FEELING THE HEAT

Corals reefs worldwide are exposed to increasingly frequent and severe warming events that can lead to catastrophic bleaching when coral organisms eject their algal symbionts. But scientists have noted that some reefs bounce back after such warming events and often fare better during subsequent temperature increases, even if they are hotter or longer than previous ones. This phenomenon—whereby an organism modifies its response to past abiotic stimuli—has been termed "environmental memory," and researchers are working to understand how and why certain corals may have a greater capacity for memory than others.