# An overview of bioinformatics databases and online resources: what they are and how to access them

Mark Stenglein



Computational Biology and Genomics Workshop

Todos Santos Center April 9-13, 2018

# There are an overwhelming number of databases and other online resources, which often have overlapping content and purpose

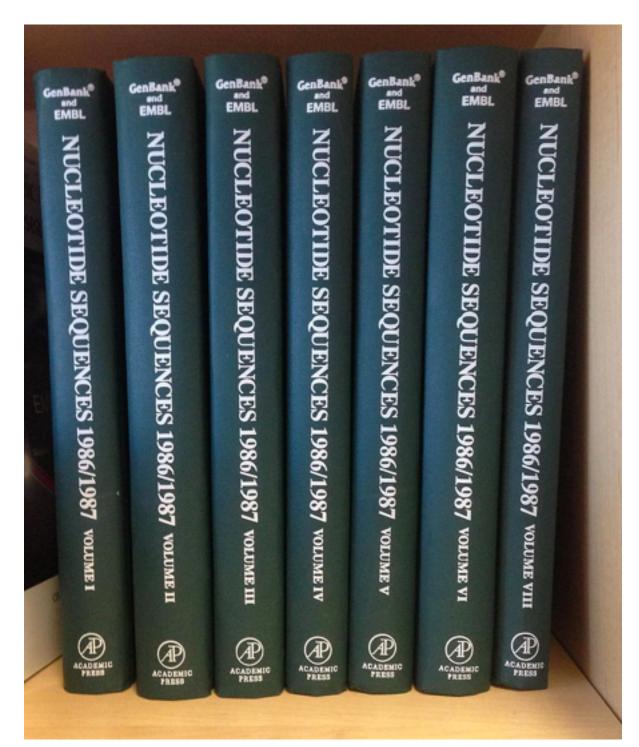
The annual Database and Web Server NAR issue is a good resource



