

(continued from p. 1181)

el is capable of learning a language, or of learning the way that human infants do. Their limits therefore illustrate the important perspectives provided to our field by Noam Chomsky. Chomsky's point was not that there is no such thing as learning; rather, it was that unconstrained learning mechanisms will not, by themselves, correctly learn just those things that every human baby learns (2). Our findings do not contradict this point. Instead, they offer the possibility of a mechanism that could turn out to be suitably powerful, but also biased and constrained, so as to perform a piece of the task.

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#### References and Notes

1. Z. Harris, *Language* **31**, 190 (1955).
2. When models possess human constraints, performance improves; for an example, see the constraint proposed by E. Newport [*Cognit. Sci.* **14**, 11 (1990)] and implemented by J. Elman [*Cognition* **48**, 71 (1993)].

#### Editorial "Plants"?

Now that the European green crab has been returned to the Arthropoda (Letters, 25 Apr., p. 513) after its temporary domicile in the Mollusca (Random Samples, 11 Apr., p. 203), can we also rescue Illinois' *Thismia americana* (Letters, 25 Apr., p. 514) from the grass family and return it to the Burmanniaceae, a small family much more closely related to orchids than to grasses? Since this *Thismia* is almost certainly extinct, its final resting place should be in the correct family plot.

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I too was amused to find green crabs classed as mollusks in a recent Random Samples item, but concluded that the error was a deliberate editorial "plant" to see whether anyone other than molecular biologists still reads *Science*.

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**Editor's note:** It appears that *Science* has many readers outside the realm of molecular biology—at last count, more than 50 letters had been received about the "misplaced" European green crabs. Botanists, however, have not been heard from in such numbers about *T. americana*, which was misidentified by *Science* during editing.

We are grateful to all those who read *Science* so carefully and who communicate their concerns to us, and we apologize to crabs, mollusks, and *Thismia* enthusiasts everywhere.

#### Letters to the Editor

Letters may be submitted by e-mail (at science\_letters@aaas.org), fax (202-789-4669), or regular mail (*Science*, 1200 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA). Letters are not routinely acknowledged. Full addresses, signatures, and daytime phone numbers should be included. Letters should be brief (300 words or less) and may be edited for reasons of clarity or space. They may appear in print and/or on the World Wide Web. Letter writers are not consulted before publication.

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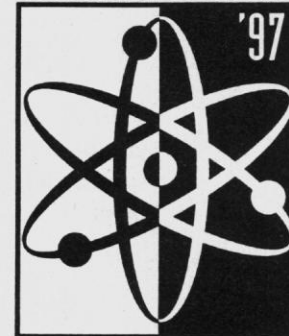
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