

LINKS

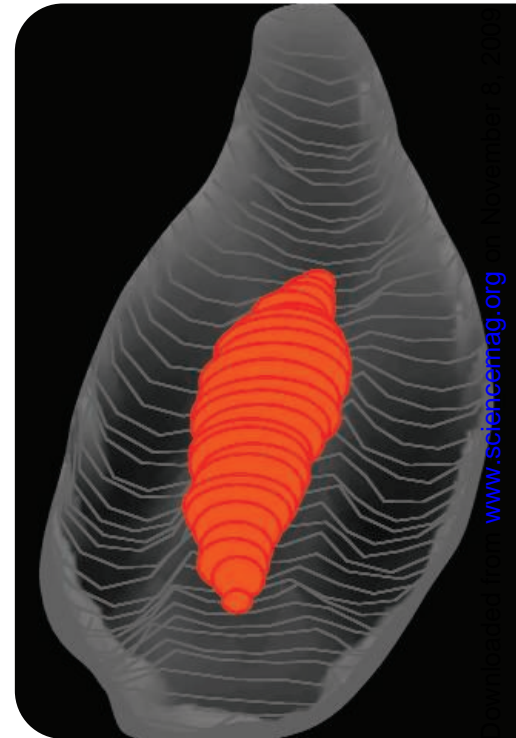
Economics Lab

Economists don't use test tubes or gene-sequencing machines, but they can run experiments on questions such as how we make choices when there's uncertainty about the outcome. Hosted by Georgia State University in Atlanta, EconPort brims with resources for researchers and teachers interested in economic experiments. A virtual textbook explains basics such as game theory and decision-making. Visitors can also consult a glossary and prowl a links catalog loaded with software, papers, tutorials, and other resources. The site also includes a feature to help users set up and run online experiments such as auctions. >> www.econport.org

DATABASE

To Build a Tooth >>

A tooth starts out as a thick patch in the lining of an embryo's mouth. To find out which genes morph these cells into a pearly white, bite into this database from the University of Helsinki in Finland. The site houses qualitative data pulled from the literature on gene activity during tooth development. You can sort through gene lists to discover when and where a specific one is active. Orange in this diagram (right) marks where the *sonic hedgehog* gene is working in the first molar of an embryonic mouse. >> bite-it.helsinki.fi



WEB LOG

Astronomy Daily

At his popular Bad Astronomy Web site, Phil Plait has long corrected misconceptions about the universe, skewered crackpots, and chastised the news media for purveying pseudoscience (NetWatch, 2 June 2000, p. 1543). The Sonoma State University astronomer offers a daily dose of his insights and opinions at the year-old Bad Astronomy Blog. Plait actually highlights plenty of good science, such as a recent study showing that the bright star Vega (left) twirls much faster than researchers imagined. But he also continues to attack ignorance, antiscience, and dubious schemes. Recent targets include a plan to have a cosmonaut belt a golf ball off the international space station. Plait notes that this will leave behind another piece of speeding junk that is "the equivalent of an invisible mine" for other spacecraft. >>

www.badastronomy.com/bablog



Send site suggestions to >> netwatch@aaas.org

Archive: www.sciencemag.org/netwatch



EXHIBIT

WHEN THE BIG ONE HIT

San Francisco residents woke early on the morning of 18 April 1906 to find their city collapsing around them. A rupture in the San Andreas fault split this street (above) and, combined with subsequent fires, razed some 28,000 buildings. At these two sites that commemorate the quake's centennial, visitors can relive the calamity, which killed more than 3000 people and left more than half of the city's inhabitants homeless.

Nearly 14,000 period photos and other visuals crowd this collection* from the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley. One highlight is footage of a pulverized downtown shot just a few days after the disaster. FaultLine† from the Exploratorium in San Francisco recounts the quake's history and delves into the science of earth movement. Backgrounders explain earthquake essentials and examine subsequent changes in building design intended to reduce damage. Fun graphics include video of a Jell-O model of the city, which shows how today's buildings would respond to a temblor. >>

* bancroft.berkeley.edu/collections/earthquakeandfire

† www.exploratorium.edu/faultline/index.html

DIRECTORY

They Know Aliens

With introduced cane toads hopping across Australia, Chinese silver grass sprouting along U.S. highways, and the raccoon dog, a native of northern Europe and Asia, showing up in Italy, invasive species are a worldwide issue. To track down experts on particular invaders, click over to this new global registry. Sponsored by a consortium of European institutions, the site lists more than 800 researchers, organized by country, type of organism, and field. >> daisie.ckff.si