

FORECASTS FROM ORBIT

Aeolus – a new laser-equipped satellite – is designed to give meteorologists the comprehensive wind data they need for better weather forecasting.

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Michael Rogers/Unsplash.com

EDITORIAL



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Teaching science often involves explaining things that are invisible to the naked eye: from the huge variety of microorganisms that are visible only under a microscope, to distant stars explored using powerful telescopes. The ability to reach into these remote worlds is one of the things that makes science so fascinating.

In this issue, we share an array of articles to help bring these hidden worlds into view. In the chemistry classroom, we investigate the benefits of the enzymes that lurk in your laundry detergent (page 34) and find out how scientists design molecules to make new drugs (page 25). In biology, we create living ‘agar art’, painting with the tiny microbes that live around us (page 48), and a researcher tells us how newly discovered bacterial communities on leaf surfaces can benefit the health of trees and forests – and can also help the environment (page 20).

For physics students, we reveal how they can identify subatomic particles by looking closely at the tracks seen in bubble chamber photographs from CERN (page 40). Venturing above Earth, we take a look at Aeolus, a new satellite launched by the European Space Agency, which promises improvements in global weather forecasting by delivering detailed data on Earth’s winds (page 14).

Finally, we showcase how images and ideas from science can really spark the artistic imagination, with some striking artworks created by students. Starting with images of biological molecules usually reserved for the eyes of scientists, the students explore and reimagine these 3D structures to create their own artistic interpretations, adding some profound cultural reflections to the mix (page 29).

Whatever your area of science, we hope that this issue will inspire you to introduce some fresh activities into your teaching – just in time for spring.

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