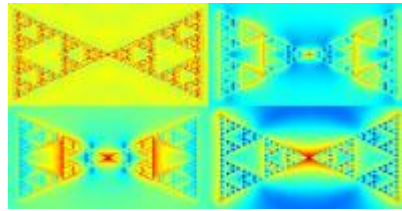


Researchers create novel fractal nano-antennas

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An international team of plasmonics researchers has developed a novel type of nano-antenna that could one day lead to advances in security applications for the detection of drugs and explosives.

A report of the finding, authored by Swinburne University's Professor Saulius Juodkazis and Dr Lorenzo Rosa with a collaborator from China, has been published in the scientific journal *Physica Status Solidi: Rapid Research Letters*.

Nano-antennas work in much the same way as regular antennas, except they collect light instead of radio waves and are millions of times smaller.

The reason that Professor Juodkazis' nano-antennas are so unique is that they are **fractal** – that is they consist of repeating patterns, with the shape of the smallest feature replicated to make identical, yet larger structures.

"Self-replication is an interesting design that is often found in nature. For example, you will see it on some sea shells," he said.

This **fractal** approach means that the researchers' nano-antennas can be scaled down to a very small size, or scaled up to be the width of a human hair – which in nanophotonics terms is extremely large.

"Once we have the smallest bit fabricated there are no restraints, we can just replicate it and make it larger," Professor Juodkazis said. "This is something that has been very difficult to achieve up until now. If scientists wanted a larger structure, they would just have to fabricate one."

"In a sense we have been able to create a customisable nano-antenna that can be used for different applications, making it a very cost effective structure."

This new type of nano-antenna has many potential applications, such as the development of new types of drug and explosives detection kits.

"The different chemicals found in drugs and explosives are detectable at very specific wavelengths. Nano-antennas are able to recognize these, and in turn identify specific types of drugs and explosives," Professor Juodkazis said.

While he is pleased with the developments to date, he expects he will be able to extend his nano-antenna research even further when Swinburne's new plasmonics lab is completed in late 2011.

The lab, which will be housed in the university's recently completed \$130 million Advanced Technologies Centre, will include both Electron Beam and Ion Beam lithography setups. It will be the only facility in the world that has both of these sophisticated pieces of equipment with the same sample handling hardware and software. These complementary functions will enable the three-dimensional structuring of materials.

Details of the journal article can be viewed on the [Swinburne Research Bank](#).

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Media Contact

Crystal Ladiges

cladiges@swin.edu.au

Department: Media and Communications Unit

Phone: +61 3 9214 5064

Mobile Phone: 0416 174 880

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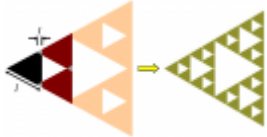


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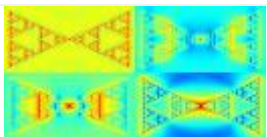


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