NETWATCH

edited by MITCH LESLIE

DATABASE

Mosquito Central

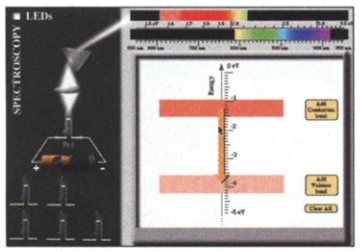
We've battled mosquitoes with netting, repellent, massive drainage projects, and clouds of DDT, but diseases such as malaria still kill millions. Genomics may provide new ways to swat down these bloodsuckers. The Mosquito Genomics World Wide Web Server at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, serves up six mosquito genome databases, including those for *Aedes aegypti*, the yellow fever mosquito (above), and *Anopheles gambiae*, the carrier of malaria. The databases are still growing, but for catalogued genes you can obtain information such as a map of chromosomal location, a listing of nearby genes, and relevant publications. Each database also features a sizeable bibliography—more than 4500 entries for *A. aegypti* alone.

klab.agsci.colostate.edu

EDUCATION

Off to Quantum School

If seeing is believing, then a visit to Visual Quantum Mechanics should help high school students and college nonscience majors understand the essential concepts of quantum physics. Produced by the Physics Education Research Group at Kansas State University, Manhattan, the site offers interactive animations that demonstrate, without using mathematics, the quantum mechanical origins of atomic spectra, laser action, diffraction of matter, and other phenomena. The easy-to-use animations generally require the student to work through mock experiments, such as analyzing the spectrum of a light-emitting diode with a prism (above). The connection to real-world devices should help convince students that quantum mechanics is useful. The site also provides a number of tutorials that explain the basic physics and incorporate the animations.



phys.educ.ksu.edu

FUN

What's in a Name?

Fear of intimacy, celibate, heartless, numb, drop dead. Highlights from a *Cosmo* article on today's dating scene? Maybe, but they're also the names of fruit fly genes. Mixing entomology with etymology, FlyNome explicates the stories behind these and some 80 other quirky monikers for *Drosophila* genes. The curator of this whimsical collection is postdoc Christopher Yohn of the Skirball Institute in New York City. Although some gene names are straightforward, others display cheeky creativity, drawing on sources as varied as *The Wizard of Oz*, the foul-mouthed brats on *South Park*, and the Bible. Flies with a mutated form of the *ken and barbie* gene, for instance, lack external genitalia, just like the famous anatomically incorrect dolls. And *fear of intimacy* doesn't signal emotional distance, but refers to the failure of two types of cells to associate during development of the gonads.

www.flynome.com

RESOURCES

Fighting Bioterrorism in the Clinic ...

Doctors and other health professionals are expected to be our bioterrorism sentinels, alert for suspicious cases that might signal an attack. Making that job a little easier is this cache of bioweapons info from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. The site features the latest on vaccines, treatment, and diagnosis, as well as germane articles from CDC publications such as the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (*MMWR*).

The most likely bioweapons—anthrax (above) and smallpox—get extensive coverage, but you'll also find information on tularemia, plague, botulism, and viral hemorrhagic fevers such as Ebola. The section on anthrax incorporates the lessons of the mail attacks last year. It provides links to a series of archived Webcasts on preventing anthrax in postal workers and others exposed to the bacterium, as well as an article from last November's *MMWR* on differentiating the disease from flu and other similar respiratory illnesses.

www.bt.cdc.gov/HealthProfessionals/index.asp

COMPUTING PROJECTS

... And at Home

Researchers have already harnessed the power of distributed computing to stalk extraterrestrials and pursue cures for cancer. Now scientists at Oxford University plan to use idle PCs around the world to screen some 3.5 billion compounds for potential antianthrax drugs.* The anthrax bacterium produces proteins that assemble on the surface of a cell, forming a toxin that enters and slays the cell. The project's goal is to find molecules that thwart assembly. Like SETI@home and Oxford's search for anticancer drugs, launched last April (*Science*, 13 April 2001, p. 175), participants download a screen saver that runs jobs for the project whenever the computer isn't busy. The screen saver is available from co-sponsor Intel.†

* **www.chem.ox.ac.uk/anthrax**

† **www.intel.com/cure**

Send great Web site suggestions to netwatch@aaas.org

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