



FINDINGS

The U.S. military reported progress in its cyborg-insect program and in building robots that can power themselves by eating the bodies of those they kill; the developers have promised that all “EATR” robots will be told not to eat people. The world’s supercolonies of Argentine ants were found to compose a single ant empire that stretches across six continents. A global plague of frog leglessness was found to have been caused not by pollution but by dragonfly nymphs eating the legs of tadpoles. Scientists linked locust comas to human migraines, and Japanese researchers moved closer to creating an unteachable mouse. Neurologists discovered where rats store their fear. Psychologists who made people with low self-esteem say, “I am a lovable person” found that doing so caused the subjects to feel worse. Wednesdays make Americans twice as likely to kill themselves. Racism makes black gay men more likely to acquire HIV. Body Mass Index calculations were found to be biased against African Americans, who were found to be less likely to survive certain cancers even if they receive equal care. The brains of white people register less empathy for the pain of Chinese people.

A Frisian godwit named Heidenskip flew 2,500 miles in two days, beating the godwits Bakhuzen, Himmelum, Skuzum, and Warkum to Mauritania, the home of graduate student Hacem ould Mohammed el Hacem, who originally tagged her in the Netherlands. Charlie Chandsawangbhuwana joined the effort to develop contraceptives for lampreys, Bieke Vanhooydonck discovered a subtle proto-gliding ability in a species of tree lizard, and Michiel de Dood co-created the blackest black. Migaloo the white whale was spotted off Australia. Two hundred people came down with dermatitis at South Korea’s Boryeong Mud Festival. Building castles in the sand may lead to diarrhea. Israeli gastroenterologists

concluded that reading on the toilet does not have medical implications. Humans experience “considerable complexity” when tasting cat food, requiring such flavor metrics as Caramel, Chicken, Offaly, Rancid, and Tuna. Researchers found that domestic cats use special “soliciting purrs,” which contain urgent high-pitched cries, to get humans to do their bidding. A young white tiger failed to develop stripes, and one of India’s major tiger parks ran out of tigers. The Indian government planned to lower the country’s birthrate by increasing access to nighttime television. Scientists at the German Primate Center seduced female mice with the mousesong of males.

Amphibians prefer to mate under a full moon.

British scientists created sperm from human stem cells, which may soon make it possible for women to conceive without men. Harry and Pepper, a gay penguin couple in San Francisco, broke up after six years when Harry left Pepper for a female penguin named Linda. “To be completely anthropomorphizing,” said a zookeeper, “Linda seems conniving.” Researchers said that some men enjoy unprotected sex on methamphetamines with Tijuana prostitutes. In Switzerland, a study found no link between child porn and child molestation, and a team of police divers tracked down and killed an aggressive zander fish in Lac Majeur. Tasmanian wallabies were getting high on opium poppies and creating crop circles with their lopsided hopping. Florida authorized a large-scale cull of the state’s invasive Burmese-python population after a pet python killed a two-year-old girl. “Our stupid snake,” explained the girl’s mother’s boyfriend, “strangled the baby.” Seagulls were eating whales alive. Dogs can predict diabetic attacks in humans, and salamanders regrow lost limbs from memory. Sleeping on it may be a bad idea. The right ear is likelier to take requests. ■

*Detail from Signs Without Signification Portfolio, 2003–2007, a group of twenty-four archival pigment prints by Jeff Brouws.
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