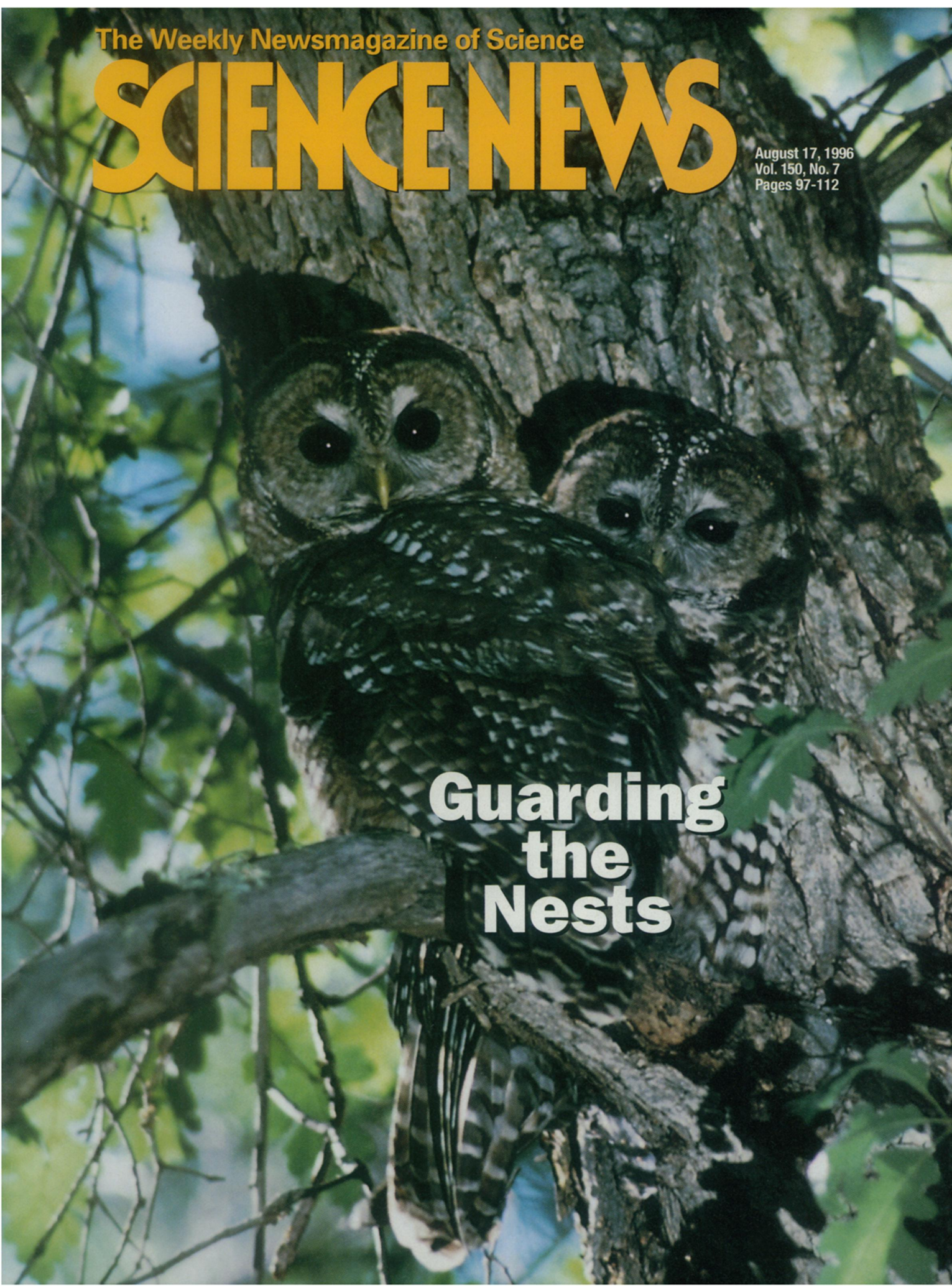


The Weekly Newsmagazine of Science

# SCIENCE NEWS

August 17, 1996  
Vol. 150, No. 7  
Pages 97-112

A photograph of two owls perched on a tree branch. The owls are facing forward, looking directly at the camera. They have dark, mottled feathers with lighter spots. The background is a dense network of tree branches and green leaves, slightly out of focus.

