



AMERICAN
SOCIETY FOR
MICROBIOLOGY

Journal of
Bacteriology®

CONTENTS • JANUARY 2017 • VOLUME 199, NO. 2

COVER IMAGE



Cover photograph: Microbial mats growing within a thermal stream flowing from Octopus Spring in Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. Each round white structure is a developing stromatolite, formed through the interaction of thermophilic bacteria and archaea with the physical environment. The outer regions of the stromatolites contain layers of living multispecies biofilms, including photosynthetic cyanobacteria. Meanwhile, the inner regions slowly turn to stone within the mineral-rich water. Bright orange and yellow pigments are produced by some of these thermophilic species and protect cells from UV radiation. (Photo courtesy of Scott Chimileski, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA.) (Copyright © 2016 American Society for Microbiology. All Rights Reserved.)

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