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A reconstruction of Hadrocodium wui, an Early Jurassic fossil (about 195 million years old) found in Yunnan, China. This newly described mammaliaform is an extinct close relative of living mammals, with many advanced features despite its early age. On the basis of a subadult skull, the tiny insectivore is estimated to weigh approximately 2 grams. The reconstruction of this mammal is shown in comparison to a paper clip (32 millimeters). [Reconstruction artwork: Mark A. Klingler/ Carnegie Museum of Natural History]

1513 Big disk alte

Big disk alters stellar and planetary evolution

HIGHLIGHTS FROM www.sciencexpress.org



Releasing transcription factors from the plasma membrane



American Association for the Advancement of Science

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A comparison of the cosmic microwave background and the present-day matter-density distribution supports a Hot Big Bang start to the Universe.

G-Protein Signaling Through Tubby Proteins S. Santagata et al.

The onset of obesity involves neurotransmitters, G proteins, phosphorylated inositols, transcription, and Tubby.

Impulsive Choice Induced in Rats by Lesions of the Nucleus Accumbens Core

R. N. Cardinal, D. R. Pennicott, C. L. Sugathapala, T. W. Robbins, B. J. Everitt The core of the nucleus accumbens is central to impulsive choice behavior.

SPECIAL FEATURES

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A compilation of the latest news and information from the scientific job-hunting world.

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How do you go about documenting, for search committees and tenure review boards, your skills as a teacher and a mentor? Easy—put together a teaching portfolio.

UK: European Young Investigators Get a Boost K. Urquhart

The huge response to the European Molecular Biology Organization's Young Investigator Programme highlights just how badly Europe's early-career researchers need support.

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SUMMARIES OF RESEARCH IN THIS ISSUE

THIS WEEK IN Science

Seeing Solar System–Sized Disks

Disks of gas and dust around stars are considered to be the most likely places for planet formation. Such disks have been observed around young, low-mass stars, but similar observations for high-mass stars have been more difficult, and have left astronomers pondering how common the conditions may be for planet foredited by Phil Szuromi

1518 Spin Injection Goes Flat-Out The success implementation of spintronics, in which the spin properties of charge carriers are used to carry information, will re-

quire getting polarized charges into semiconductors. LaBella *et al.* (p. 1518) studied the spin-injection efficiency into a semiconductor from a ferromagnetic tip. Spin injection can be as high as 92% for current tunneling into the flat terraces of the GaAs, but it is almost decimated when current transport takes place near or at the terrace step.

mation in the universe. Shepherd *et al.* (p. 1513) have now observed a very massive disk (similar to the mass of the solar system) around a high-mass young star, G192.16–3.82. They used the National Radio Astronomy Observatory's Very Large Array radio interferometer coupled with the Very Long Baseline antenna in Pie Town, New Mexico, to improve their resolution by an order of magnitude over previous observations.

Silent Earthquake

The Juan de Fuca plate is being subducted under the North American plate along the coast of southern British Columbia and of Washington and Oregon. A network of about 14 Global Positioning System (GPS) sites show motion to the northeast consistent with that of the Cascadia subduction zone. Dragert *et al.* (p. 1525; see the Perspective by Thatcher) observed seven of these sites reverse their motion to the southwest over a period of tens of days in 1999. This

shift was modeled as an aseismic event with about 2 centimeters of upward-propagating slip over a large area along the deeper part of the subduction zone. Such a silent slip could add stress or possibly trigger an earthquake on the shallower, seismogenic part of the subduction zone.

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Colossal Magnetoresistance to Order

The wealth of magnetic, electronic, and temperature-dependent properties displayed by the doped bilayered manganites make them potentially very useful not just for novel devices but also for further understanding the complex magnetic and electronic phase transitions observed in other correlated-electron systems. Chuang *et al.* (p. 1509; see the Perspective by Keimer) used high-resolution angle-resolved photoemission spectroscopy to determine the transport parameters of the manganite and found that the measured conductivity is an order of magnitude lower than that expected from the transport data. The discrepancy may be caused by the formation of a pseudogap (through the nanoscale phase separation of charge and spin) that removes a considerable fraction of carriers for conduction.

A Salty Satellite

Ganymede, the largest of the Jupiter's satellites, has a surface dominated by water ice, and it has been hypothesized that Ganymede, like Europa, has an ocean below the ice. McCord *et al.* (p. 1523) analyzed reflectance spectra of Ganymede taken by the Galileo spacecraft's near-infrared mapping spectrometer during a relatively close flyby

of the satellite. The ice contains hydrated minerals, such as hydrated magnesium sulfate, that may be derived from a briny layer of water lying beneath the ice.

Superconducting MgB₂ Thin Films

The recent observation of superconductivity in magnesium diboride with a relatively high transition temperature (T_c) of 39 K has generated a flurry of activity. Studies are now aimed at establishing the mechanism, teasing out possible routes for boosting the T_c , and developing more practical preparation techniques. Using precursor boron films, Kang *et al.* (p. 1521) report that thin films of MgB₂ prepared by a pulsed laser deposition and sintering technique exhibit a sharp T_c at 39 K and can sustain large current densities.