## Guarding the Nests



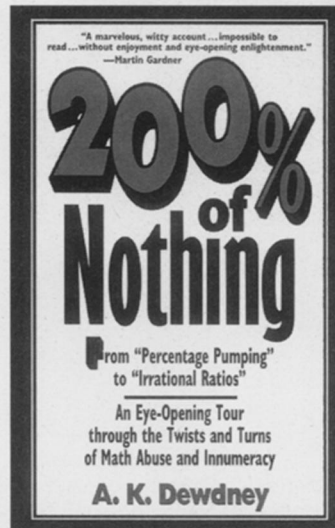
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Do statistics really prove it's safer to fly than drive across country?**

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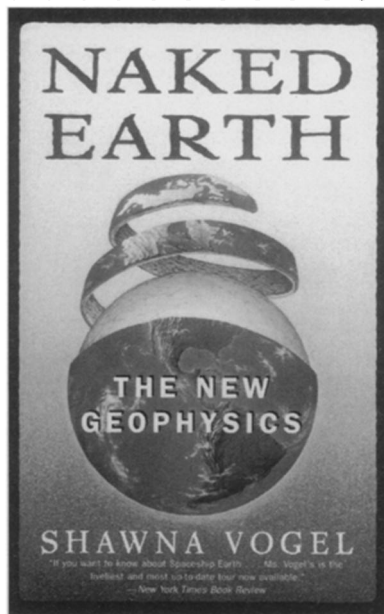
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In fiction, Jules Verne sent a traveler to the center of the earth, and Lewis Carroll sent a little girl named Alice down a rabbit hole into Wonderland. Yet neither of these extraordinary journeys of the imagination came close to the amazing truth about the awesome interior of the planet on whose fragile surface we live.

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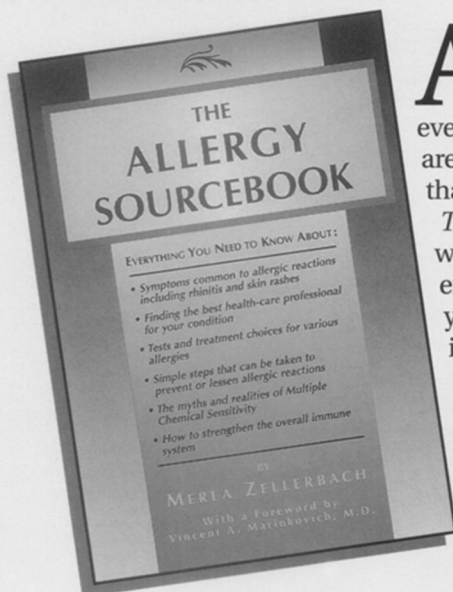
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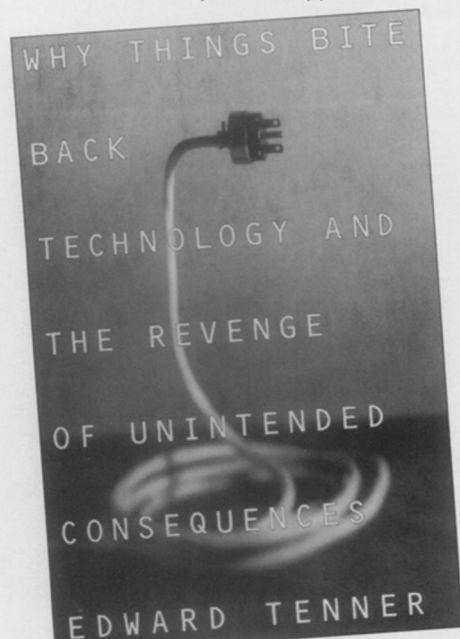
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Edward Tenner is a connoisseur of what he calls "revenge effects"—the unintended, ironic consequences of the mechanical, chemical, biological, and medical forms of ingenuity that have been hallmarks of the progressive, improvement-obsessed 20th century. In seeking out these revenge effects, he ranges far and wide in our cultural landscape to discover an insistent pattern of paradox that implicates everything from black lung to bluebirds, wooden tennis rackets to Windows '95. His insatiable curiosity embraces technology in all its guises: Televised competitive skiing, which is much less exciting now that state-of-the-art cameras have eliminated the blur and lost motion of older broadcasts; low-

tar cigarettes, which may encourage smokers to defer quitting; the meltdown at Chernobyl, which occurred during a test of enhanced safety procedures; and much, much more.

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