

## NET NEWS

### A Fount of Fonts

Palatino, Times New Roman, Symbol—the traditional fonts are failing scientists, engineers, and doctors, according to a consortium of six publishers called the Scientific and Technical Information Exchange. The group announced on 10 June that it plans to bring typography into line with the needs of science by offering a slew of custom-built, tech-friendly fonts.

Right now, scientists and engineers must borrow their  $\alpha$ 's,  $\rightarrow$ 's, and  $\Delta$ 's from multiple fonts that are not always compatible or recognizable to people working on different computers. The consortium has hired typographical experts to design a new set of fonts that will contain 8000 scientific, medical, engineering, and mathematical symbols that will work at every stage, from word processing to print and on the Web. Sponsors include the American Chemical Society, the American Institute of Physics, and Elsevier Science. When the font sets are complete next fall, you'll be able to download and use them for free.

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

## RESOURCES

### Fierce Flies

Like tiny hawks, robber flies swoop down on unwary insects or spiders, carting off their meal and sucking it dry (above). Compiled by Fritz Geller-Grimm, a curator at the Museum Wiesbaden in Germany, and Cornell grad student Torsten Dikow, the Asilidae home page swarms with information on the biology of the world's nearly 7000 species of robber flies. Illustrated with labeled drawings and electron micrographs, the site's guide to anatomical terminology can help you remember the difference between the prescutum and the pronotum, two parts of the thorax. To pin down the identity of a mystery bug, match it against one of 20 keys. A primer explains how to digitally photograph prize specimens, and ample background sections cover distribution, mating habits, feeding, phylogeny, and development.

[www.geller-grimm.de/asilidae.htm](http://www.geller-grimm.de/asilidae.htm)



## EXHIBITS

### On the Trail of Yellow Fever

"I rather think I am on the track of the real germ," U.S. Army surgeon Jesse Lazear exulted on 8 September 1900, describing his research into the transmission of yellow fever. Just 17 days later, Lazear died from the viral illness, probably contracted when he used himself as a guinea pig to prove that mosquitoes spread this tropical scourge.

Lazear was part of the Army's Yellow Fever Commission, which within 2 years confirmed that mosquitoes were guilty. Investigate this medical milestone with the Philip S. Hench Walter Reed Yellow Fever Collection, an online exhibit and trove of over 5000 original documents from the University of Virginia, Charlottesville. The site's biographies introduce the major figures in the century-old story, including pioneering U.S. epidemiologist Walter Reed and Carlos Finlay, the Cuban doctor whose contention that mosquitoes transmitted yellow fever drew ridicule from most scientists of the day. Another section

follows the bug-hunters to Cuba, where their experiments demolished the notion that yellow fever traveled through contaminated bedclothes or on air currents. The site is chock-full of period photos—above, Lazear (middle) and two other scientists—and you can peruse reports, letters, even a chart recording Lazear's fever on his deathbed.

[yellowfever.lib.virginia.edu/reed](http://yellowfever.lib.virginia.edu/reed)



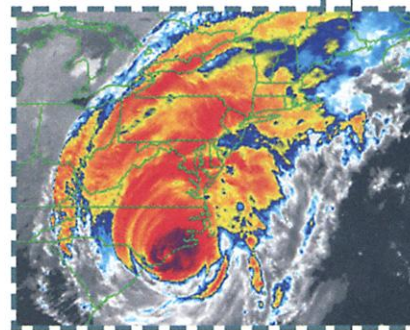
## RESOURCES

### Weather That Can Stop the Mail

Large swaths of the western United States were aflame thanks to a punishing drought, hurricane season began, and floods killed more than 200 people in China—all in the month of June. This Web site from the National Climatic Data Center offers updates and a historical perspective on tornadoes, ice storms, and other forms of extreme weather.

Sections focus on different forms of unruly weather and are stuffed with facts and figures. For example, you can search a 50-year database for all tornadoes above a certain wind speed, or find the maximum and minimum recorded daily rainfall for each state. (Texas tops the list with nearly 110 centimeters in Alvin in July 1979.) Read up on billion-dollar weather disasters or browse the gallery, which showcases satellite views of fires, hurricanes, cyclones, and pounding storms. Here, Hurricane Floyd whirls ashore in 1999.

[lwf.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/severeweather/extremes.html](http://lwf.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/severeweather/extremes.html)



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