

SCIENCE NOTEBOOK

Scientific Observations

We've created a "perfect storm" for viruses. And we'll continue to see — as we have in the past few years — a whole range of new animal diseases as outbreaks in human populations. But we have to stop being surprised by them. Right now, global public health is like cardiology in the '50s — just waiting for the heart attack, without understanding ... the many ways to monitor for them, detect them early and ultimately prevent them. Swine flu is not an anomaly. We know that swine flu — like the vast majority of new outbreaks — comes from animals. We should be monitoring those animals and the humans that come into contact with them, so we can catch these viruses early, before they infect major cities and spread throughout the world.



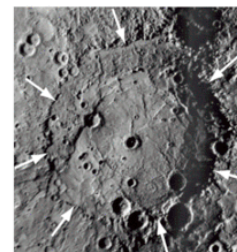
— NATHAN WOLFE, STANFORD UNIVERSITY BIOLOGIST AND DIRECTOR OF THE GLOBAL VIRAL FORECASTING INITIATIVE, IN AN INTERVIEW AT BLOG.TED.COM

SN Online

www.sciencenews.org

ATOM & COSMOS

The MESSENGER spacecraft sleuthed more clues about Mercury, including views of its second-largest known crater (below) and details of the planet's magnetic interactions with the sun. Read "MESSENGER's second pass."



LIFE

Scientists recovered what they believe to be collagen, bone cells and other soft tissue from the remarkably well-preserved fossil of an 80-million-year-old hadrosaur. Read "Soft tissue from a dino fossil."



Science Past | FROM THE ISSUE OF MAY 23, 1959

NUCLEAR-POWERED BLIMP — America's first nuclear-powered aircraft could very well be a huge blimp, about three times the size of those now being used by the U.S. Navy for submarine and plane spotting.... The blimp's length would be 540 feet, making it possible to locate the atomic reactor far enough away from the craft's control car to permit personnel to work in an environment comparable to that of an atomic plant.... Security requirements, the officials said, prevent disclosure of the airship's detail and the extent of its shielding.



Science Future

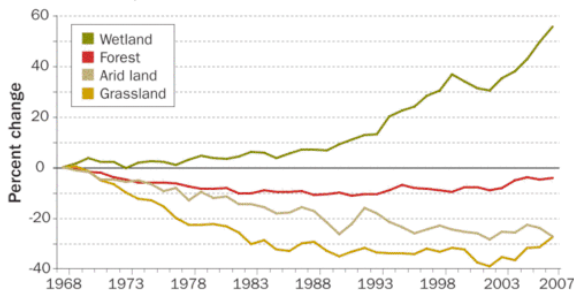
June 4–6
Organization for the Study of Sex Differences annual meeting in Toronto. See www.ossdweb.org

June 6
The annual Galaxy Ball held in Arlington, Va. See www.foge.org

July 22
Get to eastern Asia to watch the total solar eclipse. Visit eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov

Science Stat | STATUS OF U.S. BIRDS

PERCENT CHANGE IN U.S. BIRD POPULATIONS BASED ON TRENDS FOR SOME SPECIES IN FOUR MAJOR HABITATS, 1968–2007



SOURCE AND GRAPH: THE STATE OF THE BIRDS REPORT 2009, WWW.STATEOFTHEBIRDS.ORG

For Daily Use

Chewing sugarless gum throughout the afternoon can curb consumption and craving of sweets and make people feel more energetic and alert through the p.m. doldrums, scientists reported April 19 at the Experimental Biology meeting in New Orleans. The new study was funded, natch, by the Wrigley Science Institute, a research arm of the chewing gum company. Participants were asked to periodically chew sugarfree gum during a three-hour stretch after lunch one day. Researchers found that, on average, chewers ate some 60 fewer calories of sweets in the mid-afternoon, when compared with a gum-free day. Chewers also reported feeling steadier energy levels during the afternoon, versus flagging levels on the day without gum.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: TED/ASA MATHAT; T. WATERS ET AL./SCIENCE/AAAS; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY J. KORENBLAT; SOURCE: BELKNAP/ISTOCKPHOTO