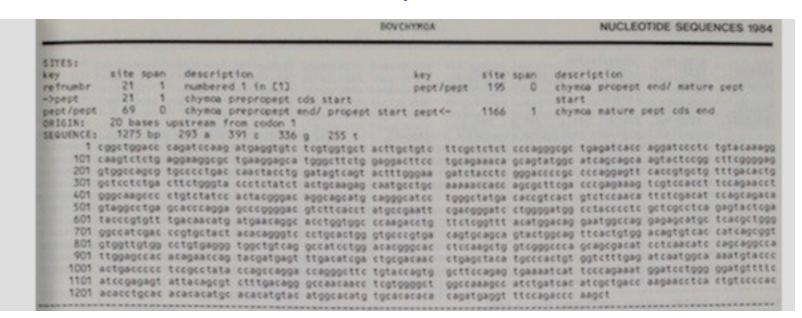


#### GenBank was one of the earliest sequence databases.

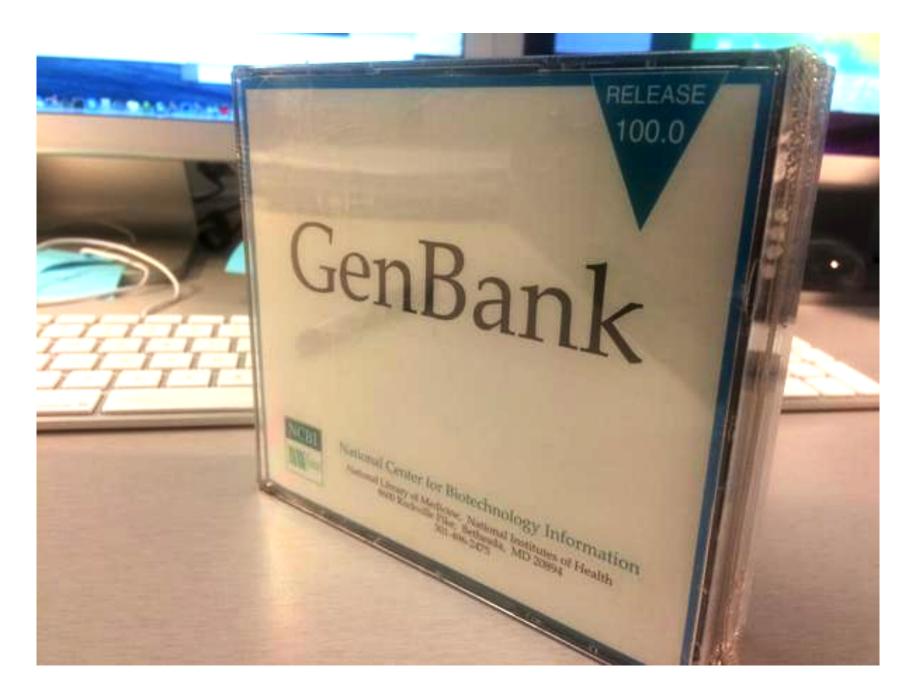
#### GenBank circa 1987



~10,000 sequences



# GenBank release 100 (1997) distributed by CDROM



~1,300,000 sequences

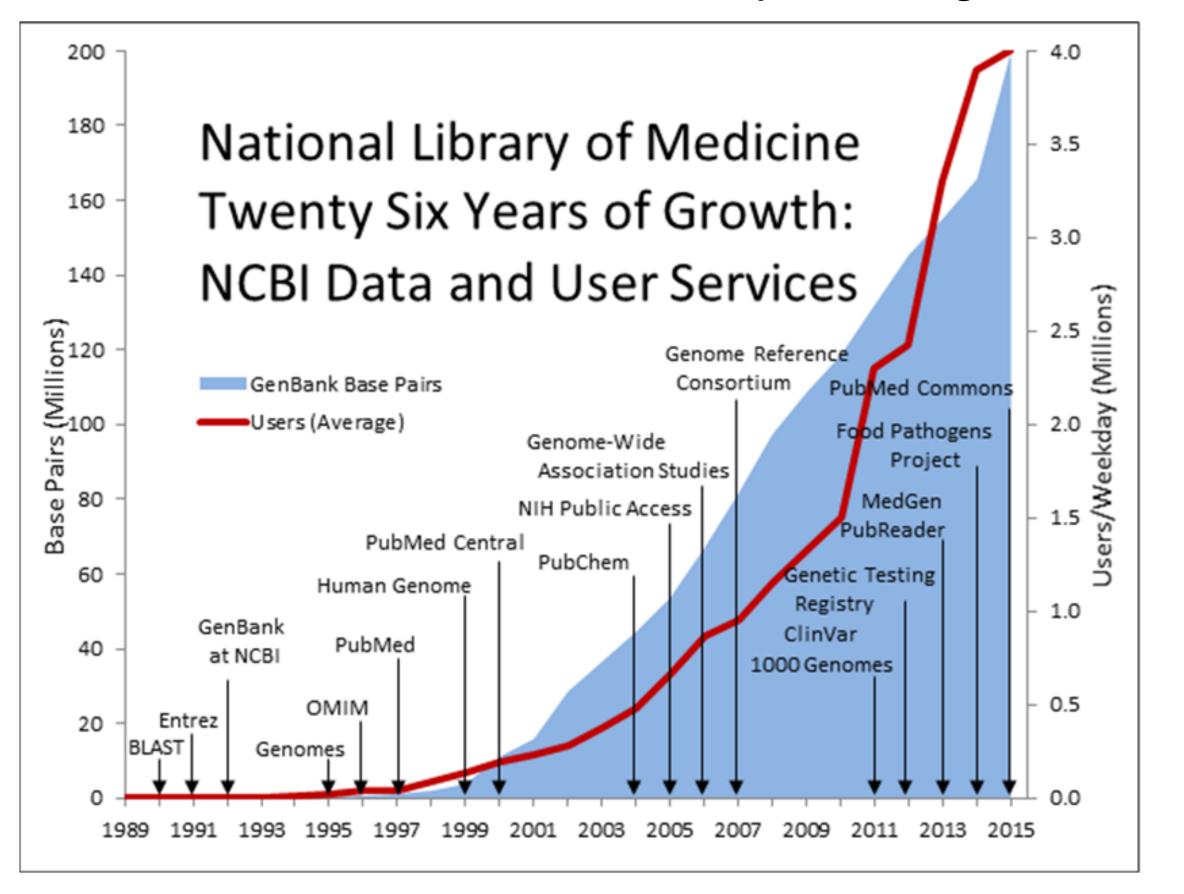
#### Genbank today



>200,000,000 sequences

#### Today, we'll focus mainly on NCBI databases and resources, and how to access them

The NCBI was created in 1987 by the US government



