

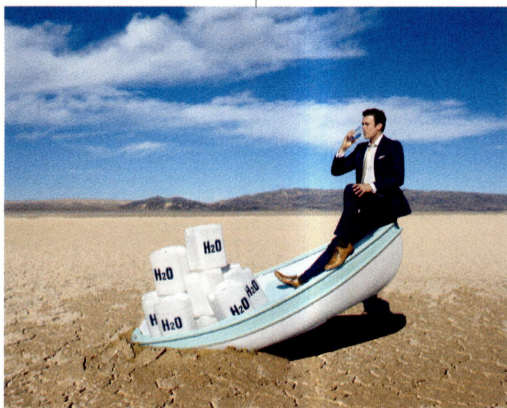
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On the Cover

A plastic shopping bag has a “working life” of about 15 minutes, and we’re using a trillion of them a year. That’s one highly visible source of plastic trash—but it’s only the tip of the iceberg in an ocean saturated with plastics.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JORGE GAMBOA

EMBARK



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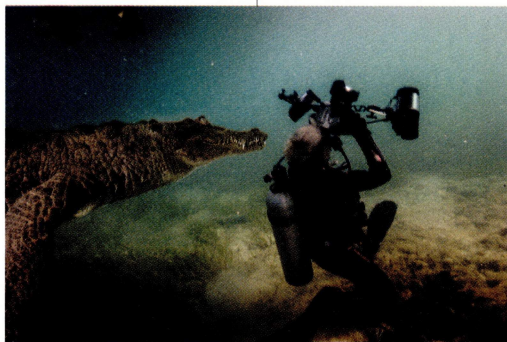
THE BIG IDEA

To Conserve or Hog Resources

If society depended on it, would you share—or would you be selfish?

BY DYLAN SELTERMAN

EXPLORE



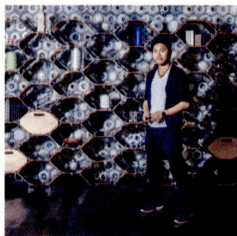
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GENIUS

Trash to Treasure

Engineer Arthur Huang is finding new uses for garbage—and revolutionizing recycling in the process.

BY CHRISTINA NUNEZ



ALSO

Pollution on a Stick
Mushroom Cleaner
Glass Octopus

THROUGH THE LENS

A Chance Meeting

They were studying marine life—at closer range than planned.

BY DAVID DOUBILET AND JENNIFER HAYES

DECODER

Talking Trees

In a Canadian forest fungi and trees have developed a hidden intelligence.

BY DAISY CHUNG AND RYAN T. WILLIAMS

ALSO

Sex and the Queen
Pop Omnivore: Sampler of culture, history and media



FEATURES

▲
Plastics

We make them. We depend on them. We're filling the ocean with them. Beyond what we've incinerated or recycled, a staggering 5.5 billion tons remain, taking centuries, or more, to break down. Can we enjoy this miracle material and have a clean environment too?

BY LAURA PARKER
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Humanlike Birds

Parrots may be too popular for their own good.

BY CHRISTINE DELL'AMORE
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Lost Colony

What happened on Roanoke Island?

BY ANDREW LAWLER
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