

4/56/2017

## Current Problem

- 4** Białowieża Primeval Forest  
**Conservation Faces the Cutting Edge**

## Women at the PAS

- 12** ANETTA UNDAS  
**To Find a Means To Keep Looking**
- 16** CZESŁAWA ROSIK-DULEWSKA  
**For a Clean Environment**

## Focus on

- 20** PAWEŁ GANCARCZYK Musicology **The Lessons of Old Scores**
- 25** KATARZYNA MAŁEK Astrophysics  
**Cartographers of the Universe**
- 28** PAWEŁ KOZŁOWSKI Economics  
**Division and Movement**
- 30** PAULINA SZAFRAŃSKA Biology  
**It Pays to be Small in Winter**
- 34** MARCIN RZESZUTEK,  
 KATARZYNA SCHIER Psychology  
**The Trouble With Helping Others**

## Research in Progress

- 38** WOJCIECH A. HELLWING Astrophysics  
**What Falls From the Sky**
- 42** DANIEL RAK Oceanography  
**Our Fresh-and-Salty Sea**
- 45** ALICJA WIERZCHOLSKA Physics  
**What Did Sst-1M See?**
- 48** PIOTR SZREK Paleontology  
**Fish Like Me**

## Briefly Speaking

- 52** ANNA AJDUK,  
 NICOLE DOŁOWY-RYBIŃSKA,  
 MONIKA KĘDRA,  
 MONIKA KWOKA  
**Call to Action for Women in Science**

## Insight

- 58** JAN DZIERŻEK Geology  
**Thin Flakes, Thick Ice**
- 62** JULIA PAWŁOWSKA Biology  
**From the Soil to the Skies**
- 65** ANNA MICHALSKA Food Science  
**Sprinkle Generously  
 with Raspberry Powder**
- 68** IN THE LENS:  
**Tethys' Mountainous Mysteries**

## Short circuit

- 74** JERZY BRALCZYK  
**Why Go To Extremes?**



## Current Problem Forest

**A tricky problem of conservation** Should the Białowieża Forest be protected by culling and removing infested trees? Specialists express their views. **4**



## Women at the PAS

### New female members of the Academy

We talk career paths with Prof. Anetta Undas from the Medical College of Jagiellonian University and Prof. Czesława Rosik-Dulewska from Opole University. **12–19**



## Briefly Speaking

### Foursome forging ahead

The Polish Young Academy's leadership team: Anna Ajduk, Nicole Dołowy-Rybińska, Monika Kędra, and Monika Kwoka. **52**

COVER PHOTO AND PAGE 2:  
 JAKUB OSTAŁOWSKI

FROM THE EDITORS

# LIVING ON THE EDGE?

Some of the most extreme variations on our planet are related to the changing of the seasons. For instance, Dr. Paulina Szafrńska writes about how the winters we experience in Poland's geographical latitude are a challenging time for weasels to live through: they "really do live on the edge – as shown by their high mortality rates in winter." It turns out that in order to survive, weasels actually slow down their metabolism, which enables them to eat less and lower their body weight. The same thing happens with their brains: they shrink by 15% in order to consume less energy.

Such findings make one ponder: we humans, after all, also live in the same ecosystem and we also adapt to the environmental conditions, albeit in our own way. In the winter we dress more warmly, eat more calorific meals, spend less time outside and more in heated homes. That's true, but at the same time our species has developed the ability to shape our environment. And not just in order to survive in it individually, but also to ensure that it provides a context in which all of human society can live better.

Efforts of this latter sort are visible in one of the threads of our conversation with the team of four women scholars now leading the Polish Young Academy. They note how the Polish Academy of Sciences decided last year to boost the share of female members of the Academy, and the same tendency is increasingly visible in grant-awarding, for instance. Not only because such are the demands of European projects, but also because of a growing awareness that the presence of women in science is important for all of society at large, as their ideas, their efforts, and their approaches help push science forward. The calculus is quite simple, really: "If we exclude the half of the world's population that is made up by women, we reduce our development options in general." And that is something that no country can afford, no matter what its climate.

**Tomasz Kawiak,  
"Drawing on two axes  
with a protractor, pencil,  
and chalk" (1975).**

A graduate of the Fine Arts Academy in Warsaw (1968), where he worked as a teaching assistant in 1968–1970 (in the ceramics workshop of the Faculty of Painting). In 1970 he presented his installation "Tomek Kawiak's Pain" in which he bandaged up the trees on a certain street in Lublin that had been damaged by the city services. He continued his artistic education at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. He is known as for his original initiatives, including briquetage – whereby the artist leaves behind identical bricks fired from red clay in various places he visits during his numerous voyages.



MARCIN KONIAK/DESA UNICUM



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