



LINKS

Take No Chances

The Probability Web won't help you win in Vegas, but it is packed with handy links on chance, probability, and statistics—the bulwarks of disciplines from nuclear physics to evolutionary theory. The community site from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, offers all the familiar resources, including job and conference announcements, links to journals and societies, and a researcher directory. Teachers and students can boost their knowledge with half a dozen online texts and tutorials, ranging from a primer aimed at liberal arts majors to a treatise on advanced theory that delves into topics such as Gaussian vectors and complex spaces. For a fun break, check out what notables ranging from Aristotle to Agatha Christie have had to say about chance and probability.

www.mathcs.carleton.edu/probweb/probweb.html

DATABASE

In the Genes

For Japanese people, the odds of having the metabolic disorder phenylketonuria are a piffling 1 in 119,000, but the chances are 26 times higher for someone from Ireland. Knowing how the frequency of inherited diseases varies from place to place is essential for doctors and health care planners—and the information can even reveal patterns of human evolution and past migrations. This new database from the University of Wales gathers figures on the prevalence of more than 280 inherited disorders, including cystic fibrosis, Tay-Sachs disease, and Fanconi anemia. The entries draw from more than 1000 studies, providing frequency data and links to the original abstracts in PubMed.

archive.uwcm.ac.uk/uwcm/mg/fidd/index.html

RESOURCES

Crayfish Den

They're known as crayfish, crawdads, crawfish, or mud bugs. The Crayfish Home Page proves that there's much more to these close kin of lobsters than just providing the key ingredient for jambalaya. Systematist Keith Crandall of Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, created the site in 1994 to answer the questions of inquisitive amateurs and crustacean researchers hungry for technical details.

Crayfish are ancient creatures; fossils from nearly 300 million years ago have been found in Antarctica. The group's diversity today—600-plus species—sometimes comes as a shock, Crandall says: "People are surprised that there's more than one species." The site reviews the taxonomy of the three known families and provides species checklists for all 50 states and for the more than 30 other countries with native forms.

(Above, *Fallicambarus devastator*, found in eastern Texas.) More than half of crayfish are in trouble, and the site includes a list of the endangered and threatened species in the United States. Crandall—whose site is part of the Tree of Life, a broader Internet biodiversity project—plans to update the taxonomic accounts to cover all known species.

zoology.byu.edu/crandall_lab/crayfish/crayhome.htm



E-PUBLISHING

Virtual Journal Mother Lode

Find out where your favorite journals are located online at the Electronic Journal Miner, a directory hosted by a coalition of 11 libraries in Colorado and Wyoming. The more than 7000 titles include electronic versions of print journals and Internet-only publications. The eclectic selection features plenty of scientific offerings, from *Academic Medicine* to *Zoomorphology*. Each journal's listing provides the URL along with a brief description and that all-important info: whether it's free.

ejournal.coalliance.org

IMAGES

Burning Issues

Feathery pennants of smoke (left) mark bushfires raging near Sydney, Australia, in early January of this year. Whether accidental or intentional, fires such as these have a global impact, accounting for up to 40% of the carbon dioxide added to the atmosphere.

Track the progress of current fires, nab updates on the prospects for future blazes, or glean statistics on past burns at the Global Fire Monitoring Center, a clearinghouse of wildfire data sponsored by the United Nations and hosted by the University of Freiburg in Germany. Discover where forests and grasslands are going up in flames with pictures snapped by NASA's Terra satellite, whose MODIS instrument keeps a glassy eye on fires around the globe. The site also links to daily summaries of burns in Mexico, Southeast Asia, Brazil, and North America, along with global, regional, and national predictions of fire danger. The risk maps for the United States, which are updated daily, show that this year, swaths of the western states are almost as flammable as a cheap cigar.

www2.ruf.uni-freiburg.de/fireglobe



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