NETWATCH

edited by MITCH LESLIE

RESOURCES

The Wild World of *Wolbachia*

Almost unknown a decade ago, *Wolbachia* bacteria are gathering fans among ecologists, microbiologists, and entomologists. This genus of bacteria infests up to 75% of the world's insect species and invades other invertebrates as well. Although they're usually peaceful guests, the ingrates sometimes slay their hosts, a feat that makes them promising biocontrol candidates. *Wolbachia* fascinate evolutionary biologists because the microbes meddle in their host's reproduction and might drive speciation. Some strains kill only males, for instance, whereas others take sides in the contest between sperm from different males to fertilize the female's eggs.

Biologist Scott O'Neill of the University of Queensland in Australia created this community site last year for both *Wolbachia* newbies and mavens who want to keep up with the field. O'Neill says visitors particularly like the *Wolbachia* bibliography of 600-and-counting references. The site also offers a database that indicates which invertebrates play host to which bacterial strains, a directory of researchers, and a news section that posts jobs, meeting announcements, and citations for the latest literature. The genomes of six *Wolbachia* strains are being sequenced, and O'Neill plans to incorporate the data.

www.wolbachia.sols.uq.edu.au

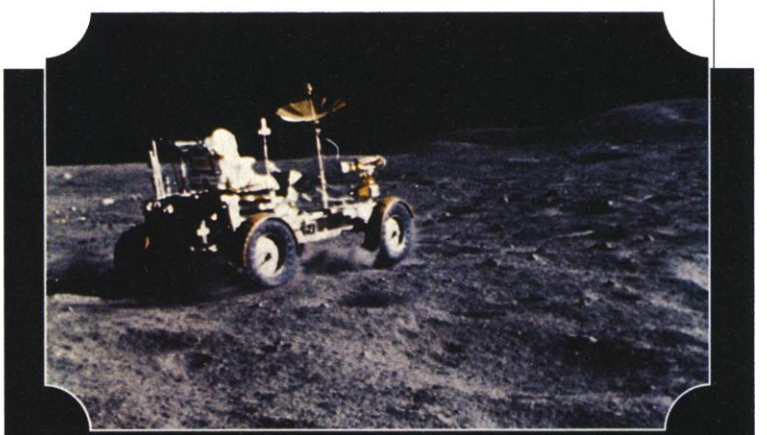
RESOURCES

The LED Grows Up

Before long, we may be able to turn off those humming, flickering fluorescent tubes and sizzling incandescent bulbs for good. Their possible successors—cool, durable, efficient light-emitting diodes, the descendants of the blinking indicator lights on toys and other electronic gizmos—are already showing up in traffic signals, cars, and other places. The devices typically produce light when electrons hop from one layer to another in a semiconductor.

Get enlightened about the promise and hurdles of this emerging technology at Solid-State Lighting. The new site from Sandia National Lab in Albuquerque, New Mexico, offers background articles, news updates, links to journals, and a roster of government labs pursuing LED lighting research. A patent database is in the works

lighting.sandia.gov



IMAGES

NASA's Home Movies

Devotees of space exploration or the History Channel will relish Space Movies Cinema, where you can rummage through NASA's film vault. The 40 or so historic clips include Neil Armstrong setting foot on the moon in July 1969, the Apollo 15 astronauts plowing through moon dust in their lunar rover (above), and the space shuttle spinning a satellite into orbit. Although most of the flicks are brief, you can watch all of John F. Kennedy's "We choose to go to the moon" speech from 1962 or a 45-minute documentary on the Challenger disaster. The clips also capture some lighter moments, such as Alan Shepard hitting the first golf shots on the moon with the handle of a digging tool. Although Shepard whiffed, er, took a practice swing on his first try, he then knocked one ball more than 365 meters.

vesuvius.jsc.nasa.gov/er/seh/movies.html

LINKS

Chemistry Files

Its title suggests a how-to on industrial espionage, but ChemSpy.com is a well-organized portal for chemists, chemical engineers, and students. The new Web site links to an assortment of chemistry resources, including dictionaries, safety information, listings of physical properties, spectral data, journal searches, and job lists. Try the tutorials section if you need to bone up on Gibbs free energy or organic nomenclature, or check out the news from fields such as biotechnology, oil and gas production, and plastics.

www.chemspy.com

DATABASE

What's for Dinner?

Despite their reputation for gluttony, caterpillars can be as finicky about their meals as a 3-year-old child. The eating preferences of these ravenous larvae intrigue ecologists, taxonomists, foresters, and other experts. Learn what's on the menu for some 22,000 moth and butterfly species at HOSTS, a collection of caterpillar dietary data from the Natural History Museum in London. Information culled from 1600 papers and unpublished manuscripts matches bugs from around the world with their host plants, and you can search the data taxonomically or by country.

www.nhm.ac.uk/entomology/hostplants

Send site suggestions to netwatch@aaas.org. Archive: www.sciencemag.org/netwatch

CREDITS: NASA; WWW.CORBIS.COM