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Conficker Cabal goes after computer worm

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NEW YORK, March 24 (UPI) -- A group of online detectives in the United States is looking for a computer worm called Conficker C that is believed to be poised to do its damage on April 1.

The researchers told CNN that the worm is thought to be present in 5 million to 10 million computers, but so far the infection has no symptoms. On April Fool's Day, those computers will become slaves to a master computer, Don DeBolt, director of threat research for the New York software company CA, said.

Microsoft has put up a \$250,000 reward. Members of the Conficker Cabal, as the researchers call themselves, say that they are also motivated by the joy of the hunt.

"We love catching bad guys," said Alvin Estevez, CEO of Enigma Software Group, which is one of many companies trying to crack Conficker. "We're like former hackers who like to catch other hackers. To us, we get almost a feather

in our cap to be able to knock out that worm. We slap each other five when we're killing those infections."

DeBolt said that no one is completely sure what will happen April 1.

Enigma is offering a free removal tool at www.enigmasoftware.com.

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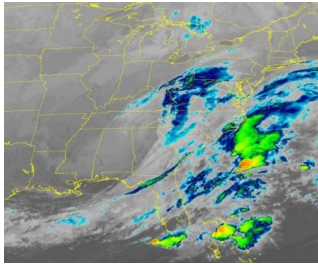
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