

# BEST FROM SCIENCE JOURNALS: WHAT MAKES US SNEEZE?

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## [Published in Cell](#)

A small tickle in your nose, exposure to irritants and viral infections can cause sneezing. But the cellular pathways and neurons behind them have been hardly understood. A new study has shown that a molecule named neuromedin B (NMB) was important for sneezing. When this molecule was blocked, the test mice did not sneeze in spite of being exposed to allergens. The researchers could also stimulate a sneeze reflex by exposing part of the mouse brain to the NMB peptide.

## [Published in Communications Biology](#)

About 40 years ago, humans brought the North American rosy wolf snail to the island of Tahiti. This snail was a predator and it led to the extinction of over 50 species of native snails. But surprisingly one species survived, the white-shelled *Partula hyalina*. Now by sticking extremely small sensors to the shells of the snail, scientists have understood how it survived. *P. hyalina* could tolerate more sunlight than its predator, so it was able to live undisturbed in the sunlit parts of the forest.

## [Published in PNAS](#)

By studying sediments from seven seafloor seeps, researchers have found that these sites house several methane-oxidising microbes. These microbial communities showed high rates of methane consumption. Lead author Jeffrey J. Marlow explains in a release, that understanding these anaerobic methane-eating microbes, can help in bioremediation in other situations like landfills with methane leaks.

## [Published in Current Biology](#)

By studying amber collected from Myanmar, researchers have described a new lizard that lived 99 million years ago. The team named it *Oculudentavis naga*. *Oculudentavis* is derived from oculus = eye, dentes = teeth, and avis = bird and Naga is the name of one of the many ethnic tribes living in the Burmese amber mines area.

## [Published in Nature Microbiology](#)

An international team of researchers has now discovered several bacteria that use DNA as a food source. They were found in the sediments of the Atlantic Ocean. "From the bacteria's perspective, DNA is particularly nutritious," says Kenneth Wasmund, lead author of the study in a release. "It's essentially a fertilizer. After all, it is a chain of millions of pieces of sugar and phosphorus- and nitrogen-containing bases." The team further studied the genomes of these species.

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