



DATABASE

An Ark for Languages

All the people who speak the Amazonian language Arikapu could fit into a minivan and still have room for their luggage. Norn, Manx, and Ubykh—tongues formerly heard in the Shetland Islands, on the Isle of Man, and in the Caucasus—have all disappeared. More than half of the world's languages may die out during this century, victims of forces that include cultural assimilation, urbanization, and suppression by intolerant regimes.

The ambitious Rosetta Project aims to save at least part of our linguistic heritage by gathering and preserving key records—descriptions, texts, translations, audio, vocabulary lists—for 1000 languages, from 'Are'are to Zulu. The effort is sponsored by the Long Now Foundation, a think tank whose board includes bigwigs like computer pioneer Danny Hillis and musician Brian Eno.

At the project's 5-month-old Web site, you can search translations of the first three chapters of Genesis in 1000 languages, along with hundreds of other texts, orthographies, and word lists. Visitors are invited to help annotate these texts and supply audio files and other materials. The completed archive will be published as a book and on an etched nickel disk with a life-span of 2000 years.

www.rosettaproject.org

LINKS

Physical Science Cornucopia

A growing number of "information portals" attempt to serve as boutiques for Web resources, featuring only hand-picked, choice offerings. PSigate, a



RESOURCES

Fungus Among Us

Deceptively beautiful, these blue-stained *Cryptococcus* yeast cells can ravage the nervous system and are particularly hazardous to AIDS patients. From athlete's foot to valley fever, fungal diseases and conditions are the specialty of Doctor Fungus, a site founded by an M.D. and a Ph.D. and aimed mainly at medicos.

Brief accounts run down symptoms, epidemiology, lab tests, and treatments for more than 20 kinds of fungal infestations and also provide links to PubMed and references. Another section of the still-growing site offers protocols for collection and identification of specimens and screening for drug susceptibility. Basic researchers may find useful the detailed descriptions of genera, the glossary, or the image bank, which is packed with photos of fungal troublemakers and the physical damage they wreak on people.

www.doctorfungus.org

NETWATCH

edited by MITCH LESLIE

new entrant in this category, provides annotated links for astronomy, earth sciences, chemistry, physics, materials science, and science history and policy. A search on earthquakes in the earth sciences section, for example, brings up 67 hits ranging from the U.S. National Earthquake Information Center to an earthquake glossary. You can also submit sites or comment on the listings. PSigate is sponsored by a British consortium called the Resource Discovery Network that also has linked portals covering life sciences, engineering, and social sciences.

www.psigate.ac.uk/homenew.htm

EDUCATION

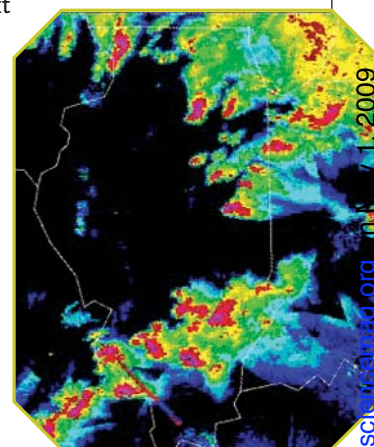
Weather Report

Written mainly for undergrads and high school students, this Web text from the University of Illinois breezes through the basics of meteorology. Concise explanations clear up topics such as how a hurricane blossoms from a tropical depression, the workings of Doppler radar, and the difference between sleet and freezing rain (freezing rain turns to ice only

when it hits a frigid surface, such as a road). If you're interested in sky study, an illustrated guide can help you tell threatening cumulonimbus clouds from the smaller, stumper cumulus clouds that portend fair weather.

Another highlight is an archive on famous storms of the past. You can watch satellite photos of Hurricane Andrew howling across Florida in 1992 or track a line of ferocious thunderstorms that pummeled Illinois in April 1996 (above), spinning off 33 tornadoes.

[ww2010.atmos.uiuc.edu/\(Gh\)/guides/mtr/cld/home.rxmltml](http://ww2010.atmos.uiuc.edu/(Gh)/guides/mtr/cld/home.rxmltml)



EDUCATION

Nobel Classroom

In this month of late-night calls from Stockholm, you may want to check out the new features at the Nobel Foundation's e-Museum. Besides a rundown on every laureate since the prizes were first bestowed in 1901, the site now offers introductory educational resources such as a primer on the structure of matter, a virtual biochemistry lab, and whimsical learning games. Also check out timely articles by past winners, such as 1989 chemistry laureate Sidney Altman's take on the RNA world concept.

www.nobel.se/about/nem_info/index.h

Send great Web site suggestions to netwatch@aaas.org

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