#### Categories of NCBI databases

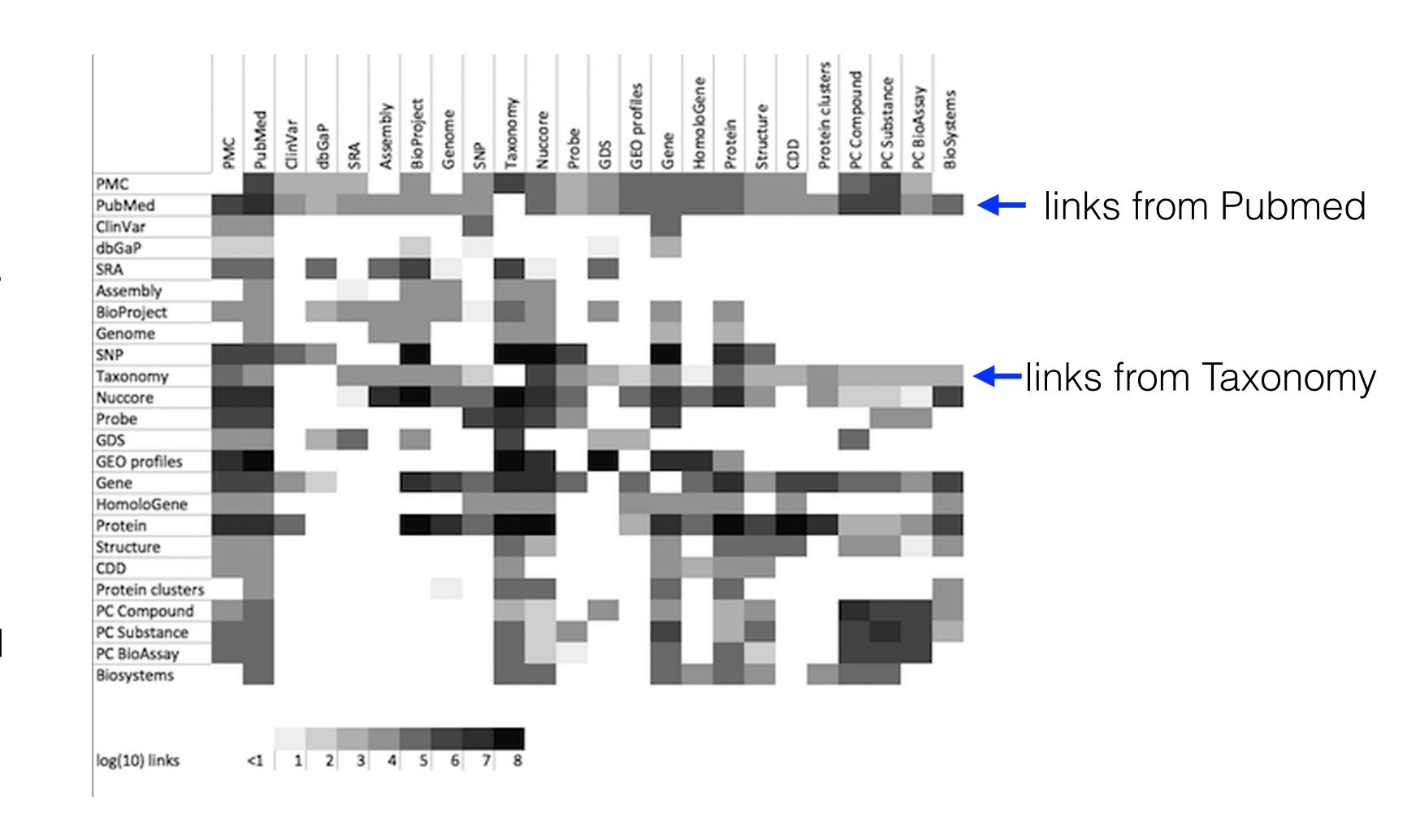
Category	Example NCBI db	Content
Literature	PubMed	Scientific and medical abstracts/ citations
Genomes	Assembly	Genome assembly information
Genes	Gene	Collected information about gene loci
Proteins	Protein	Protein sequences
Chemicals	PubChem Compound	Chemical information with structures, information and links
Health	dbGaP	Genotype/phenotype interaction studies

