
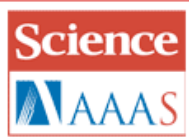


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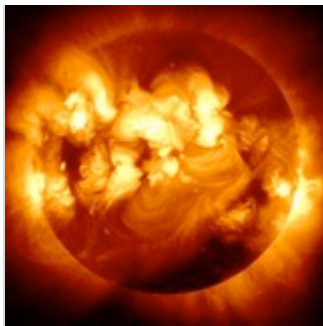
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ScienceShots

## ScienceShots



**Hot temper.** Some of the sun's biggest outbursts have gone unrecorded. In 1989, a solar flare cut power to 6 million people in Canada, but that was nothing compared to past explosions. Now researchers are finally uncovering evidence of these earlier events thanks to analyses of Greenland ice cores. In the March issue of *Geophysical Research Letters*, scientists report that nitrates in one of these cores, which result from ozone-depleting solar protons, point to a massive solar flare in 1859 that was 6.5 times more energetic than the 1989 flare and destroyed 3.5 times as much ozone. The findings, say the researchers, indicate that powerful flares likely occur more frequently than once thought. (Photo: JAXA)



**Thanks, Mom.** Some squirrels are born with a silver nut in their mouths. Researchers found that when they gave red squirrels (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) a head start in life--by supplementing their mothers' diets with peanut butter or sunflower seeds--the offspring were nearly three times more likely to survive until the following spring as were those from control group mothers. This maternal boost was seen even though all juveniles grew to the same size and moved into similar-quality feeding territory, researchers report online 29 March in *Biology Letters*. One explanation for the survival advantage may be that young of well-fed mothers left the nest 2 to 3 weeks before the other set did, allowing them to find territory faster and hoard more food. (Photo: C. Kolaczan)

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