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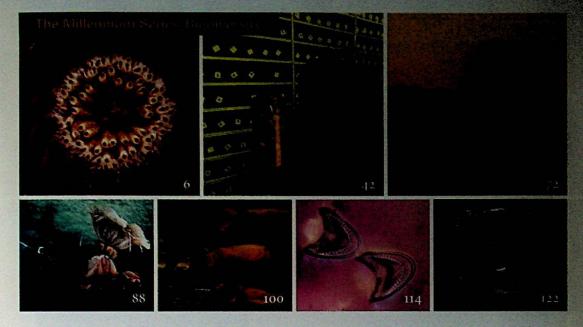


BIODIVERSITY

The Fragile Web

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- 2 Biodiversity: Taking Stock of Life Hosting an astonishing array of living things, our hospitable planet is becoming less so for many species. An introduction to this special issue.

 BY JOEL L. SWERDLOW
 - Millennium Supplement: Biodiversity
- The Variety of Life Wilderness Headcount The Sixth Extinction Restoring Madagascar In Search of Solutions Species too numerous to count are disappearing too quickly to record. From Central America to Asia, five articles take you to the front lines of the fight to save Earth's biological treasures.

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- 88 Under Antarctic Ice Diving beneath a stark, frozen desert, ocean explorers discover a world of startling color, clarity, and life.

 ARTICLE AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY NORBERT WU
- Torest Elephants In a remote clearing in the Central African Republic, biologist Andrea Turkalo observes the lives of endangered animals that until recently were only glimpsed through the trees.

 PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL FAY AND MICHAEL NICHOLS
- Diatoms, Plants With a Touch of Glass Under a high-powered microscope the silica shells of single-celled algae are revealed in all their manifold beauty.

 ARTICLE AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY DARLYNE A. MURAWSKI
- Ants and Plants—A Profitable Partnership
 In nutrient-poor forests ants and plants have evolved to meet each other's needs. Rare photographs from Borneo show the only known swimming ants helping their hosts—pitcher plants—digest other insects.

 ARTICLE AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK W. MOFFETT

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Flashback On Assignment

The Cover

Peering out from red Australian sands, a desert spadefoot frog emerges for a rare drink of water. Photograph by Frans Lanting

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