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Cover: On their trip to Washington, D.C., the 1983 finalists in the Westinghouse Science Talent Search visited Albert Einstein's statue at the National Academy of Sciences. A longitudinal study of the group, as well as other research, points out why some interested, talented students do not pursue science. (Photo: Westinghouse)

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Letters

Sounds like...

"What's in a name? Sound symbolism..." (SN: 4/12/97, p. 226) was most amusing. I gave the squirrel versus tapir sound test to my husband, who responded with, "I ran over a kuzikuzi on the way home today."

Emily Johnston
Westminster, Md.

Hyacinth—it's a guy thing

When I read that all flower-derived names except for Narcissus are feminine ("...or natural world symbolism?" SN: 4/12/97, p. 226), I immediately recalled Saint Hyacinth's Church in Bay City, Mich., which assuredly was not named after a female saint.

Nancy Hamilton
Ypsilanti, Mich.

Although Hyacinth has been a feminine name in English since the 19th century, the name was indeed originally masculine, from Greek

and Latin mythology, says anthropologist Ben Blount.

—C. Mlot

Restoring the aplomado falcon

I read with interest "Away from the wolf, into the falcon" (SN: 4/5/97, p. 210), which describes an interesting interaction between the maned wolf and the aplomado falcon. The note states that the aplomado falcon "has been eliminated from its range in the U.S. Southwest."

Although extirpated in the United States by the early 1950s, the aplomado falcon is once again breeding in this country as a result of an ongoing captive breeding and release program being conducted by the Peregrine Fund. There are currently at least four established pairs of aplomado falcons, which have collectively fledged four young in south Texas.

J. Peter Jenny
Vice President
The Peregrine Fund
Boise, Idaho

Your article called to mind my youth on a farm in the Snake River plain of southern Idaho. As on any farm, our family's fields contained an abundance of mice. Also on our property during the summer, several red-tailed hawks nested. When the time came to harvest the alfalfa, these hawks would inevitably trail the farm machinery. As the alfalfa was felled and cleared, the hawks swooped down to take their fill of freshly exposed vermin. Needless to say, the hawks were well rewarded for their efforts.

This anecdote supports the notion that humans can, in certain circumstances, fill the role of wolves, monkeys, or dolphins.

Terry R. Molyneux
Canyon Lake, Calif.

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