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Human ancestry has just got more complicated

5 ONE of the oddest things about *Homo sapiens* is that he is alone. Though storytellers have filled the world with imaginary hominids—from woodland pixies to mountain giants—no sign of the real thing has ever been seen. But that was not true in the past. As recently as 40,000 years ago there were three other species of human on Earth: Neanderthals in Europe, the “hobbits” of Flores, in
10 Indonesia, and a recently discovered and still mysterious group of creatures called the Denisovans, who lived in Central Asia. And now there is evidence that similar diversity existed earlier in human history, a little under 2m years ago, in Africa.

10 The problem with studying humanity’s fossil record is that it is so sparse: a jawbone here; a braincase there. Often, it is difficult to know if different bones have come from the same species or not. Even multiple examples of the same type of bone can mislead. What looks like two species might actually be the male and the female of one.

Such confusion has bedevilled the interpretation of the human fossils found near Lake Turkana. Some palaeontologists see a single, variable species called *Homo habilis*. Others add a second, *Homo rudolfensis*. (...)

15 It seems then that at least two, and possibly three species of *Homo* were stalking the east-African savannah a little under 2m years ago: *habilis*, *rudolfensis* and something as yet unnamed.

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Sum up this article and explain the main ideas using your scientific knowledge.

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