



## RESOURCES

### Whirlwind Tour of Tornado Science

Although the nearly 400 tornadoes in a single week in early May were way off the charts, on average roughly 1000 tornadoes rip across the United States each year, killing 60 people and causing millions of dollars worth of damage. Students and teachers chasing down information on these violent storms will find this well-written frequently asked questions (FAQ) site by Roger Edwards of the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma, right up their alley.

Scientists don't understand exactly how twisters form, Edwards begins, but the most ferocious are born in supercells: powerful, roiling thunderstorms.

Edwards touches down on scores of tornado topics, such as the basics of forecasting, the F-scale for gauging damage (F5, the strongest, has winds over 420 km per hour), and whether the tropical Pacific Ocean warming known as El Niño leads to more tornadoes (it's not yet clear). Visitors who get swept up in the subject can skip to supplementary sites, such as maps of tornado risk for different parts of the country. Edwards blows apart some famous myths, like the advice that you open the windows of your house when a tornado is bearing down to equalize the pressure inside and out. It's dangerous and futile, he writes. (Above, a tornado near Dimmitt, Texas, in June 1995.)

[www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/tornado](http://www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/tornado)

## EDUCATION

### Everyday Chemistry

ChemCases entices college students to learn chemistry by exploring the development of familiar products, from the fat substitute olestra to unleaded gasoline. Sponsored by Kennesaw State University in Georgia, the dozen case studies explain not just chemical details but also the economic, safety, and other decisions behind the inventions. One case study tracks the invention of the sports drink Gatorade, which began in 1965 when the football coach at the University of Florida, Gainesville, asked researchers to concoct something to recharge his tiring players. Students learn about chemical concepts such as osmosis and sugar metabolism, as well as a U.S. decision to ban an original Gatorade ingredient—the artificial sweetener cyclamate—and a patent brouhaha over the popular drink.

[chemcases.com](http://chemcases.com)

## DATABASE

### Turning On the myc

The *myc* gene is one of the cell's movers and shakers. The well-connected gene not only speeds up cell division, researchers recently recognized, it also turns on genes that rev up metabolism and help power a cancer cell's prodigious reproduction. Keep track of *myc*'s network of genetic contacts and its role in human cancers at this 9-month-old site run by molecular biologist Chi Van Dang of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. The site's target gene database profiles the 647-and-counting genes that *myc* governs. Entries specify each gene's function, which method linked it to *myc*, whether *myc* turns it up or down, and other info. A second database lists studies



## IMAGES

### Virtual Noah's Ark

Once a widespread dune-dweller, the sand lizard (right), *Lacerta agilis*, now hangs on in a few patches of habitat on Britain's south and east coasts. The last known thylacine (below), a marsupial carnivore, died in the Hobart, Australia, zoo in 1936. Film and recordings are often among the only evidence of rare and extinct species.

The ARKive project, sponsored by the Wildscreen Trust in Bristol, U.K., has been gathering, digitizing, and storing media of endangered species from around the world. The project's Web site, where you can browse much of the collection, premiered on 20 May.



ARKive's goal is not just to document vanishing species and promote their conservation, but to save media from being lost, discarded, or destroyed. The ARKive staff stocked their multimedia ark with donations from natural history filmmakers such as Discovery Channel and Oxford Scientific Films, scientists, and wildlife photographers. The archive boasts roughly 5000 images, along with background on about 1100 species, such as habitat, diet, and reproduction. Two subsites are aimed at teachers and children. If you've got photos or movies to contribute, see if your species is on the site's "Most Wanted" list.

[www.arkive.org](http://www.arkive.org)

that have linked *myc* to lung, bladder, breast, and other cancers.

[www.mycancerogene.org](http://www.mycancerogene.org)

Send site suggestions to [netwatch@aaas.org](mailto:netwatch@aaas.org). Archive: [www.sciencemag.org/netwatch](http://www.sciencemag.org/netwatch)

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