image: NIH/NLM

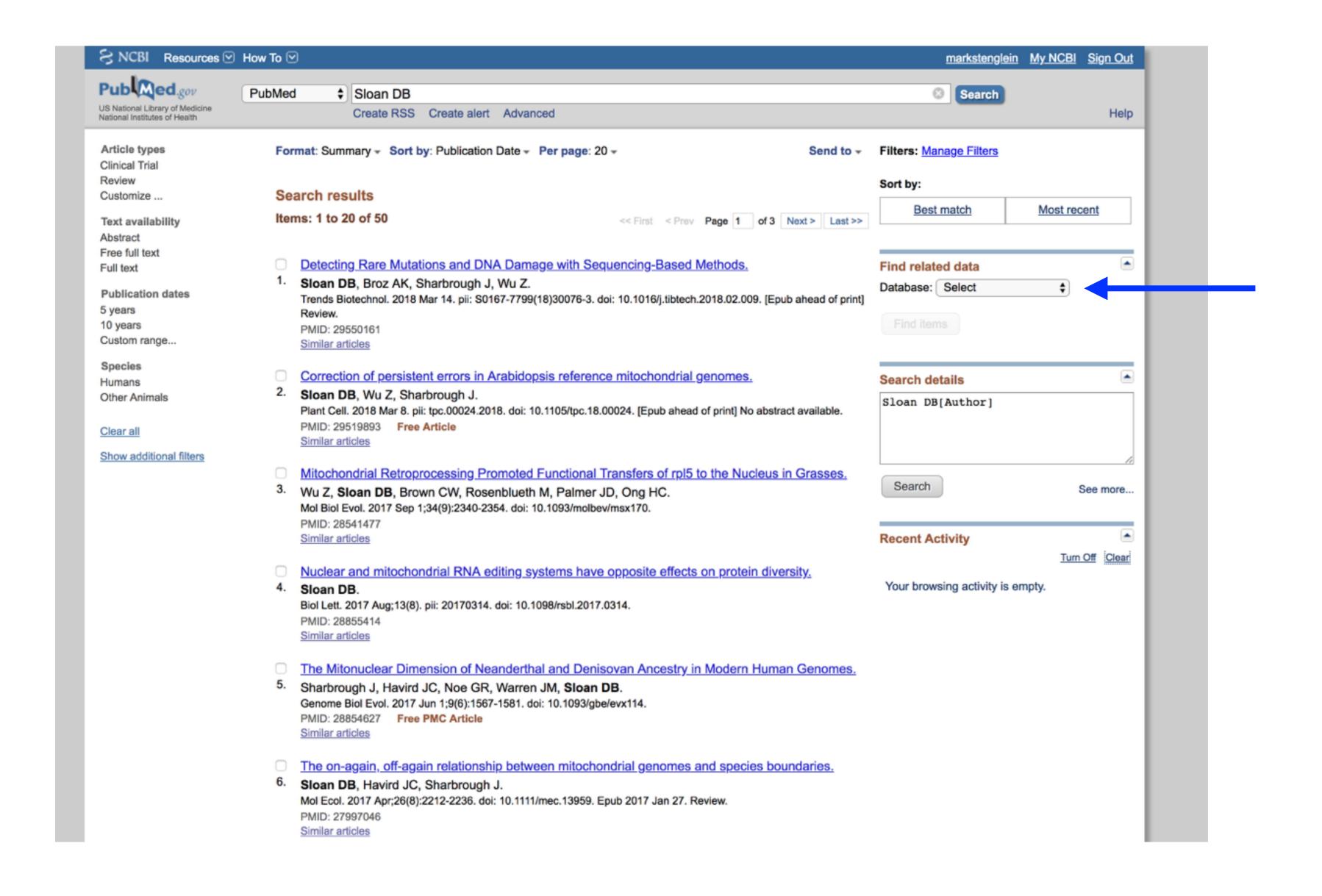
#### One really useful feature of NCBI databases is that they link to each other

#### So, you can, for example:

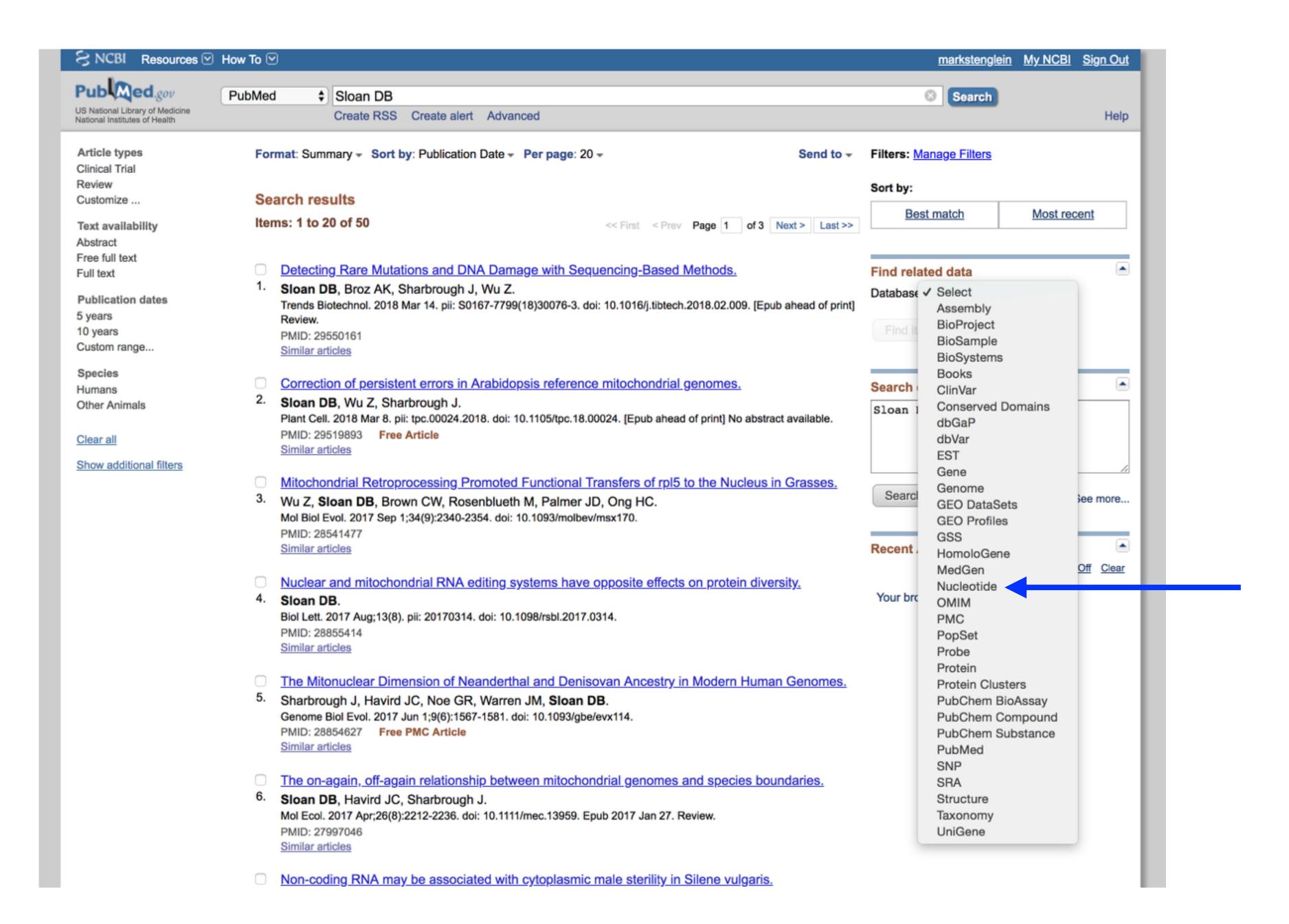
- get all the nucleotide sequences associated with a taxon of interested
- get all the protein sequences predicted to be encoded by a genome
- get the SRA datasets associated with a particular paper in Pubmed

