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EXHIBITS

Space-Flight Chronicle

The Columbia space shuttle disaster and its aftermath (see p. 1300) are the latest upheavals in a long history of space exploration. Chances are, you probably remember only the highlights: Apollo 11 touching down on the moon, perhaps, or Apollo 13 limping back to Earth after an oxygen tank exploded onboard. Anyone who wants a refresher on specific missions should check this site from NASA, which spans the Mercury program of the late 1950s and early 1960s through the last space shuttle flight of 2002. You can find information such as descriptions of the flights, crew lists, and synopses of scientific achievements. But the stars of the site are the hundreds of period photos. Above, for instance, Apollo 16's John Young takes the lunar rover for a spin in April 1972.

spaceflight.nasa.gov/history

DATABASE

Fish Tales

The latest feature at the U.S. Geological Survey clearinghouse on water quality is a trove of data collected between 1993 and 2002 on the abundances of different fish species in nearly 1000 streams. Ecologists and fish biologists can use the collection to characterize aquatic communities and look for trends. Researchers investigating the biological effects of pollution can also tap into data on the concentrations of contaminants such as metals and pesticides in tissues of water-dwelling creatures.

water.usgs.gov/nawqa

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

RESOURCES

The People's Encyclopedia

The do-it-yourself spirit flourishes on the Web, where for the last two-and-a-half years, readers have been writing and editing their own encyclopedia, known as Wikipedia. It now has more than 152,000 articles under way in English, and the project's participants aim to create the world's largest encyclopedia. Wikipedia offers a substantial science section, with biographies of scientists such as the late paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould, backgrounders on subjects such as relativity and acid-base reactions, and overviews of major disciplines. The articles brim with links to other Wikipedia entries and outside sources.

Anyone can write a Wikipedia entry—if they dare. Instead of undergoing formal peer review by experts, the articles endure the scrutiny of readers, who can edit, correct, and polish the prose. The idea is that multiple contributors will not only improve accuracy and clarity, but also balance clashing viewpoints. Amateurs write many entries, but Wikipedians encourage experts to pitch in and help produce articles that are authoritative but not too technical for a general reader.

www.wikipedia.org

RESOURCES

Where Digital Wildlife Roams

Plump and deep-voiced, the Colorado River toad (*Bufo alvarius*, below) is the Orson Welles of amphibians. The largest toad native to the United States exudes a paralyzing, hallucinogenic poison that can kill a dog that bites or mouths it. The "field guides" at this site from eNature are full of fun facts about the Colorado River toad and 4800 other species of North American wildlife. Sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation, eNature peddles all sorts of outdoor products, but the field guides are free. Pithy species profiles cover the taxonomic spectrum, from the American horse fly to the white sturgeon to the saguaro cactus. You can listen to the calls and songs of vocal creatures such as birds and frogs and learn to recognize the tracks of mammals.

www.enature.com



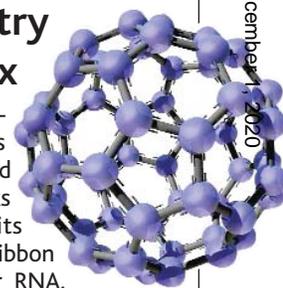
IMAGES

Chemistry Cineplex

A bulky enzyme sidles up to a strand of DNA, locks on, and spits out a fresh ribbon of messenger RNA. A capsule of fat plows through a cell's membrane, emerging with a golden cap of grease. These are two of the chemical action flicks you can check out at this educational site. Creator James Hardy of the University of Akron in

Ohio has directed about 100 short animations for beginning chemistry and biochemistry classes. Plenty of structure models let students study the twists and turns of molecules, from ethane to this buckyball (above). Other movies demonstrate lab techniques such as titration.

ull.chemistry.uakron.edu/genobc/animations/index.html



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Science

DATABASE: Fish Tales

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