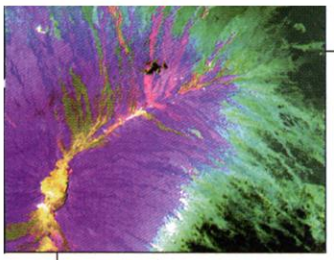

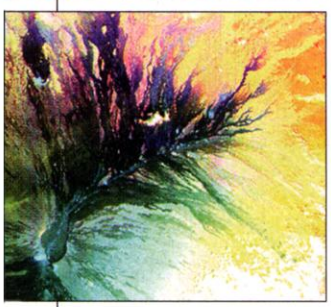

CREDIT: (TOP) ASTER

COOL IMAGES

Terra Nova

A vulcanologist hiking across a lava field has no easy way to tell whether the black crust beneath her feet was formed 10 years or a century ago. But lava flows from past eruptions are laid bare in a thermal infrared satellite view of Mauna Loa in Hawaii (yellow, green, and magenta above, compared to a short-wave infrared image). The images were snapped in March by ASTER, a Japanese-made multispectral "zoom lens" with 15- to 90-meter resolution that can, among other things, distinguish rock types. And that's just a small taste of what's anticipated from Terra, NASA's flagship Earth Observation Satellite launched in December (*Science*, 10 December 1999, p. 2064). ASTER and four other instruments will beam down a daily dose of data on earth processes—some never monitored by satellite before—including cloud formation, air pollution, ice-sheet movements, and heat radiation. For more first-light images, go to terra.nasa.gov/Gallery

HOT PICKS

Variety show. The single-base variations in human DNA that have become a gold mine for drug companies and disease researchers are the focus of the Human Genic Bi-Allelic Sequences Database, sponsored by a European consortium. The "highly curated and annotated" collection of single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) culled from public databases expects to soon reach 50,000 entries. hgbase.cgr.ki.se

Bug juice. Chemical ecology, particularly the pheromones and other chemicals that insects use to communicate (and that sometimes go into natural insect repellents), gets a close look at this researcher's site. There's a bibliography of over 11,400 insect pheromone papers, quizzes on chemical ecology, and sundry software for tasks such as modeling animal movement, teaching probabilities, and finding chemical vapor pressures. www.vsv.slu.se/cec/h.htm

Mothballed OTA. It was dismantled by the U.S. Congress 5 years ago, but the revered Office of Technology Assessment lives on at this Web site holding all 23 years of assessments and reports still useful as references, on everything from unconventional cancer treatments to invasive species to superefficient cars. www.wws.princeton.edu/~ota

NET NEWS

Web Nanny for Disease Researchers

Government agencies are joining corporations in cracking down on so-called "cyberslackers" by installing software that limits employee access to the Internet—with annoying consequences for some researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta.

CDC installed filtering software in late March after monitoring revealed "inappropriate use," with peeks at pornography sites among "the more acute abuses," says spokesperson James Seligman. The filter, called Websense, bounces employees to an internal CDC page if they request a site included in a proprietary database of Web addresses that CDC says agency and federal policies place off limits. Sites featuring porn, weapons, racist rants, gambling, and militant screeds are among the 12 categories the agency has judged beyond the pale.

The new restrictions chagrined researchers studying topics that involve the Net's seamy side, such as AIDS. "When we saw [the e-mail memo], we kind of went: 'Arghh!' " says a researcher in a CDC division that studies whether the Internet encourages risky sexual behavior. Under a waiver policy, however, that group—along with another studying the use of explosives in mines—were granted access to forbidden territory.

CDC scientists told *Science* they can live with the filter. But at least one outside group is upset. "It raises very troubling [free speech] issues," fumes Chris Hansen of the American Civil Liberties Union, which has filed lawsuits against Web filters in libraries. "If this becomes a widespread practice in government, there's a fair chance we would challenge it."

SITE VISIT

A Peek at Development

www.luc.edu/depts/biology/dev.htm

Developmental biologists like to begin at the beginning, focusing their work on the earliest steps in an organism's winding path from single-celled blob to fully formed adult. But the developing embryo can be a bear to study, requiring sharp eyes, powerful optics, and a ready supply of subjects. Luckily, armchair biologists desiring a glimpse of creation—and students needing some help understanding exactly what they saw under that microscope—can turn to Bill Wasserman's Developmental Biology Web Page.

The Loyola University Chicago biologist has laid out a tantalizing spread on this three-pronged site. One button leads to a long list of developmental biology Web resources organized by organism, from *Arabidopsis* to zebrafish. Another links to key journals. But the most popular destination is bound to be Wasserman's collection of nearly 70 movies, animations, and pictures. The squeamish might stick to the nicely rendered animations that illustrate the difference between radial and spiral cleavage in embryos, or a color film of a "calcium wave" sweeping across a newly fertilized urchin egg. Braver surfers can watch an amputated newt leg regenerate in time-lapse photos, or a mammalian eye develop in animation. And don't miss animated illustrations that compare the techniques used to clone frogs, sheep, and mice.

Science ONLINE

Melinda Kelley used to spend weekends staining slides as a neuroscience postdoc. Now, as director of research and education for a Washington, D.C.–based research foundation, she takes the long view and helps define future funding directions in her field. Kelley and others tell how they made the move to grants management this week in *Science*'s Next Wave's special feature. www.nextwave.org

Send Internet news and great Web site suggestions to netwatch@aaas.org