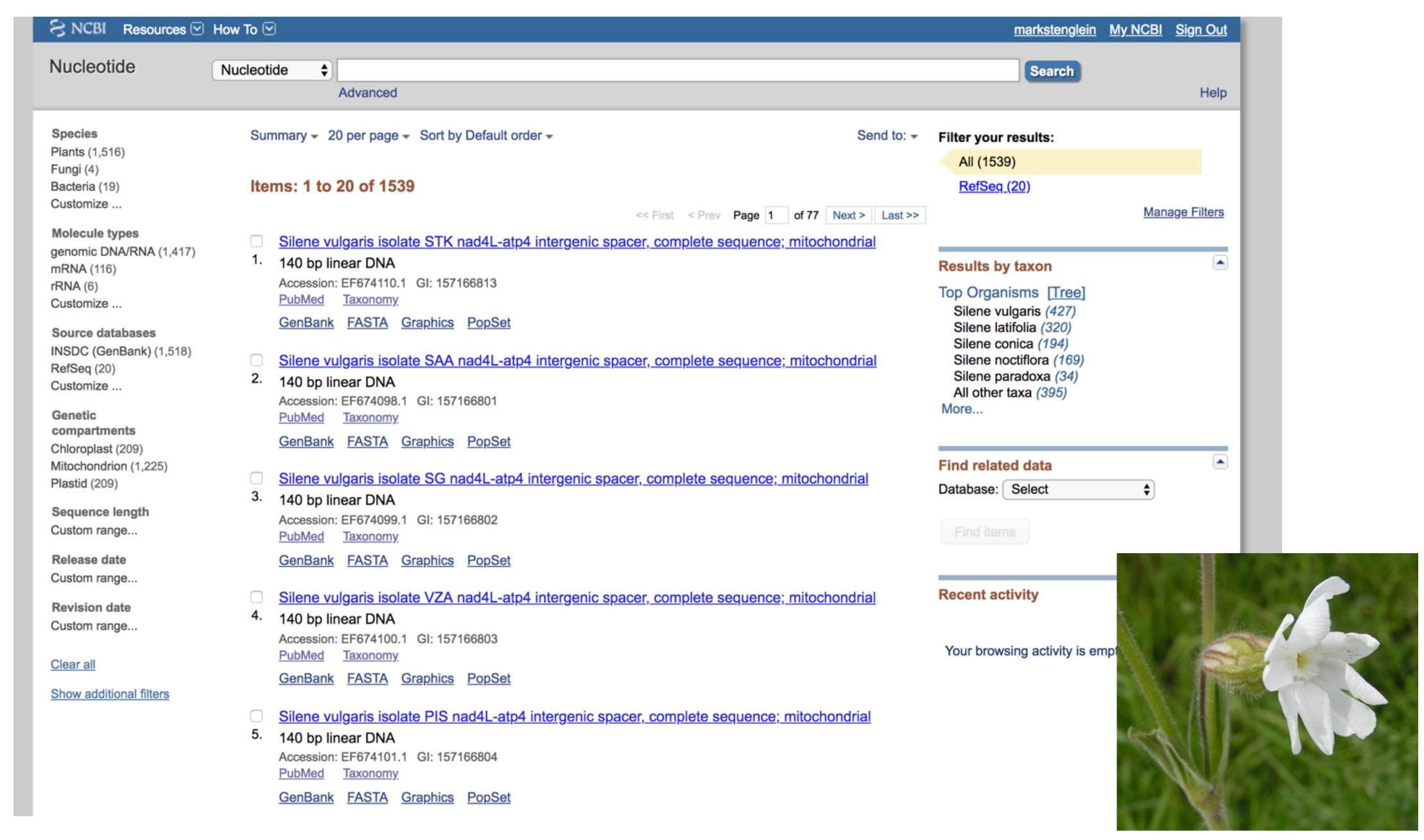


#### Get nucleotide sequences associated with Dan's papers

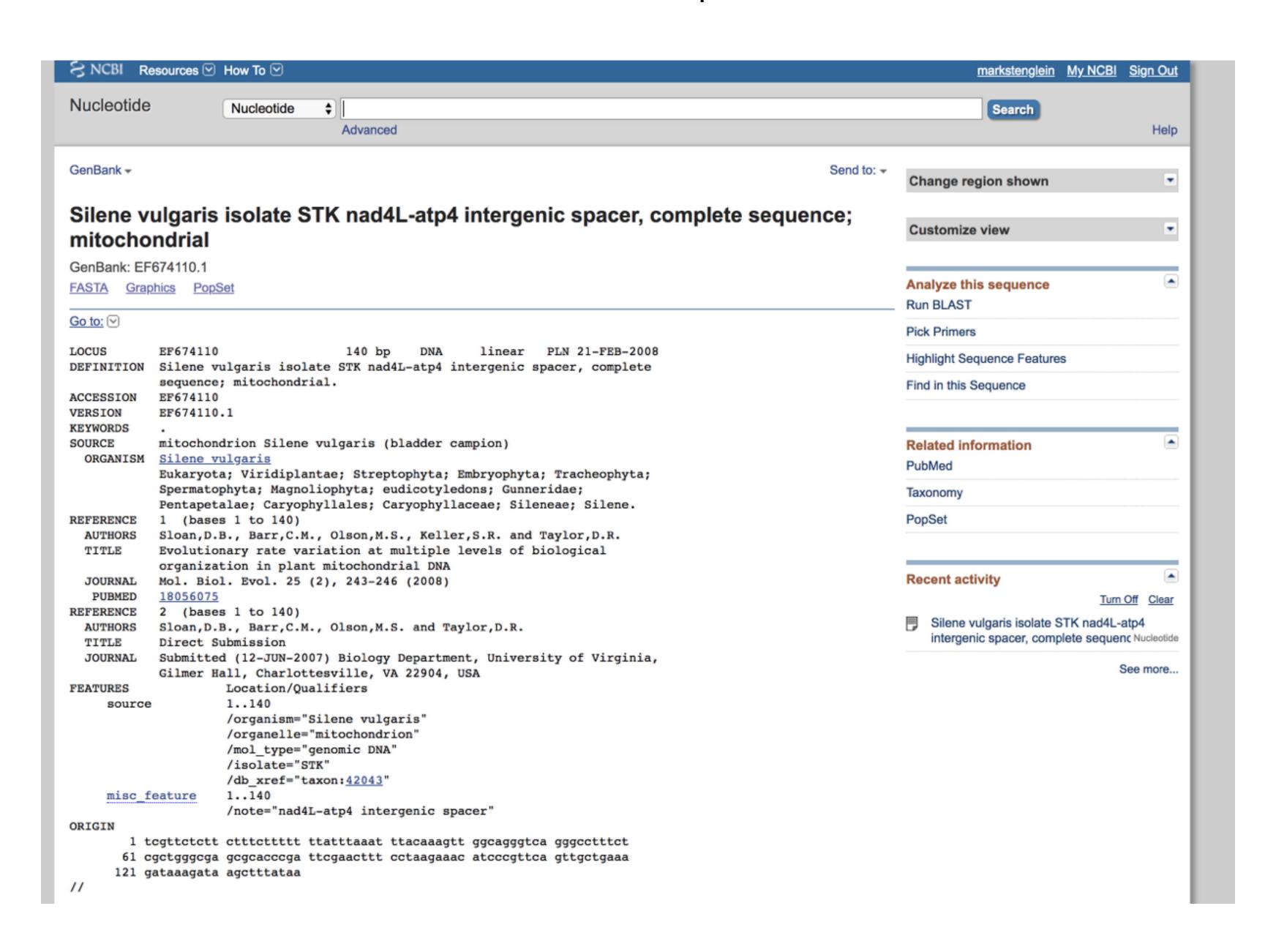


#### Get nucleotide sequences associated with