

9th International Conference on Biology and Synchrotron Radiation



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NETWATCH

Many taxonomists want to expedite the often laborious task of identifying specimens by using a unique DNA sequence, or bar code, to recognize each species (*Science*, 18 February, p. [1037](#)). At the Web headquarters of the Barcode of Life Initiative, hosted by the University of Guelph in Canada, visitors can read up on the concept, which proponents are hoping will accelerate the cataloging of Earth's disappearing life forms. The site already holds codes for more than 13,000 animal species. The codes, based on different sequences of the cytochrome *c* oxidase I gene in mitochondria, encompass 260 species of North American birds and a selection of insects, such as the *Halysidota tessellaris* moth. Users can compare a bar code from their specimen to the entries in the database. The site will soon add about one-fifth of North American butterflies and moths, says curator Paul Hebert.

www.barcodinglife.org

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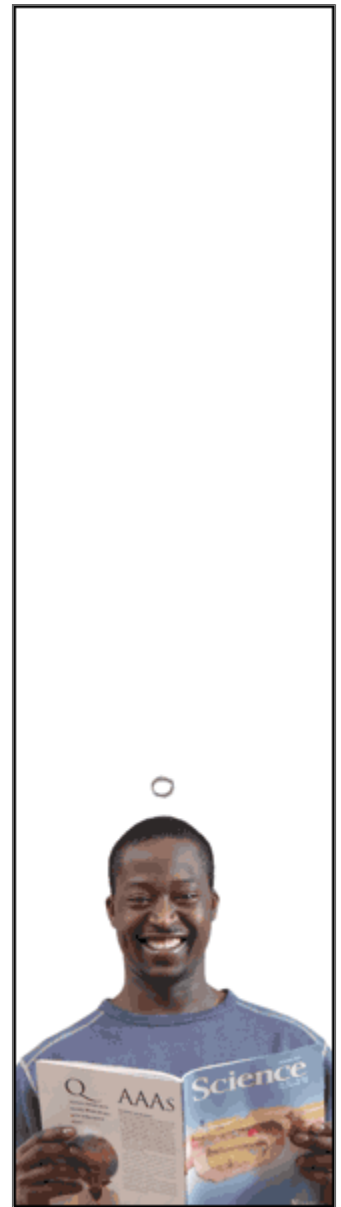
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