

EDITORIAL

Dear reader,

The ants on the front cover are an impressive example of what can be accomplished through collaboration: but just how did collaboration evolve in the first place? After all, living in a group always involves compromise at the expense of the individual.

To investigate the origins of communities, researchers simulate evolution in fast motion in the laboratory. Their research is focused on bacteria. When conditions are right, bacteria establish cell assemblies that can colonize new habitats and continue to develop independently. Does this represent the first step on the path to becoming a multicellular organism?

Baboons also benefit from living in groups; it helps them to forage for food and provides protection from enemies. But who actually calls the shots when deciding where to go? Surprisingly, recent findings show that it is not the alpha males who take the lead.

Humans are the undisputed champions of collaboration, yet coexistence in our society is constantly being put to the test. Civil courage is an important social glue. Scientists are striving to understand why some people have more civil courage than others and how willingness to stand up for others can be increased.

In their pursuit of new knowledge, researchers repeatedly transcend the boundaries of the known and make the unseen visible. Starting with this issue, we will be featuring a pair of images in each issue that will present a given research subject from two slightly different perspectives – encouraging you to do a double take! This image duo will reveal surprising connections or present the familiar in a new light.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and wish you happy browsing!

Your editorial team