

IMAGES

Mars Jaunt

Google can already steer you through the Internet and send you soaring over Earth. The company's latest release, Google Mars, lets armchair astronauts browse the surface of the Red Planet. With a click you can pinpoint craters, sand dunes, spacecraft landing sites, and other notable features on a relief map. Many of the landmarks link to eye-catching close-ups from the Mars Odyssey and Mars Express missions. >>

www.google.com/mars

RESOURCE

Disease in the Wild

A threat is stalking North America's deer and elk—chronic wasting disease (CWD). Triggered by the infectious proteins called prions, the brain-devastating ailment has attacked wild and captive animals in 14 U.S. states and Canadian provinces since the late 1960s (at right, a sick doe). Find out more about CWD and other wildlife illnesses at this online clearinghouse from the U.S. Geological Survey's National Wildlife Health Center.

Aimed at resource managers, researchers, and the public, the site's nine major sections describe maladies that afflict North American animals in nature, including several such as plague and West Nile fever that can jump to humans. Each section offers fact sheets, abstracts of recent papers, links to news updates, and other resources. For instance, you can check out the latest map of CWD's spread and learn more about its risks to humans. Other mapping features allow you to, say, chart 50 years' worth of avian cholera outbreaks. >> wildlifedisease.nhii.gov



IMAGES

<< Scoping Out the Brain

Unlike glass microscope slides, the virtual slides at BrainMaps can't chip or break, and you can see details without squinting through an eyepiece. The atlas from neuroanatomist Edward Jones of the University of California, Davis, and colleagues displays hundreds of thin brain sections from healthy rhesus monkeys, mice, humans, and cats. You can browse the collection by species or by structure. Then zoom in on particular cells, rotate the image, or pan to find other features. The slice at left from a monkey brain shows the junction between the hippocampus (lower left), cerebral cortex (lower right), and lateral geniculate body. >>

www.brainmaps.org

Send site suggestions to >> netwatch@aaas.org

Archive: www.sciencemag.org/netwatch

DATABASE

MOLD CODES

At this new microbial database from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, researchers can compare the genomes of two pathogens that irk farmers and foresters. Both are funguslike water molds from the genus *Phytophthora*. *P. sojae* (above) plagues soybeans and other crops, and *P. ramorum* blights oaks and other trees along the U.S. West Coast. Using tools on the site, researchers can identify genes that are diverging rapidly and that might enable the pathogens to victimize different hosts, says co-curator and molecular biologist Brett Tyler. Genomes from two other microbial pests are coming by the end of the year. >>

phytophthora.vbi.vt.edu

DATABASE

Reading the Reeds

Modern parents will recognize the sulky tone in a letter from a 2nd century C.E. Egyptian responding to a scolding from his mother and sister. The writer, Ptolemaios, first swears "by all the gods that I have done nothing of what has been said," then pouts that his family ignored him even though he "was kicked by a horse and was in danger of losing my foot [or even] my life." That's one tidbit from the Advanced Papyrological Information System, a master catalog of more than 23,000 papyri—texts inscribed on paper made from flattened reeds—and other ancient writings. The artifacts reside at 10 institutions, including Columbia University and the State Hermitage Museum in Russia. Scrawled in 13 languages on everything from wooden tablets to banana leaves, the texts date back as far as the 2nd millennium B.C.E. More than half of them have digital images, and about one-fourth provide English translations. You can browse official and private documents such as trial transcripts and contracts—complete with fine print. >>

www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/projects/digital/apis

