# AUSTRALASIAN SCIENCE

# **CONTENIDO**

# VOLUMEN 31 No. 1, JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 2010

# **FEATURES**

# 14 The Birth of Our Solar System (and Life as We Know It).

When the Sun was born, radioactivity may have helped to create conditions for life in the rocks that formed the planets. Understanding the origin of this radioactivity could tell us how likely it is that life could exist elsewhere in the Universe.

María Lugaro.

# 17 Black Holes: The Missing Link.

Evidence for the existence of small and very large black holes is quite convincing, and now there is strong evidence for one in the "medium" range.

Sean Farrell.

# 21 The Light Fantastic.

By Controlling how individual wavelengths of light diffract, researchers are harnessing the power of white light lasers that open up the visible spectrum on optical chips.

Tim Wetherell.

## The Myopia Epidemic.

The prevalence of myipia is increasing in children and adolescents, but pharmaceutical intervention is on the horizon.

Sheila Crewther, Melanie Murphy and David Crewther.

# **Switches for the Gene Machine.**

We share the same number of genes as simple roundworms. Newly discovered systems of gene control explain why. *Geoff Faulkner*.

# 28 Humpback Love Songs.

New Insights into the context of when humpback whales sing and with whom suggest that a function of the song could be as a courtship display to females.

Joshua Smith.

#### Food Security in a Warming World.

Increasing levels of atmospheric CO2 will change the nutritional value of food for both people and livestock – and even lead to higher levels of toxic cyanide in some staple foods and pastures.

Ros Gleadow.

# **Quantum Memory.**

New models of human cognition inspired by quantum theory could underpin information technologies that are better aligned with how we recall information.

Peter Bruza.

# 36 Massege from Refugee.

One of the least recognized issues faced by refugees id access to technologies enabling them to keep in touch with their families. *Linda Leung*.

#### **conSCIENCE**

# **38** Curbing Population Growth Limits Global Warming.

Few can have any doubt that halting population growth in developed and developing countries is the greatest challenge now facing our world. *Roger Short*.

# **REGULAR COLUMNS**

# 3 Simon Says

SCIRO has blown its credentials on academic freedom.

#### 4 Browse

A round-up of the latest science news from our shores.

#### 39 Cool Careers

Nature's complex molecules provide a starting point for Andrea Robinson to produce chemicals that survive in the human body.

#### 40 Australasian Sky.

Your guide to the night sky this month.

# 42 Out of this World.

A dusty problem for the Apollo astronauts has taken on new significance with US plans to return to the Moon by 2020.

### 46 Publish or Perish.

Your guide to new science books published this month.

# 47 Neked Skeptic.

Flying is the safest form of travel so why are so many people afraid of it. And why do we need a prescription for a drug with no known toxic close when we can buy potentially deadly drugs in supermarkets?

#### 48 Quandary.

The discovery that a man who had been in a coma for 23 years was still conscious has raised questions over the treatment of people who are in a permanent vegetative state.