



## Website of the Week — Smithsonian Science

By Art Chimes  
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Time again for our Website of the Week, when we showcase interesting and innovative online destinations.

Visitors to Washington almost always stop at at least one of the many museums of the Smithsonian Institution. The Natural History Museum and the Air and Space Museum are perhaps the most popular, but the exhibits at the American history and art museums also draw huge crowds. Far fewer people know about the Smithsonian's important research programs, which take place behind the scenes.

But at [SmithsonianScience.org](http://SmithsonianScience.org), you can take an over-the-shoulder look at top scientists doing important work.

"Science plays a critical role in the daily life of the institution," says Smithsonian writer-editor John Barrat. "We do science every day, exploring the nature and the origin of the universe, the formation and evolution of the Earth and the other planets, understanding the biological diversity of life on Earth, and human diversity and cultural change."

SmithsonianScience.org is just a few months old, but it's already full of interesting articles and multimedia about the discovery of new bat species in the museum's collection or the birth of new animals at the zoo, or evidence of prehistoric global warming. Some scientists work at Smithsonian museums, while others work at specialized research centers.

"One of our oldest research institutions is the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory," Barrat says. "They are monitoring the movement of glaciers in Greenland. They're determining how fast the glaciers are melting, how fast they're moving. It's something they've been doing for many years. More recently, they measured the Milky Way galaxy and learned that it's larger and more massive than they previously realized."

There's also a growing series of videos of scientists describing their work.

*My name is Stefan Schnitzer. I am a research associate at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama. My research subject is the maintenance of species diversity and the ecology of lianas, which are woody vines like this one here....*

More content is constantly being added on SmithsonianScience.org, or visit our site, VOAnews.com, for the link to this and [more than 250 other Websites of the Week](#).

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