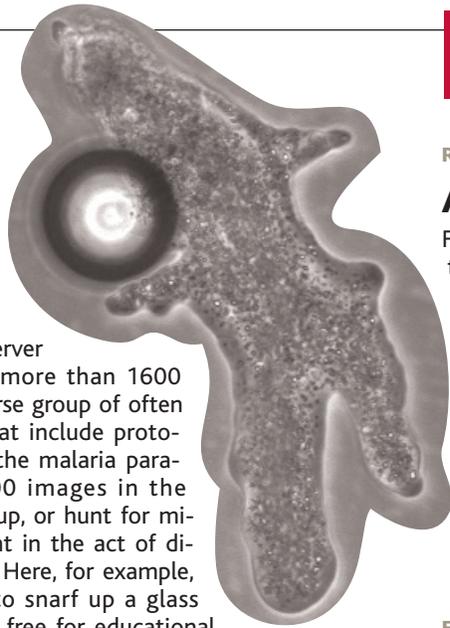


IMAGES

Microscopic Menagerie

The Protist Information Server swarms with photos of more than 1600 species of protists, a diverse group of often one-celled eukaryotes that include protozoans, slime molds, and the malaria parasites. Search the 29,000 images in the gallery by taxonomic group, or hunt for microscopic creatures caught in the act of dividing, eating, or mating. Here, for example, a hungry amoeba tries to snarf up a glass bead (above). Images are free for educational and research uses. Hosted by Hosei University in Japan, the site includes an international directory of researchers and links to more than 20 other protistology sites. You can also page through electronic versions of two classic texts on protists from the early 1900s.

protist.i.hosei.ac.jp/Protist_menuE.html



RESOURCE

AIDS Cache

For the latest on AIDS vaccines, treatments, and research, try this newly revamped information clearinghouse from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. A database profiles drugs for battling HIV and opportunistic infections, and the site posts the latest guidelines for using these compounds. Although the collection is tailored mainly for doctors and patients, researchers can peruse descriptions of completed and continuing vaccine trials or find out who's running studies of treatments and prevention strategies. There's also a handy glossary of HIV-related terms, and you can link to a federal government site that provides free reagents for studying the virus.

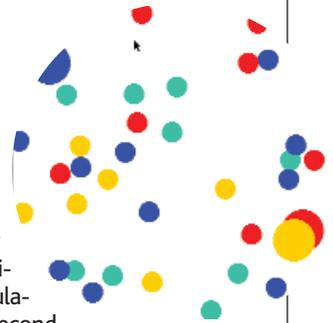
aidsinfo.nih.gov

EDUCATION

Follow the Bouncing Molecule

These six Java applets are like a virtual chemistry set, letting undergrads absorb principles by "messing around," according to creator Christopher Grayce, a chemistry prof at the University of California, Irvine. The simulations explore subjects such as the second law of thermodynamics, the reversibility of reactions, and statistical mechanics. Students learn by tweaking key variables—for example, they can adjust the concentration of reactants and the reaction rate constants to better understand the notion of chemical equilibrium. A detailed explanation wraps up each simulation.

www.chem.uci.edu/education/undergrad_pgm/applets



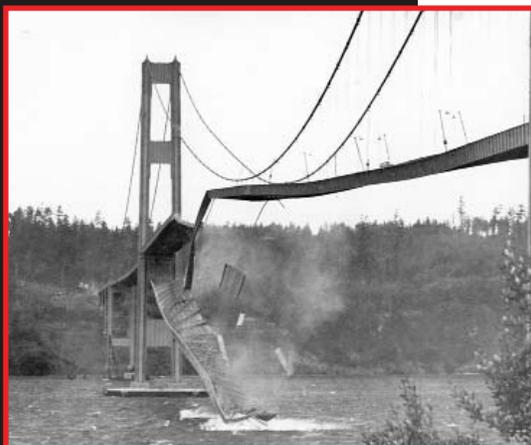
EXHIBIT

Bridge Out

It's known as the "Pearl Harbor of engineering." The Tacoma Narrows bridge in Washington state, the third longest suspension bridge in the world, collapsed in strong winds on 7 November 1940, just 4 months after it opened. Enlivened by period photos and eyewitness accounts, this exhibit from the University of Washington Libraries in Seattle chronicles the design disaster and its aftermath, from the planning of the original doomed span to the opening of a sturdier replacement in 1950.

The bridge showed signs of instability even during construction, and visitors would line up to cross the bouncy span as if it were an amusement park ride. By chance, an engineering professor who was studying ways to damp these movements was filming on the bridge when it began pitching and twisting violently. Along with stills from his footage, the site features other eye-catching shots of the bridge's death throes (right). After the fall, investigators concluded that the bridge was too flexible to withstand the 67-km-per-hour winds blowing that day, motivating engineers to scrupulously test the design of the successor in a wind tunnel.

www.lib.washington.edu/specialcoll/tnb



DATABASE

Gene Farm

Dogs and cats can have the blood-clotting disease hemophilia. Camels sometimes fall victim to cardiomyopathy, a potentially lethal enlargement of the heart muscle, and koalas are susceptible to diabetes. Animals suffer from many of the same inherited disorders that plague humans, as well as a host of their own diseases. Named after a well-known database on human genetics, Online Mendelian Inheritance in Animals makes it easy to track down studies on inherited traits and disorders in domesticated and wild species. Searchable by disease and by species, the bibliography includes publications on more than 100 types of mammals, birds, reptiles, fishes, and other beasts. Site creator Frank Nicholas, an animal geneticist at the University of Sydney in Australia, plans to add genetic data and information on diagnosis.

www.angis.su.oz.au/Databases/BIRX/omia

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

RESOURCE: AIDS Cache

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