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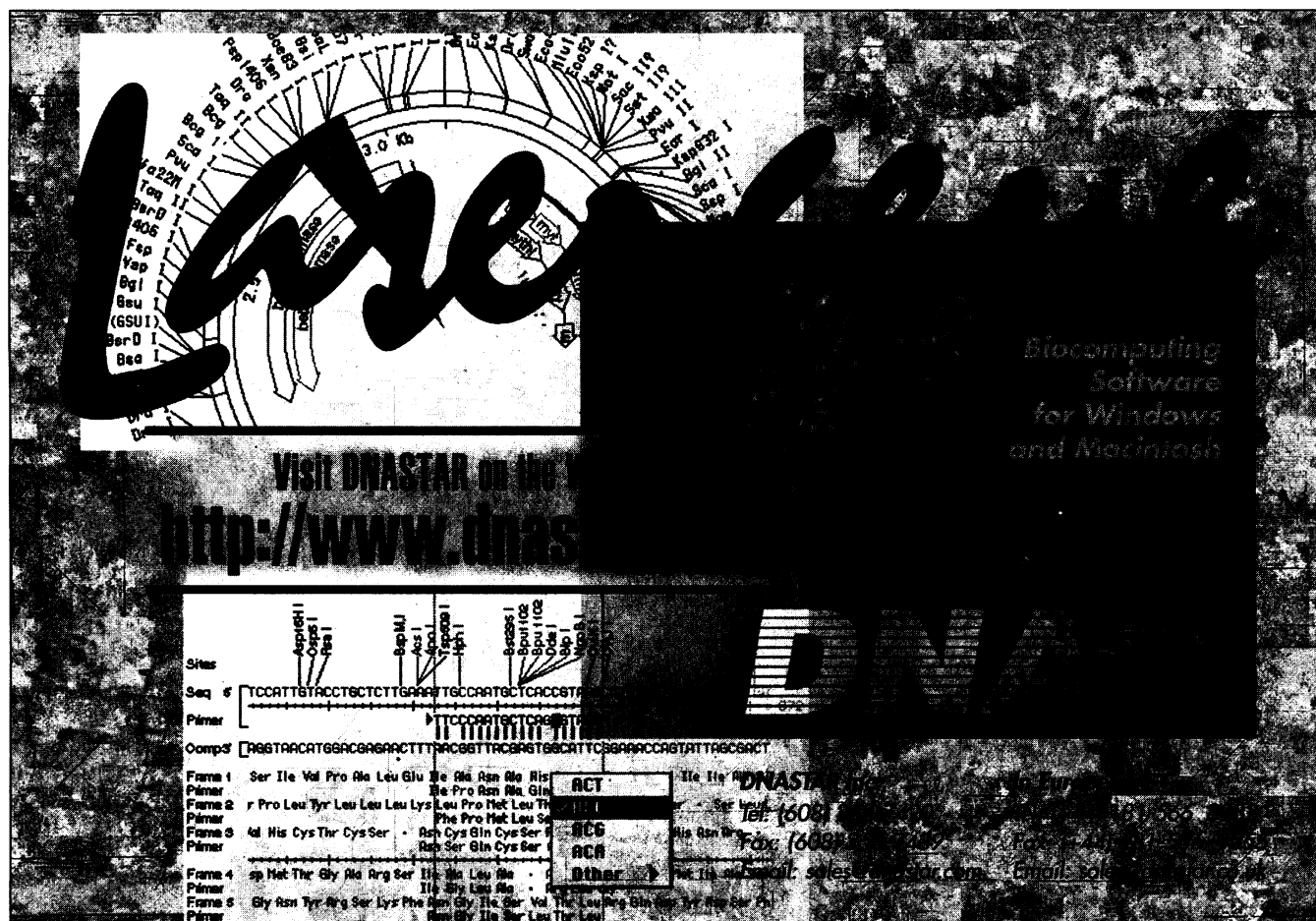
1. C. F. D'Elia, R. W. Buddemeier, S. V. Smith, *Workshop on Coral Bleaching, Coral Reef Ecosystems and Global Change: Report of Proceedings* (Maryland Sea Grant College, College Park, MD, 1991).

The Florida *torreya* was described in Random Samples (8 Dec., p. 1573) as "the rarest tree in North America." With a population size of only 1500, it is indeed rare:

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1. J. C. Hickman, Ed., *The Jepson Manual, Higher Plants of California* (Univ. of California Press, Berkeley, 1993).
2. L. H. Rieseberg and D. Gerber, *Cons. Biol.* **9**, 199 (1995).

Susan Biggin (News & Comment, 10 Nov., p. 909) is to be congratulated for the clarity of her description of the conundrum of national competitions for university appointments in Italy. Retirement mechanisms are another peculiarity of Italian academic life that are difficult to explain to the international scientific community. Although full professors retire at age 77, at age 72 they officially abandon their chair and enter a special category ("*fuori ruolo*"), which implies relief from conventional academic duties, but allows them to retain full salary and the right of sitting—and voting—in faculty councils. In the past, chairs could be immediately open for a new appointment. However, because of recent financial constraints in Italy, new appointments for existing chairs now require the availability of ad hoc financial coverage, which in fact is precluded by the simulta-



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