

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

CONTENIDO

VOLUME 219 No. 1, JANUARY 2011

- 32 **Population 7 billion.**
Find out why you shouldn't panic—at least, not yet.
Robert Kunzing.
- 70 **Phoenix Islands Rising.**
After a bleaching disaster, Pacific reefs bounce back.
Gregory S. Stone.
Photographs, Brian Skerry.
- 84 **Telltale Scribes.**
Timbuktu's books and letters are historic, magical, romantic.
Peter Gwin.
Photographs Brent Stirton.
- 104 **Conquering a Cave.**
Explores scramble to the end of Vietnam's infinite cavern.
Mark Jenkins.
Photographs Carsten Peter.
- 126 **America's Lost City.**
Cahokia was born with a bang and died of unknown causes.
Glenn Hodges.
Photographs Don Burmeister and Ira Block.

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 **Editor's Note.**
- 8 **Letters.**
- 11 **Your Shot.**
- 12 **Vision of Earth.**

POPULATION

World's Biggest Guest List.

You'd be surprised how little space would be needed for a party for everyone on Earth.

ENVIRONMENT

Eat a Ray, Save the Bay.

Cownose rays in the Chesapeake Bay are gobbling shellfish and roiling grass beds.

CULTURE

More Mature Mothers.

The number of births for moms 35 and older jumped 64 percent from 1990 to 2008.

WILD

How Butterflies Get Color.

Microscopic 3-D structures create the brilliant greens on the wings of some species.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Cave Secrets.

Caches of bones and manuscripts may shed light on Tibet's ancient Bon religion.

THE BIG IDEA

28

Noisy Ocean.

The sounds of chips, from air guns to propellers, are on the increase, disrupting the lives of marine dwellers.

146

Inside Geographic.

Flashback.

GeoPuzzle.

ON THE COVER

With 14 million people, 2.3 million vehicles, and 9,320 miles of roads, Shanghai typifies the new urban landscape in our populous world.

Photo by *Peter Bialobrzerki, Laif/Redux.*