

## EDUCATION

### Frog Film Fest

Instead of prolonging their breeding season over weeks or months as some amphibians do, wood frogs (right; *Rana sylvatica*) cram it into three or four frantic nights. To screen video showing tangles of mating frogs and other amphibian footage, click over to Frog Calls, hosted by documentary filmmaker David McGowan. The site focuses on Midwestern species, offering clips of a dozen kinds of frogs and toads singing their lungs out. In video interviews, herpetologists discuss topics such as the different calls males use to attract mates and rebuff rivals and the advantages of breeding early or late in the year. Researchers also touch on the problems of malformed and disappearing amphibians. For example, Michael Lannoo of Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, explains that the once-common northern cricket frog (*Acris crepitans*) has vanished from Canada and much of the upper Midwest, possibly because roads and development prevent the amphibians from hopping to more suitable habitat.

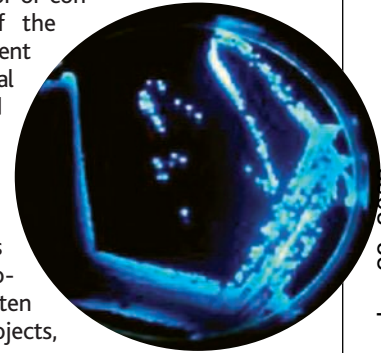


[www.midwestfrogs.com](http://www.midwestfrogs.com)

## LINKS

### Home Base for Microbes

You'd expect microbes to be high on the research agenda at the National Institutes of Health, but many other federal agencies sponsor or conduct investigations of the bugs, from the Department of Defense to the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Visitors can discover more about these efforts at The Microbe Project. The new portal offers a synopsis of each agency's microbiological research, often providing links to projects, databases, and other resources. The site also furnishes news and an education section, which includes information on fellowships and mentoring programs.

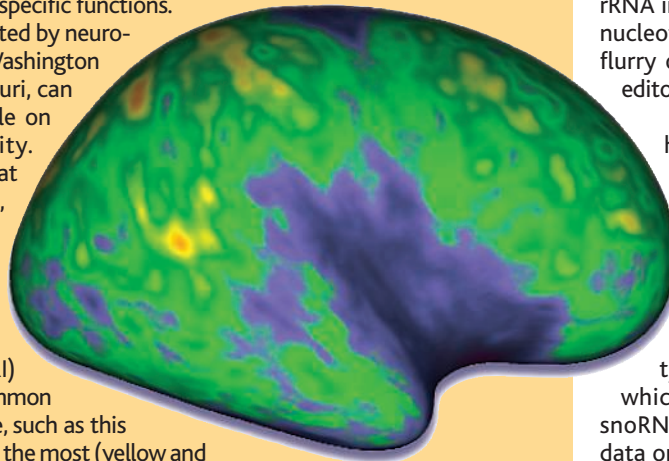


[www.microbeproject.gov](http://www.microbeproject.gov)

## IMAGES

### Cerebral Surveying

All human brains look pretty much alike in a jar of formaldehyde, but on closer inspection each person's sports a unique pattern of wrinkles and crevices. That's good news for individualists and bad news for neuroscientists striving to pin down what areas manage specific functions. The new brain atlas PALS, created by neurobiologist David Van Essen of Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, can help researchers get a handle on this geographical variability. Unlike previous atlases that relied on scans of one brain, PALS maps the contours of the cerebral cortex—which governs "higher functions" such as planning and problem solving—by averaging magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans of 12 people. You can summon 17 views of the brain's surface, such as this map showing which areas vary the most (yellow and orange) and the least (blue) among individuals. Controls let you rotate the images and view them from different angles. You can also superimpose data such as functional MRI measurements of activity. PALS is part of the neuroimaging database SumsDB that features similar atlases for the human cerebellum and for macaque, rat, and mouse brains.



[sumsdb.wustl.edu/sums/index.jsp](http://sumsdb.wustl.edu/sums/index.jsp)

## DATABASES

### Let It sno

Like the rough cut of a movie, a newly minted ribosomal RNA (rRNA) molecule needs fine-tuning before it's ready for release. Enter the small nucleolar RNAs, or snoRNAs, which team with proteins to snip rRNA into usable segments and modify its nucleotide bases. Researchers will find a flurry of information on these molecular editors at this pair of databases.

For profiles of more than 350 human snoRNAs, check out this clearinghouse\* at the Laboratoire de Biologie Moléculaire Eucaryote in Toulouse, France. Search for a particular snoRNA to read a description of the molecule and find its sequence, size, and target. You can also scan rRNA and other types of RNA molecules to learn which bases get modified and what snoRNA makes the revision. For similar data on *Arabidopsis thaliana* and 17 other plant and algae species, drop by this site† from the Scottish Crop Research Institute in Invergowrie.

\* [www-snorna.biotoul.fr](http://www-snorna.biotoul.fr)

† [bioinf.scri.sari.ac.uk/cgi-bin/plant\\_snorna/home](http://bioinf.scri.sari.ac.uk/cgi-bin/plant_snorna/home)

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