Dan's publications

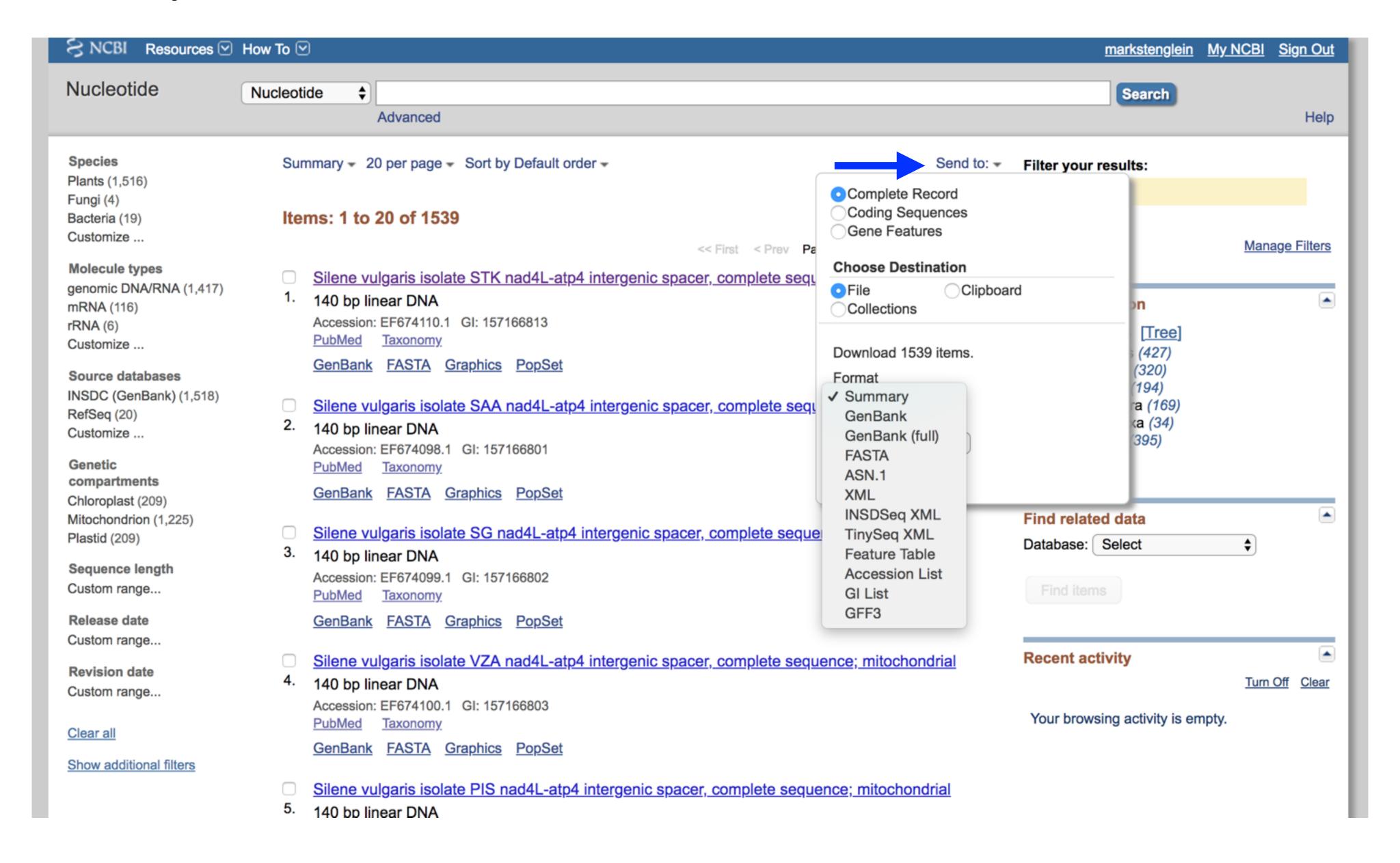




#### You could click on these sequences one at a time



#### Or you can download them all at once, in various formats

