

by Scott_LaFee

'TRUE FACTS'

Aviation pioneer Orville Wright numbered the eggs that his chickens produced so that he could eat them in the precise order in which they had been laid.

VERBATIM

A great deal of the universe does not need any explanation. Elephants, for instance. Once molecules have learned to compete and to create other molecules in their own image, elephants, and things resembling elephants, will in due course be found roaming the countryside. Some of the things resembling elephants will be men.

FIRST AND LAST - Astronaut Eugene Cernan took the first personal toothbrush into space during the Apollo 10 mission in 1969. CNS Photo.

SINGING THE BLUES - Researchers say they have proof that the songs of blue whales are linked to gender, certain behaviors and which part of the world a particular whale hails from. CNS Photo.

TRUE FACTS - Aviation pioneer Orville Wright numbered the eggs that his chickens produced so that he could eat them in the precise order in which they had been laid. CNS Photo.

WHAT IS IT? - These are ciliates, microorganisms found almost anywhere there is water. CNS Photo.
- Peter William Atkins, an English theoretical chemist

BRAIN SWEAT

What does this riddle refer to?

The rodents walk all over me.

Well, "walk" is not the word.

My job is to exist

And not much else, you've heard.

I see the end is nearing, though.

My usefulness, it dies.

Those clever high-tech computer guys

Have replaced the balls with eyes.

ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE

Astronaut Eugene Cernan took the first personal toothbrush into space during the Apollo 10 mission in 1969. The brush, along with a spoon Cernan brought with him, were later sold at auction for \$10,000.

Incidentally, Cernan was also the last astronaut to step foot on the moon in 1972 during the Apollo 17 mission.

BRAIN SWEAT ANSWER

Computer mouse pad

SINGING THE BLUES

It's probably not news to the whales themselves, but researchers at Scripps Institution of Oceanography say they have proof that the songs of blue whales are linked to gender, certain behaviors and which part of the world a particular whale hails from.

The findings are the result of multiple studies by Scripps scientists John Hildebrand, Erin Oleson and others. In one study, they recorded eastern North Pacific whale songs while simultaneously observing the circumstances and behavior of the animals.

"Once you understand the context of specific types of sounds, then you can use those sounds to infer something about what they are doing when you are not there to actually see them doing it," said Oleson, a postdoctoral researcher.

The researchers found that only males made "AB" calls, while both sexes produced "D" calls. AB calls, they said, probably play a role in reproduction, while D calls are employed by whales foraging for food.

In a second study, Hildebrand used acoustic recordings gathered from around the world to map blue whale songs by geographical location. They found that whales in a specific ocean region tended to use a "dialect" that was different from whales in other regions.

The mapping may eventually help researchers better assess the numbers and status of blue whale populations, which, like great whales in general, were decimated by commercial hunting before a 1986 moratorium was imposed.

POETRY FOR SCIENTISTS

Rockets were launched in Roswell,

A place that is hotter than hell.

They say men from space,

Have crashed in the place,

Where Goddard's old missiles once fell.

ANTHROPOLOGY 101

In Bulgaria, it was once thought that a woman should be completely clean only once in her life: On the night before her wedding.

PATENTLY ABSURD

Sail bike

U.S. Patent No. 4,735,429

Except for all that pedaling, bicycling is a great way to get out in the fresh air. The Sail bike, patented in 1988, was an attempt to exploit all that air without the sweat. The idea was simple: An ordinary bike was fitted with a small sail rising just behind the seat. Riders were supposed to adjust speed and direction by trimming and tacking, just as in sailing.

And just as in sailing, stopping quickly is problematic, probably involving ramming into something like a car or wall.

JUST ASKING

Before they invented the drawing board, what did inventors go back to?

WHAT IS IT ANSWER

Ciliates are microorganisms found almost anywhere there is water - lakes, ponds, oceans, soils, even the insides of other organisms. Though quite diverse in form and function, they all sport the hairlike organelles called cilia, which give them their family name.

Eureka! Daily discoveries for the scientifically bent by Scott_LaFee