

edited by Mitch Leslie

## DATABASE

### The Many Faces of Immunity

The HLA genes help the immune system discern friend from foe and underlie the rejection of organ transplants. This cadre of genes, which belong to the major histocompatibility complex (MHC), has also drawn interest from anthropologists tracing human migrations and epidemiologists trying to understand the genetic basis of autoimmune diseases. dbMHC, a year-old site from the National Center for Biotechnology Information in Bethesda, Maryland, offers plenty of information for anyone who works with MHC genes and proteins in the lab or the clinic.

MHC genes come in a multitude of forms, or alleles. For example, researchers have identified more than 250 alleles for the *HLA-A* gene (above, an HLA protein). dbMHC lets you compare different protein versions in 3D and browse the DNA sequences of their genes. The site can also help users select or create typing kits and probes to identify which MHC variants a person carries. A new section lists the frequencies of different MHC alleles in more than 70 populations from places such as Australia, Uganda, and Ireland.

[www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/mhc/MHC.cgi?cmd=init](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/mhc/MHC.cgi?cmd=init)

## WEB TEXT

### Killing Bugs Softly



Many farmers respond to an outbreak of destructive alfalfa weevils (left) by pouring on the pesticides. But using chemicals to control insects exacts a health and environmental toll, so scientists have developed alternative control strategies, called integrated pest management (IPM). This growing Web text, edited by entomologists

Edward Radcliffe and William Hutchison of the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, boasts more than 60 chapters on the theory and practice of IPM, which can involve everything from introducing the pest's natural enemies to altering harvest times to disrupt its life cycle.

Readers can check up on efforts to breed wheat plants that are resistant to the ruinous Hessian fly or download a model that predicts the consequences to a pest population of releasing swarms of sterile individuals. The text also offers background chapters on pest ecology and on different kinds of pesticides, as well as synopses of measures to protect particular crops. For example, alfalfa weevils have been controlled by releasing tiny wasps that parasitize the troublemakers.

[ipmworld.umn.edu](http://ipmworld.umn.edu)



## EXHIBITS

### Cold Spring Harbor Retrospective

Over the years, many of biology's top thinkers have studied, worked, or attended symposia at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory on Long Island. In this set of video interviews, more than 50 Cold Spring Harbor alumni—from evolutionist extraordinaire Ernst Mayr of Harvard to science writer Matt Ridley—reminisce about their time at the lab and how it shaped their careers. Aspiring scientists might want to check out the advice from seasoned researchers. For example, Mayr, whose first language was German, hammers home the importance of honing one's writing skills. In another set of interviews on the Human Genome Project, scientists recall their participation in the effort and discuss controversies such as the patenting of human DNA.

[library.cshl.edu/OH/mainMovie.html](http://library.cshl.edu/OH/mainMovie.html)

## TOOLS

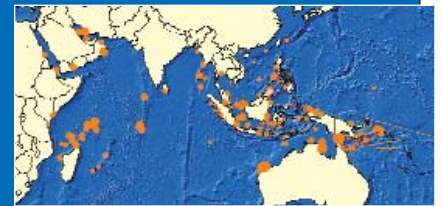
### Turtle Travels

There's no place like home—especially for female sea turtles. When ready to lay eggs, they can paddle more than 2500 kilometers to the beach where they hatched decades before. Follow the wanderings of these imperiled reptiles with the Marine Turtle Interactive Mapping System, a new site from the U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP) designed to help pinpoint feeding and nesting areas that need protection.

So far, the site tallies more than 30 years of records for the Indian Ocean and western Pacific provided by turtle expert Colin Limpus of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service in Australia. Turtle trackers can create custom maps of egg-laying locales and migration routes for six species, or click on a site or route to get underlying data. The map above shows the haunts of the hawksbill (*Caretta caretta*, left), whose populations haven't recovered from decades of slaughter for their ornately patterned shells. UNEP encourages scientists and conservationists to contribute their findings on other sea turtle havens.

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[www.ioseaturtles.org/mapping](http://www.ioseaturtles.org/mapping)



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Send site suggestions to [netwatch@aaas.org](mailto:netwatch@aaas.org). Archive: [www.sciencemag.org/netwatch](http://www.sciencemag.org/netwatch)