

In brief

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· Researchers have developed a rule of thumb to help stop **lion populations** declining at the hands of trophyhunters. They are urging hunters to kill only males with **dark noses** . A lion's nose is speckled with dark pigment, and these freckles become more pronounced with age, says Craig Packer of the University of Minnesota at Saint Paul, who led the study in *Nature*. Removing only old males whose noses are at least 50% dappled would give cubs a better chance of survival.

· The fumes from **stools** could help doctors diagnose diarrhoea in an hour. A new method uses the distinctive gases to identify the **infectious bugs** . Current detection techniques can take days. A report in the journal *Gut* says samples are placed in a sealed vial and heated gently. "Essentially, you've got a **fart in a tube** ," says Chris Probert, of the University of Bristol, who helped develop the test. The fumes are captured on a fibrous stick, which is fed into a machine for analysis.

· A simple scheme for **combating email spam** has been devised by two US researchers. The technique exploits the structure of **social networks** to determine whether a message is from a friend or a spammer. It works for only about half of all emails received, but in all those cases it sorts the mail correctly. P Oscar Boykin and Vwani Roychowdhury, of the University of California, Los Angeles, say on the arXiv.org e-print site that their method should prove **highly effective** when paired with more sophisticated, but cumbersome, filtering methods.

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