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DEEP-SEA  
INFERNOS

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# NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



## Across the Heart of Africa

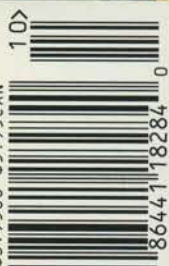
A Conservationist's  
Yearlong Trek

## Boston's North Enders

Keeping the Faith  
in Little Italy

## WILD GLIDERS OF BORNEO

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## ENVIRONMENT

# Backyard Barrel Burning

*Out in the country, pollutants add up*

In rural America, where landfills and incinerators are sparse, an estimated 20 million people burn their trash outdoors, some in old 55-gallon oil drums. How much pollution goes up in smoke, the EPA wondered? A study analyzed barrel-burned trash, which included paper, cardboard, plastic, tin cans, food waste, and glass. The result: Barrels may release as many dioxins as did all municipal incinerators in 1995, before the EPA tightened incinerator rules. "Backyard burning is one more factor that goes into the pollution mix," says the EPA's Dwain Winters, adding that only state restrictions, not federal, now apply.



ART BY RICHARD DOWNS



LANDSAT IMAGE PRODUCED BY ROBERT E. CRIPPEN, JET PROPULSION LABORATORY, NASA

## CONSERVATION

## Wild Side of L.A.

*Groups buying corridor as an animal haven*

Surrounded by more than five million people, an ecosystem in the Los Angeles Basin remains surprisingly intact. Not far from downtown L.A., the 30-mile-long Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor harbors mule deer, bobcats, foxes, nearly a hundred species of breeding birds, and a few mountain lions. Conservationists have purchased almost half the corridor's 40,000 acres.

The ecosystem includes the hills above, valuable real estate prized by developers. "We have bought several important parcels owned by oil companies in the hills, and we're still negotiating," says Bev Perry of the corridor's Conservation Authority. "There have been wells up there since about 1900, and some are still producing."

## TECHNOLOGY

## Fool's Gold

Congress wanted a gold-colored metal for the new Sacagawea dollar, but scientists couldn't find one that vending machines would accept. They had almost given up when they tried pink-toned copper manganese, which turns gold when zinc is added. Vending machines were happy—and so was Capitol Hill.



NGS PHOTOGRAPHER MARK THIESSEN

## TAKE FIVE

### Top Pumpkin-producing States

1. Illinois
2. New York
3. California
4. Oregon
5. Michigan

SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE