



RESOURCES

Liquid Assets

Whether it's the Everglades or just a seasonal pool, a wetland is a haven for life. Find out where these habitats are located across much of the United States with the Wetlands Mapper* at this U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service site. The tool lets you zoom in to a scale of just a few meters. The site also lists wetland plant species and reports on how fast wetlands are vanishing (23,000 hectares a year in 2000). The U.S. Geological Survey's National Wetlands Research Center† offers fact sheets on topics such as mangroves and climate change as well as the nutria, a ratlike invasive species chomping its way through Louisiana's dwindling swamps. An online library includes reports documenting the ecology and habitat needs of more than 100 coastal wetland residents, from the black abalone to the yellowtail snapper.

* wetlands.fws.gov

† www.nwrc.usgs.gov

RESOURCES

Still in the Crosshairs

The Cold War may be long over, but the threat of nuclear annihilation remains. To drive home the point, the nonprofit Federation of American Scientists provides its Nuclear Weapon Effect Calculator, a Java applet that lets visitors see how far the zone of destruction would stretch if an atomic bomb of a specific size exploded in Washington, D.C., or in one of 24 other American cities. "This is just a very graphic way to let anyone see what the effect of a bomb on his city would be," says Ivan Oelrich, director for the federation's strategic security project.

The foundation's Web site offers scientific guidance on issues from energy-efficient housing to biomedical computing, but its focus is nuclear arms control. You'll find tutorials on timely questions such as how a gas centrifuge could help a rogue nation amass the uranium necessary to make a bomb. Reports also apply technical expertise to policy analysis, arguing for instance that an adversary could evade the U.S.'s proposed earth-boring "bunker buster" bomb simply by tunneling deeper.

www.fas.org

IMAGES

The Earth in Your Computer

Few of us will ever gaze down at Earth from space. With the free program World Wind, though, even chairbound adventurers can swoop past Japan's Mount Fuji (right), trace the fractures in a Greenland iceberg, or zoom in on their houses from high altitudes. The software from NASA's Ames Research Center knits together satellite images and elevation data, letting users chart spectacular virtual trips. For more than 30 major U.S. cities, the program features 25-centimeters-per-pixel color images—a resolution that allows viewers to pick out cars on the Golden Gate Bridge. Black-and-white aerial photographs and topographic maps capture the rest of the country. Users can also overlay the latest temperature and cloud-cover measurements and summon data on fires, floods, storms, and volcanic activity. You'll need Windows, a 3-D graphics card, and a 1.4 gigahertz or faster processor.

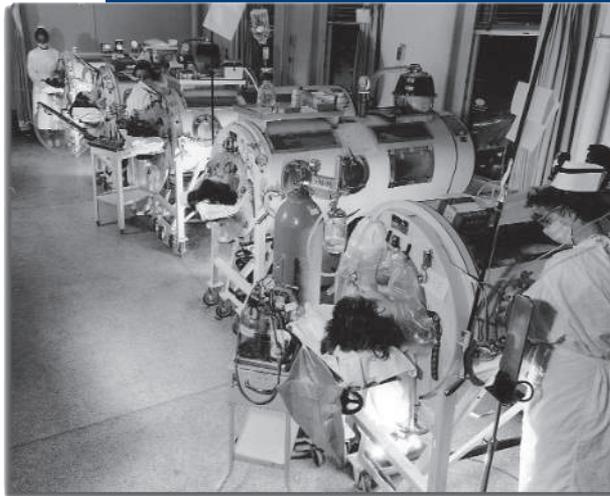
worldwind.arc.nasa.gov



EXHIBITS

A Killer Remembered

Americans were so worried about polio in the early and middle 20th century that some towns forbade travelers under 16 years old from entering, fearing they might be carrying the disease. At *Whatever Happened to Polio?* you can look back at those nervous days and learn about the vaccines that helped stamp out polio in the United States.



The new Web site, which accompanies an exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution, marks the 50th anniversary of the polio vaccine. It offers period photos, audio clips from polio survivors, and other resources that chart the disease's wrenching impact on society and families. For instance, newly diagnosed children were often quarantined for up to 14 days, followed by several weeks of limited contact with their parents. Technologies of the day included these cumbersome iron lungs that helped paralyzed patients breathe (left). You can

also learn about Jonas Salk's and Albert Sabin's vaccines. Salk introduced his vaccine first, but Sabin's, which relied on a weakened virus rather than an inactive one, was more widely used. A final section looks at current efforts to eradicate polio from the few countries where it remains.

americanhistory.si.edu/polio

Send site suggestions to netwatch@aaas.org. Archive: www.sciencemag.org/netwatch

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