

# CHOICE

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## CURRENT REVIEWS FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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**CSA Illustrata: Natural Sciences.** ProQuest. Internet Resource.

**Outstanding Title!** Reviewed in 2007aug CHOICE.

<http://www.csa.com/>

[Visited May'07] *CSA Illustrata: Natural Sciences* offers content that is multidisciplinary in nature, covering the biological and environmental sciences, agriculture, medicine and veterinary science, geography and meteorology, pharmacy and pharmacology, and public health and safety. *Illustrata's* unique content are its graphical objects such as tables, figures, graphs, and charts from peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conferences, and other periodical literature. Indexed content covers 1997 to the present, with most of the objects available from post-2000 literature. Updated monthly, *Illustrata* has the same easy-to-use interface as other CSA databases. Search options include Quick and Advanced searches.

The ability to search by tables and figures could help users to identify the focus of a particular article quickly. In a recent study of this database <http://info.csa.com/csaiillustrata/whitepaper/execsummary.pdf>, Carol Tenopir and Robert Sandusky concluded that these objects are most helpful within the context of other information about the article, such as an abstract. For example, by searching only for Tables and Figures, the user can determine the relationship between the carbon cycle and climate change by previewing figures from more than one publication. While the search for Tables and Figures is a good starting point, it does not adequately replace a search by Published Works to ascertain the full scope of a particular topic. Figures are also helpful tools when making presentations and providing instruction; for these purposes CSA serves as a more reliable search engine than *Google Scholar* (CH, Jul'07, 44-5957). The interface also offers more sophisticated tools, such as Alerts, History, Command Search, Thesaurus, and Indexes. Its strengths include a hierarchy of search categories, e.g., options to search by Published Works or Tables and Figures, and to locate search results by All Publication Types, Journals, or Peer-Reviewed Journals. Search results are clearly displayed and include a feature called Object Descriptors that allows users to find related objects by keyword. The interface offers the options to mark, save, and e-mail records. Overall, this database offers academic libraries unique content and an easily navigable search interface.

**Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Lower-level undergraduates through faculty/researchers.

– M. Burreight, *University of Maryland Libraries*