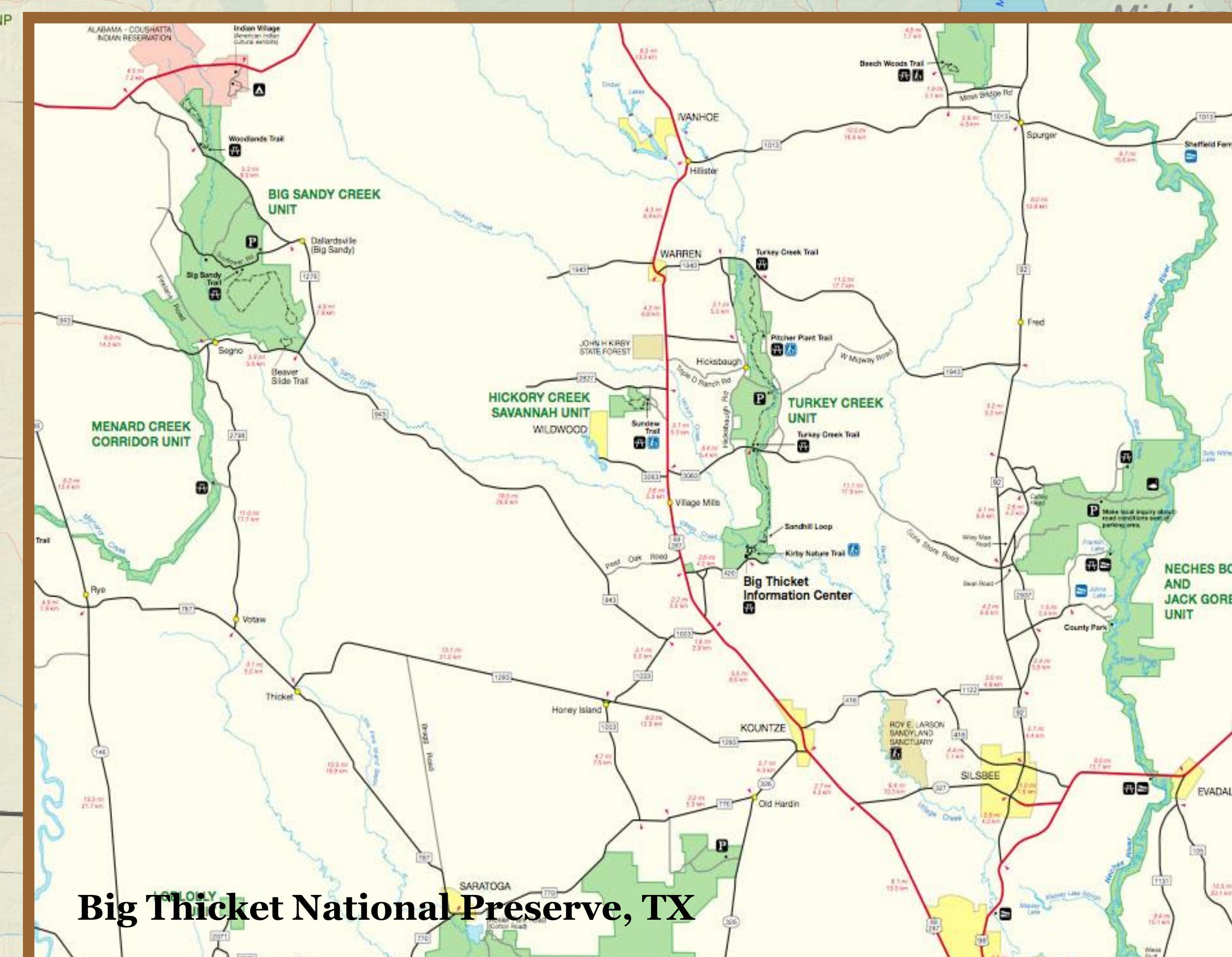
Over the past year, 13 national parks were surveyed by the authors for eumycetozoans (true slime molds) to increase our knowledge of these organisms in the United States (US) for the NSF-funded Planetary Biodiversity Inventory (PBI) project with the objective of developing a global understanding of the species in this group and their distribution. There is a considerable body of data for slime molds in the US; however, much of it is restricted to the specific locations where particular researchers in this field have lived and worked. To develop a more comprehensive view of species distribution, it is important to sample sites that are representative of all the different habitat types found in the US. The National Park System (NPS) is ideal for this purpose because it encompasses in protected areas most of the habitat diversity found within the US.



