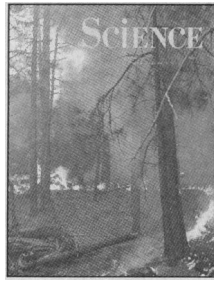


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- SCIENCE (ISSN 0036-8075) is published weekly on Friday, except the last week in December, by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1333 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005. Second-class postage (publication No. 484460) paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Copyright © 1990 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The title SCIENCE is a registered trademark of the AAAS. Domestic individual membership and subscription (51 issues): \$80. Domestic institutional subscription (51 issues): \$150. Foreign postage extra: Canada \$46, other (surface mail) \$46, air mail via Amsterdam \$85. First class, airmail, school-year, and student rates on request. **Change of address:** allow 6 weeks, giving old and new addresses and 11-digit account number. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to *Science*, P.O. Box 1723, Riverton, NJ 08077. **Single copy sales:** Current issue, \$3.50; back issues, \$5.00; Biotechnology issue, \$6.00 (for postage and handling, add per copy \$0.50 U.S., \$1.00 all foreign); Guide to Biotechnology Products and Instruments, \$20 (for postage and handling add per copy \$1.00 U.S., \$1.50 Canada, \$2.00 other foreign). Bulk rates on request. **Authorization to photocopy** material for internal or personal use under circumstances not falling within the fair use provisions of the Copyright Act is granted by AAAS to libraries and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) Transactional Reporting Service, provided that the base fee of \$1 per copy plus \$0.10 per page is paid directly to CCC, 27 Congress Street, Salem, Massachusetts 01970. The identification code for *Science* is 0036-8075/83 \$1 + .10. *Science* is indexed in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* and in several specialized indexes.
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COVER A surface fire, near Crown King, Arizona. Low-intensity surface fires have burned repeatedly through ponderosa pine forests of the southwestern United States. Chronologies of fire scars in the tree rings reveal an association between wildfire occurrence in this region and the El Niño–Southern Oscillation during the past three centuries, demonstrating that global-scale climatic patterns affect the frequency of fires and their effects on the ecosystem. See page 1017. [Photograph by John H. Dieterich]

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Science **249** (4972), 967-1054.

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