

THIS WEEK IN CHEMISTRY

9TH AUGUST - 15TH AUGUST 2015

DETERMINING WHEN FINGERPRINTS WERE LEFT AT CRIME SCENES

Researchers discovered the palmitic acid left behind in fingerprints migrates away from the print's ridges at a certain rate, allowing age of fingerprints to be determined. The findings currently apply to 4-day-old prints, though could be extended to 10-day-old prints.



YEAST SUCCESSFULLY MAKES PAINKILLERS FROM SUGAR

The first strain of yeast able to synthesise opioid compounds from sugar has been successfully engineered. The work is the culmination of ten years of research, and though yields are currently very low, work will continue to try and improve this.



GARLIC'S ANTIOXIDANT PROPERTIES CALLED INTO QUESTION

New research has shown that thiosulfinates in garlic don't act as antioxidants in cells, as was previously thought. Allicin, one of the main thiosulfinates in garlic, had been shown to be an effective antioxidant in organic solutions.



ANTS ARE ABLE TO DETECT SUBTLE CHEMICAL DIFFERENCES

A new study which tried to get ants to associate particular chemical compounds with sugar rewards found that the ants could detect small differences in numbers of carbon atoms in molecules, and also between enantiomers of particular pheromones.



WAX CAPSULES HELP PROTECT SENSITIVE REAGENTS

US scientists have developed wax capsules containing pre-weighed amounts of reagents. These capsules could help to protect air or moisture-sensitive reagents. A capsule can simply be dropped into a solvent when the reagent is required.



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