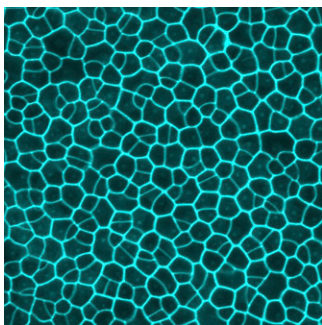


T H E  
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**ON THE COVER**



Stomata are formed through a series of differentiation events mediated by a trio of basic-helix-loop-helix (bHLH) proteins: SPEECHLESS (SPCH), MUTE, and FAMA. Through characterization of a dominant mutant, *scream-D* (*scrm-D*), which produces an epidermis consisting entirely of stomata, Kanaoka et al. (pages 1775–1785) identified two paralogous *Arabidopsis* bHLH proteins, SCRM and SCRM2, that partner with SPCH, MUTE, and FAMA to drive initiation, proliferation, and terminal differentiation of stomata. The cover shows the rosette leaf epidermis of a *mute scrm-D* double mutant, which is composed of triangular stomatal precursor cells called meristemoids and their sister cells. Surprisingly, SCRM is ICE1, a key upstream regulator of cold-induced gene expression, therefore suggesting a link between the transcriptional regulation of environmental adaptation and development.

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