

National Library for the Environment: Congressional Research Service Reports. Access: http://www.cnie.org/nle/crs_main.html.

At first glance it is confusing as to what agency is responsible for this Web site, although its purpose is clear: "improving the scientific basis for making decisions on environmental issues."

Further investigation reveals that this site is a product of dual efforts. The National Council for Science and the Environment (NCSE), formerly the Committee for the National Institute for the Environment (CNIE), is responsible for the site, which also is entitled the National Library for the Environment. The content of the site, however, is provided by the Congressional Research Service (CRS), a division of the Library of Congress and provider of these reports for Congress.

Explained on the main page, NCSE examines CRS reports for accuracy and objectivity, and since the reports contain non-technical information, it provides useful information in the area of environmental policy. Furthermore, CRS reports are not readily available to the general public nor are they law or copyright protected.

Thus, to make vital environmentally related information available to everyone, the NCSE obtains CRS documents, formats them for the Internet, and loads them on the Web. The Web site is updated once a month, although reports and resources are added or revised as they become available. In April, the update included 11 new and 66 revised reports.

A clean, well-balanced main page offers easy perusal of both the report index and the report search instructions. The index provides 27 categories in the areas of natural resources (including biodiversity, forestry, and mining), environmental quality (including climate, pesticides, and waste management), and general information (including agency profiles, legislation, and risk assessment). Searching is simple with capabilities including direct links by cat-

egory via the index, by keyword, by report title, by CRS code number, and by author. Soon free-text searching of abstracts will be available.

Documents offered from this site cover a wide array of timely environmental topics and issues, from the Wireless Communication and Public Safety Act of 1999 and Federal Grazing Regulations to Stratospheric Ozone Depletion and Military Base Closures.

Access to this plethora of valuable information should prove quite useful for research and instruction, especially for students, educators, researchers, and consumers who are interested in such topics such as renewable energy, civilian nuclear waste disposal, methane hydrates, and immigration legislation and issues.

An appropriate disclaimer is provided to inform visitors of the usual material liabilities and warranties. Links are provided to make suggestions and ask questions via e-mail, and information is provided for contact via snail mail, as well as telephone and fax.—*Cynthia E. Saylor, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, saylor@nat.uncp.edu*

Black Collegian Online. Access: <http://www.black-collegian.com/>.

This vibrant Web version of the well-known college and career magazine for African American students has a lot to offer for all college students. Selected articles from recent monthly issues and archives back to 1997 are available to read and search online, and cover useful topics such as preparing for job interviews, using the Internet effectively in job searches, the details on building an appropriate business wardrobe, enhancing study skills, and much more.

For students of color, there is useful and sound advice on Afrocentric questions that

typically are not covered in other career magazines. For example, should you wear your hair braided to a corporate interview? What do African Americans have to gain from graduate school? and What organizations or scholarships exist that can help ensure success?

The job market is covered from many angles, including a searchable job bank, a résumé posting service, an index of advertisers, an Internet directory, and links to other Web sites with job listings and related career information aimed specifically at students of color.

A cultural section features brief essays on African American history, arts and entertainment features, including book and music reviews and profiles of successful African Americans in various careers and how they achieved their dreams. The entire site is well-organized, and the articles are written in a clear, non-sensational style.

From a librarian's point of view, the only drawback to the Web version of *Black Collegian* is that the articles lack citations, making it difficult for users to know the date a particular feature was published. Depending on the type of information being sought, this may or may not be important; however, all job postings are dated.

Academic libraries, as well as other libraries, organizations, and university offices serving pre-collegiate and college students will definitely want to bookmark and use this attractive and highly recommended site.—*S. A. Vega Garcia, Iowa State University, savega@iastate.edu*

Nearctica.com. Access: <http://www.nearctica.com/>.

This plain yet sturdy Web site covers a wide and wild range of subjects related to North American natural history. Nearctica serves equally well as an encyclopedia, textbook, almanac, and subject directory.

The Web site covers such a broad range of subject matter that any number of user groups might find it valuable, from education and policy majors to natural sciences majors to faculty and other teachers. The eclectic subject matter covers everything from vascular and nonvascular plants to contact information for raptor rehabilitation centers, from environmental law and legislation to native plant societies.

Other interesting data contained within this site include the full text of those chapters of the U.S. Code Title 16 that apply to conservation, links to international conservation agreements, and further links to topics as diverse as island biogeography and the work and writings of E. O. Wilson.

Also notable are numerous links to Web pages maintained by university faculty that include lecture notes and synopses of college courses ranging from conservation biology to evolution and other topics.



The site is clearly and simply organized and easy to navigate. As the site authors note, "Nearctica has a very strict hierarchical structure starting with the most general and ranging downward to the specific." The Table of Contents page consists two parts: A–Z topical links and a link to the site's search page.

While the Nearctica is easily searchable via the Excite search engine, users may want to note that there are no other links to this internal search engine on any of the site's other pages, either from the homepage or from any of the subject pages.

While many of the pages contain valuable links to further information, a large number of Web documents are available directly from the Nearctica Web server, and response time was highly satisfactory throughout the review.—*John Creech, Central Washington University, creechj@cwu.edu* ■

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