

Science on the Air

Science News prints the latest written word of scientific development and noteworthy news. We've set this space aside to inform our readers of programs of scientific interest that are scheduled on television and radio. Check your local listings for exact times and dates. (R) indicates a repeat broadcast.

Aug. 1 (PBS) Innovation – “Radon: The Invisible Danger” Looks at the possible health implications of radon pollution, methods homeowners can use to detect the gas and what is being done to minimize radon hazards once they are found.

Aug. 2 (PBS) National Audubon Society Special – “Ducks Under Siege” Examines the decline of the U.S. duck population due to the loss of wetland habitat, and the efforts to arrest this decline in the United States and Canada.

Aug. 4 (PBS) Nova – “Orangutans of the Rain Forest” (R) Travels to one of the last habitats of the wild orangutan, where scientists study the endangered ape and where it is not always clear who is observing whom.

Aug. 5 (PBS) National Geographic Special – “The Grizzlies” (R) Tracks this magnificent and misunderstood animal and interviews the scientists who are trying to save it from extinction.

Aug. 5 (PBS) Star Wars: The Bottom Line Presents the economic consequences of the Strategic Defense Initiative and depicts the research and development done to date.

Aug. 6 (PBS) Wild America – “North Woods Lynx” (R) A look at the elusive lynx and its relationship with its primary quarry, the snowshoe hare.

Aug. 8 (PBS) Innovation – “Allergy Blues” (R) Reports on researchers at Johns Hopkins Medical Center in Baltimore who are working on new methods for treating allergies, based on the growing understanding of the immune system.

Aug. 9 (PBS) National Audubon Society Special – “Common Ground” Talks to some enterprising farmers who are using new cost-effective methods of raising crops that improve farming without damaging the environment.

Aug. 11 (PBS) Nova – “How Babies Get Made” (R) Explores the ground-breaking experiments that led to the discovery of a tiny sequence of molecules, and more clues to the mystery of how a complete baby develops from a single cell.

Aug. 12 (PBS) National Geographic Special – “In the Shadow of Vesuvius” (R) Follows excavations of ancient Herculaneum and explores the challenges of life today in a nearby fishing town.

Aug. 13 (PBS) Wild America – “Woodpeckers: Nature’s Hammerheads” (R) Looks at the birds that whack away at tree trunks with extraordinary force in their quest for food and shelter.

Aug. 15 (PBS) Innovation – “One Hundred, and Counting” Looks back at highlights from the series, travels to the Soviet Union to provide an international perspective on the “computer revolution” and profiles Walter Cronkite’s early science journalism days.

Aug. 16 (PBS) National Audubon Society Special – “On the Edge of Extinction: Panthers and Cheetahs” Chronicles efforts to rejuvenate the Florida panther and other endangered cats by establishing gene banks, and visits Oregon’s Wildlife Safari Zoo, where biologists are attempting to breed cheetahs in captivity.

Aug. 19 (PBS) National Geographic Special – “Lions of the African Night” (R) This special, filmed over a three-year period, follows a pride of 30 lions during a “typical” night in the African bush.

Aug. 22 (PBS) Innovation – “Mind Over Matter” (R) Explores the connection between stress and illness, and focuses on how changing lifestyles and work patterns can alter different kinds of stress.

Aug. 23 (PBS) Nature – “Cats” (R) Examines cat behavior and reviews the widely varying attitudes toward cats over the 5,000 years of their domestication.

Aug. 23 (PBS) Nature – “Man’s Best Friend” (R) Investigates why humans have developed such a close relationship with dogs.

Aug. 25 (PBS) Nova – “Children of Eve” (R) Examines a controversial theory that traces our ancestry to a small group of women living in Africa 300,000 years ago.

Aug. 25 (PBS) Silicon Valley Focuses on some of the people responsible for the technical advances the Valley has delivered and explores how market forces have been the catalysts in the creation and growth of the region’s electronics industry.

Aug. 29 (PBS) Innovation – “Mapping Our Worlds” Visits with John Wolter of the Library of Congress and looks at how new technology is enabling us to view the world as never before.

Aug. 30 (PBS) Headache: The Ancient Enemy Looks at the phenomenon of the headache, from its history to the new methods of its elimination, including a major sequence concerning headaches in children.

Books

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Agricultural Biotechnology: Strategies for National Competitiveness – National Research Council, Board on Agriculture, Charles E. Hess, Comm. Chairman. An overview of how the U.S. agricultural research system is responding to biotechnology and how it might prepare for future opportunities. Natl Acad Pr, 1987, 205 p., paper, \$14.95.

Annual Review of Immunology, Vol. 5 – William E. Paul, Ed. Topics include disorders of phagocyte function, rheumatoid factor and immune networks, early events in T-cell maturation and lymphocyte hormone receptors. Annual Review, 1987, 690 p., illus., \$31.

The Hare and the Tortoise: Culture, Biology and Human Nature – David P. Barash. This scientist develops the thesis that most of the world’s current problems are due to the conflict between rapidly moving culture and slow-moving biology. Using the culture/biology conflict, he considers issues related to sexual behavior, feminism and family structure; and raises questions about aggression and war, the population explosion, environmental abuse and the nuclear arms race. Assesses our biological and cultural futures and explains how the two can be reconciled. Originally published in hardback in 1986 by Viking Press. Penguin, 1987, 351 p., paper, \$7.95.

Learning About Risk: Consumer and Worker Responses to Hazard Information – W. Kip Viscusi and Wesley A. Magat. Offers evidence on how people process information about risk and how they make choices under uncertainty. Takes a close look at one type of risk information – the labeling (meaning all the ways in which information is transmitted) of hazardous products and chemicals. The authors surveyed hundreds of consumers and chemical workers in their research. Harvard U Pr, 1987, 197 p., charts & graphs, \$27.50.

On the Brink of Extinction: Conserving the Diversity of Life – Edward C. Wolf. “For 3.5 billion years, evolution has unfolded without our conscious guidance,” says this Worldwatch Institute report. “Today, human activities seem destined to shape earth’s biological future as inexorably as a geological process.” This report indicates that the next 10 years will be especially crucial in determining the severity of the extinctions that we have already set in motion if deforestation unfolds according to projections and human populations double from 5 billion today to the 10 billion forecast for the year 2028. Worldwatch Inst, 1987, 53 p., paper, \$4.

The Smithsonian Guide to Seaside Plants of the Gulf and Atlantic Coasts: From Louisiana to Massachusetts, Exclusive of Lower Peninsular Florida – Wilbur H. Duncan and Marion B. Duncan. Covers the plants found in this coastal environment for both the scientist and the amateur. 949 species of wildflowers, trees, shrubs, grasses, rushes and sedges are described here. Most are illustrated by a color photograph with accompanying magnification ratio to help determine actual size of the plant. Smithsonian, 1987, 409 p., color/b&w illus., \$45, paper, \$29.95.