## Redwoods National and State Parks



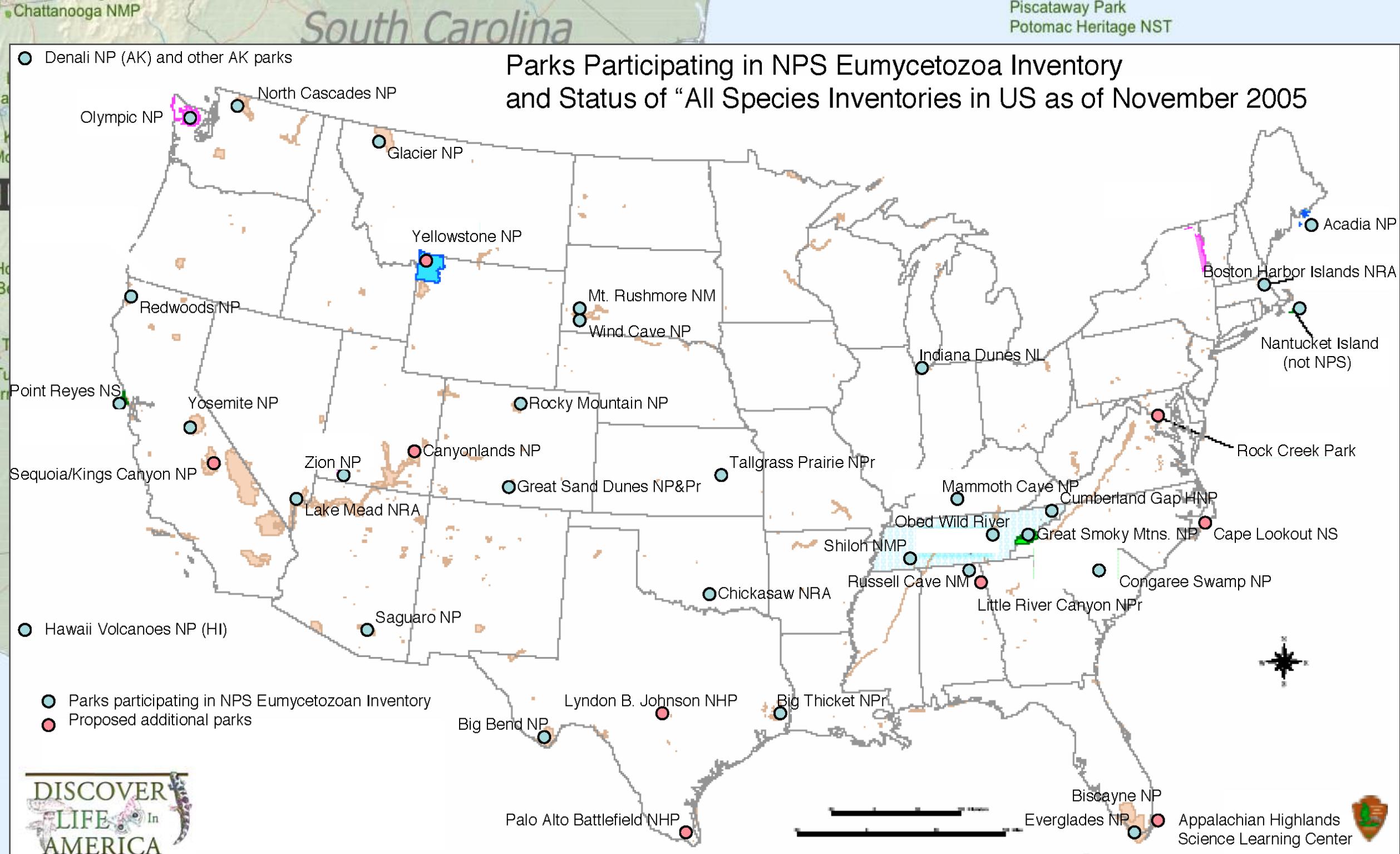
## Chickasaw National Recreation Area



## Big Thicket National Preserve, TX



Plasmodium on a log



The first National Park comprehensively sampled for slime molds was the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, largely as a result of the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) in that park. The ATBI project and Discover Life in America (DLIA) funded a slime mold workshop for NPS personnel in May 2005 to train park personnel in the methods of collecting for and finding slime molds to contribute to the larger PBI project. Through both the overall project and special activities such as the workshop, we have expanded our connections in other parks, further facilitating this research. **Currently, the ATBI for the Big Thicket National Preserve is under way. For updated information see <http://thicketofdiversity.org>.**

Background image produced by the National Park Service

Status map produced by Discover Life in America, Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center

All other images from the authors

0 125 250 500 Miles

Gulf of Mexico



0 125 250 500 Miles

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