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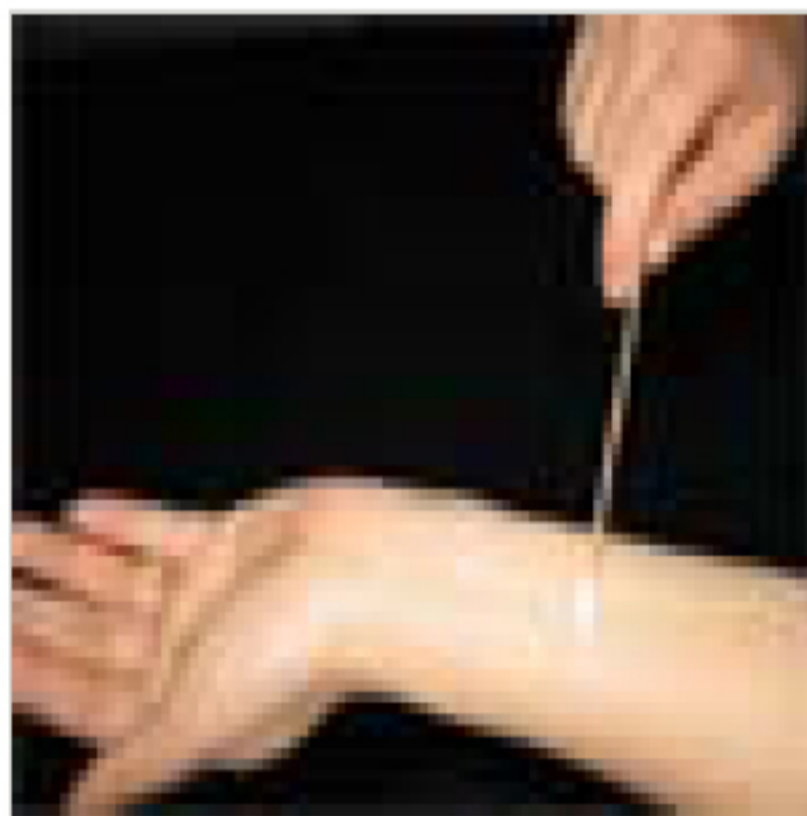
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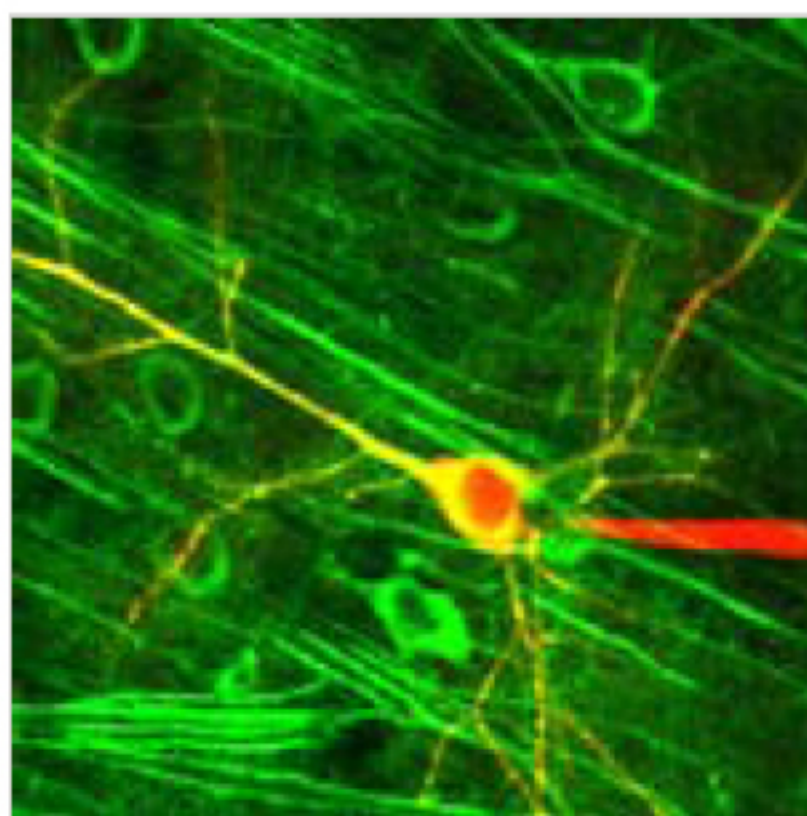
ScienceShots



Froggy died a-courtin'. Male tungara frogs could be singing themselves to death, all for love. When males are vocalizing alone, they make a simple-sounding call. But if other males chime in, they tend to croak out a more complex tune. That same call also beckons a slew of parasites and predators, such as frog-eating bats, which disrupt the courtship, to say the least. Now researchers report in the March issue of *The American Naturalist* that these predators target the singers because they find larger numbers of prey where the frogs converge to sing. (Credit, photo: Alex Baugh; video: Ximena Bernal and Rachel Page)



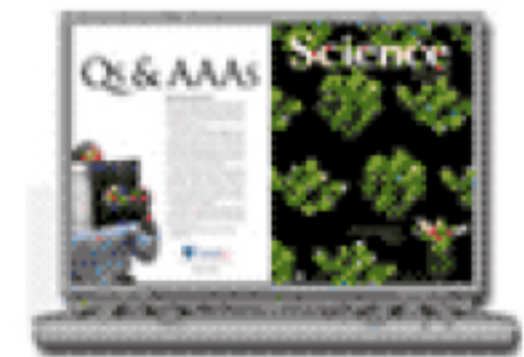
I've got you on my skin. Human skin is covered with bacteria, but little is known about which species live there. To find out, researchers swabbed the forearms of six volunteers and sequenced the microbial DNA in the samples. They detected a grand total of 182 bacterial species (estimates for the human gut commonly fall between 300 to 500 species). Only 2% of the skin bacteria were found on all the subjects, and 71% of the species only colonized one or another of the six volunteers, the researchers report online the week of 5 February in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. When four of the subjects were swabbed again 8 to 10 months later, their bacterial profiles had changed dramatically, and 65 other species were identified. (Credit: Zhan Gao and Martin J. Blaser)



Eavesdropping on the mind. What is the sight of a single neuron firing? Scientists now know thanks to a transgenic mouse with a glowing brain. When single neurons transmit even the faintest whispers of communication, they generate tiny spikes of electrical activity. The mouse was engineered so that these pulses cause neurons in the cortex to fluoresce. Researchers say the technology--described in the February issue of *Nature Methods*--could help neuroscientists elucidate the complex chatter involved in various brain functions such as memory and cognition. (Photo: Olga Garaschuk)

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