Assembly Rules for Coral Reefs

Protection of the rich faunas of coral reefs will require a greater understanding of their complexity and diversity. Bellwood and Hughes (p. 1532; see the Perspective by Knowlton) have compiled a data set for all Indo-Pacific coral reefs and show that the taxonomic composition of corals and reef fishes is very conservative and that only a narrow range of many possible configurations occurs at the family level. More than half of the observed variation in species diversity is explained by area of available habitat, and there is little relation between latitude and diversity. These results suggest a need for the protection of habitat over regional-scale areas, with international coordination of conservation programs.

Counting Sheep

A challenge in animal population dynamics is to tease apart the deterministic factors that affect population size from noise. Coulson *et al.* (p. 1528; see the Perspective by Gaillard *et al.*) used a combination of empirical analyses of survival and fecundity and age-structured modeling to analyze long-term population data for Soay sheep in the isolated archipelago of St. Kilda off the northwest coast of Scotland. Much of the "noise" is actually deterministic in origin, because animals of different age and sex respond in contrasting ways to population density and to weather patterns. This approach allows much improved predictions of future changes in population size.

CREDIT: H. DRAGERT ET AL



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Lunasin (soybean polypeptide fusion protein)	32	Protein inhibits cell division

Table 1. Examples of proteins successfully expressed in the RTS 500 System.

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CONTINUED FROM 1445 THIS WEEK IN SCIENCE

A Handle on Histones Marks Chromatin

The protein RCC1 can be considered as a marker for chromatin, and as such plays an important role in the transport of molecular cargoes between the nucleus and cytoplasm, spindle formation during cell division, and formation of the nuclear envelope. These functions are mediated through RCC1's interaction with the small guanosine triphosphatase Ran. However, little is known about how RCC1 associates with chromatin. Nemergut *et al.* (p. 1540) show that RCC1 interacts not with DNA, but with the histones that package DNA into chromatin, and specifically with histones H2A or H2B, and does not require higher order chromatin structure for binding. Binding of chromatin promotes RCC1's ability to stimulate guanine nucleotide exchange on Ran.

Early Mammalian Traits

Two characteristics of living mammals are enlarged brains and the separation of the middle ear bones from the jawbone. Luo *et al.* (p. 1535; see the cover and see the Perspective by Wyss) present a fossil find from the early Jurassic, named *Hadrocodium*, that extends the "first appearance" of these advanced anatomical features by more than 40 million years, or about one-quarter of the period of mammalian existence. It suggests that mammalian features were in place long before the major diversifications of mammals.

Metabolism, Excitability, and Seizures

Potassium channels that are sensitive to adenosine triphosphate (ATP) couple the intracellular metabolic state to electrical activity at the plasma membrane. Yamada *et al.* (p. 1543) show in a knockout study that these channels exert a protective effect in the brain during hypoxia. Mice lacking ATP-sensitive K⁺-channels were more sensitive to generalized seizures. In slice experiments, neurons from knockout animals in the substantia nigra pars reticulata, an important brain area for the control of seizures, began to depolarize upon a hypoxic challenge rather than hyperpolarize like the neurons from normal control animals.

Fatal Indigestion

During the later stages of mammalian embryogenesis, erythrocytes (red blood cells) are formed in the liver and bone marrow from erythroid precursor cells that have expelled their nucleus. The molecular events involved in erythrocyte enucleation are not well understood. Using genetically modified mice, Kawane *et al.* (p. 1546) show that mice lacking the enzyme deoxyribonuclease II are severely anemic and die shortly before birth. The critical cellular source of the enzyme



appears to be macrophages, which are present at the site of erythropoiesis in the fetal liver and probably digest the nuclear DNA expelled from the erythroid precursor cells.

Alzheimer's Balancing Act

One of the initial steps in the course of Alzheimer's disease (AD) is the deposition of amyloid β peptide (A β) in the brain. The enzyme neprilysin, which can degrade A β , may be an important player in the pathophysiology of AD. Iwata *et al.* (p. 1550; see the news story by Marx) compared the metabolism of A β in homozygous and heterozygous neprilysin knockout mice with that in wild-type animals. They observed a reduced catabolism of exogenously labeled A β in the gene-deficient animals, and endogenous A β was elevated in a gene dose-dependent way in the knockout mice. Even a slight imbalance between production and removal of A β due to a reduced rate of enzymatic catabolism could increase the risk of developing AD.

Protein Aggregation and Degradation

Many neurodegenerative disorders are characterized by the prevalence of protein aggregates in the brain. These aggregates are often composed of proteins that have been modified by the addition of ubiquitin—a marker that should lead to degradation of the offending protein by a cytosolic proteolytic complex known as the proteasome—but are the aggregates a cause or a consequence of the disease process? Bence *et al.* (p. 1552; see the news story by Helmuth) now show that protein aggregation per se appears to inhibit the proteasomal protein degradation system.



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Type 2 diabetes, also called adult-onset or non-insulin-dependent diabetes, affects more than 15 million Americans. Although there is no single gene that can explain the risk of diabetes, scientists using DNA analysis systems from Applied Biosystems have recently pinpointed a gene that plays a key role in this complex disease.

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12

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TRAF5

TRAF2

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p65

NFKB

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sonable job of providing drawing func-

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