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Webworthy-Unique and Interesting Websites- Crocodiles and Space Travel

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WEBWORTHY —

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Websites selected for broad appeal, depth of information, and ease of access. Sites are organized by broad subject area and are visited just prior to publication. Please let the editor know of any sites that are not accessible. Comments and suggestions welcome to **Pamela M. Rose, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo, 3435 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14214-3002; 716-829-2408** <pmrose@acsu.buffalo.edu>. Unless otherwise noted in square brackets following the description, Internet addresses were published in *Science*, *NetWatch* column edited by **Jocelyn Kaiser**. — PR

Crocodiles

Did you know that female crocs tote their youngsters around in their mouths? Or that crocs are the most vocal of reptiles? The Crocodylians Website offers a detailed species list, a crocodylian biology database, a communication section where you can hear the sounds crocs make, and the most detailed captive care FAQ available (“only serious keepers need apply!”). Generally considered threats to humans and livestock and simply vermin to be eliminated, the decline and endangerment of two-thirds of the world’s crocodylians has been reversed by the Crocodile Specialist Group (CSG), a worldwide network of various professionals actively involved in the conservation of alligators, crocodiles, caimans, and gharials in the wild. — <http://www.crocodylian.com/>

Biology

Designed for an introductory biology course at MIT, the MIT Biology Hypertextbook is laid out in chapters just like a standard textbook, but also offers a nifty tutorial, practice problems, and quizzes, not to

mention the versatility of Web links and the ability to search for a specific topic. — <http://esg-www.mit.edu:8001/esgbio/7001main.html>

Natural History

Quick: who was the Father of American Vertebrate Paleontology, the Founder of American Parasitology, a leading teacher in human anatomy and natural history and an expert in a areas as diverse as entomology, geology and pathology? The Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences Website offers an online exhibit and tribute to Joseph Leidy, one of the leading American scientists of the 19th century. Browse through his biography timeline to get a sense of how he lived, learn about the incredible breadth of subjects he pursued, or read about his study of fossils and how he contributed to knowledge of the dinosaurs through his study of *Hadrosaurus foulkii*. — <http://www.acnatsci.org/leidy/index.html>

Paleontology

Dedicated to preserving the Coelacanth (literally “hollow spine” from the Greek), a cousin of the ancestor of all land vertebrates thought to be extinct, “The Fish Out of Time” Website offers a number of interesting tidbits, including the opportunity to buy a “living fossil” — a young Madagascan Giant Hissing Roach that will grow to its 2-3 inch adult size in a few months. The site’s author, Jerome Hamlin, recounts his exciting descent to view coelacanths in their native locale, a cave 640 feet below earth’s surface. The history of the discovery of the living specimens, *Latimera*, is presented, along with online videos and a collection of related links. — <http://www.dinofish.com/>


Public Policy

From Abortion to the Right to Die, Public Agenda, a nonpartisan, nonprofit public opin-

ion research and citizen education organization founded in 1975, seeks to help leaders better understand the public’s point of view on major policy issues and help citizens better understand those policy issues so they can make their own more informed and thoughtful decisions. Each topic is clearly and concisely presented in a common outline format from two perspectives: Understanding the Issue and Public Opinion. The site also offers a newsletter (in pdf format), as well as an opportunity to invite a Public Agenda representative to your next meeting. — <http://www.publicagenda.org/>

Space Travel

Fascinating facts abound in this online version of an exhibit, “2001: Destination Space” running at the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose, CA. For example, did you know Swiss inventor George de Mestral conceived his invention, velcro (used on the shoes of flight attendants in Stanley Kubrick’s film “2001: A Space Odyssey”), after observing the burrs that stuck to him and his dog after a nature hike in 1948? The name “velcro” was created from “velour” and “crochet.”

The exhibit celebrates the arrival of the year depicted in Kubrick’s film. The site offers an intriguing comparison of fiction technology depicted in the film to fact technology today. Browse the gallery of works by visionary “space artist” Robert McCall (whom Kubrick enlisted to paint posters for the film), view streaming video interviews with five artists and scientists, and visit a selection of learning resources particularly suitable for classroom use as well as a list of Websites directly related to the original movie. [Requires Real Player and Macromedia Flash] — <http://www.thetech.org/2001ds/> 

Report from Fiesole III from page 88

ing them to reach these new communities while also recognizing some problems posed by ownership issues, privacy issues, and the like.

The consortia session looked at consortia widely defined, including a presentation regarding the relationship between library and university press, where the **Temple University Press** now reports to the library; case studies of the UK and Germany; an analysis of how libraries within consortia need to cooperate amongst themselves to build distinct collections; and a controversial presentation from **Michael Mabe** of **Elsevier** arguing that the so-called “crisis” in scholarly publishing

stems from a long-term decline in library acquisitions funding as a percentage of overall university budgets. This lively session provided jumping-off points for just about every aspect of collection building one could imagine.

The consensus in the digital teaching/learning portion of the program really seemed to coalesce around the idea that while there is much potential, distance learning via the Net does not offer quite the gold rush potential that many seemed to be predicting a few years ago. Various initiatives in the UK and US were reviewed and the need for libraries and publishers to work together to create an electronic infrastructure that allows researchers and students to work efficiently noted. This need

for simple and seamless systems across publishers, platforms, and fields was reinforced by Michael Keller in his closing remarks.

But it wasn’t all work! Between the many sessions and during a couple of delightful dinners and a wonderful cocktail reception hosted by and at **Casalini Libri** there were numerous chances to discuss these issues informally, to exchange war stories, to network, and most especially to enjoy the beautiful scenery and lovely spring weather offered up by **Fiesole**. Everyone who attended felt very lucky on both intellectual and aesthetic grounds to have the opportunity to be present and all look forward to the July 2002 collection development conference in the Netherlands. 