Why Are Plants Green?

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Why are plants green? NASA scientists claim to have found the answer in the light from the sun, according to a report from Reuters, 11 April 2007. A group of scientists from NASA's Virtual Planetary Laboratory have been developing a computer model for predicting the colour of plants on other planets based on the light from their stars. To do this they studied how plants and bacteria on earth absorb and reflect the sun's light. The green colour in plants is from a pigment named chlorophyll, which absorbs light from the red end and blue end of the rainbow of colours that is found in sunlight, and reflects green light, which is in the middle of spectrum. We see the reflected light, so plants appear green.

The scientists found that blue light is easier to absorb, but there is more red light available. Therefore, according to Nancy Kiang, who led the study, plants "don't absorb the green because they have more than enough light from blue and red. They just don't need green." Kiang went on to comment: "It turns out plants are actually using the best light there is." The NASA team claim they have "uncovered maybe the best explanation of why plants are green."

Editorial Comment: The NASA scientists have not explained why plants are green; they have simply observed a system that works. The fact that there is plenty of blue and red light available as an energy source does not explain how the highly complex and precisely shaped molecules that capture the light came into being. The most rational explanation for any system that works well is that a rational mind outside the system designed each component to work with the others. The God who made light on the first creation day designed and made the plants to use "best light there is". (Ref. photosynthesis, photonics, colour)

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