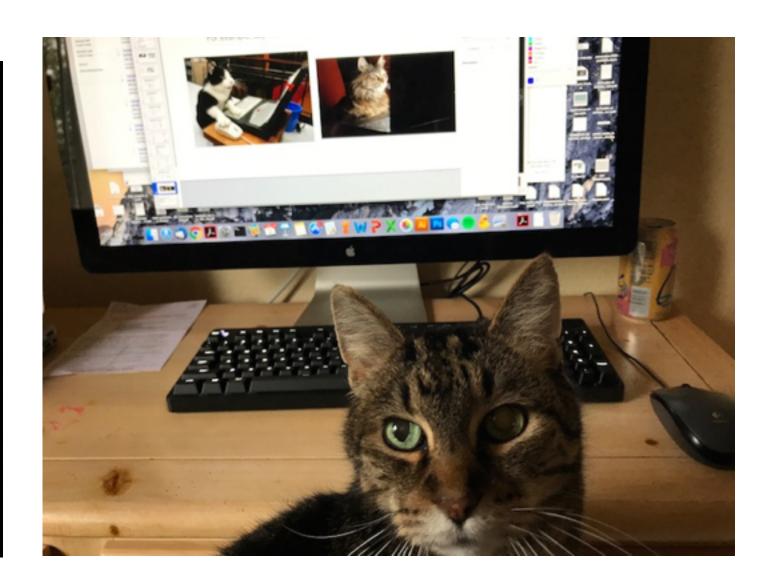


# There are often many paths to the same data

#### For example, say we want to download the cat (Felis catus) genome

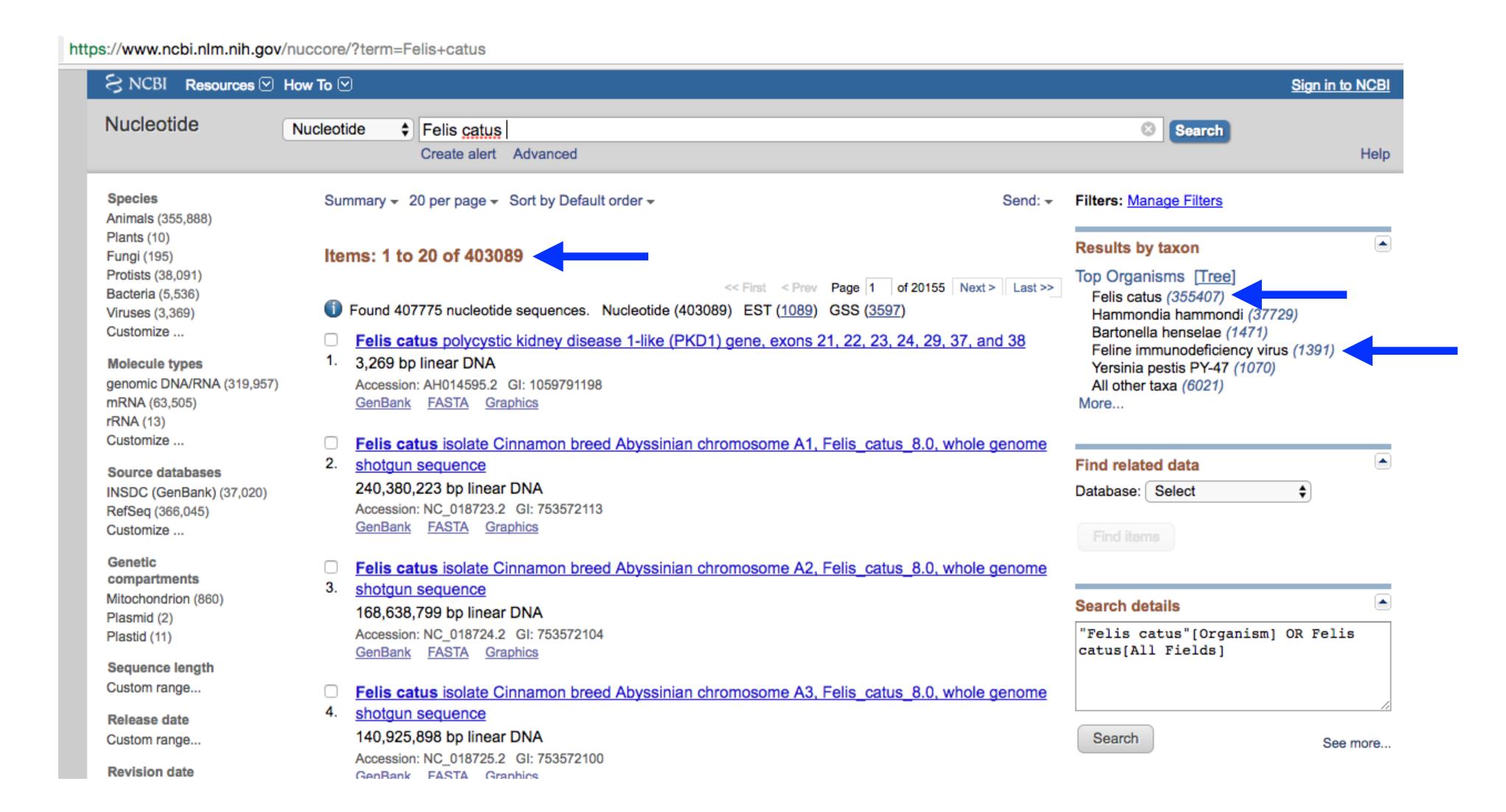




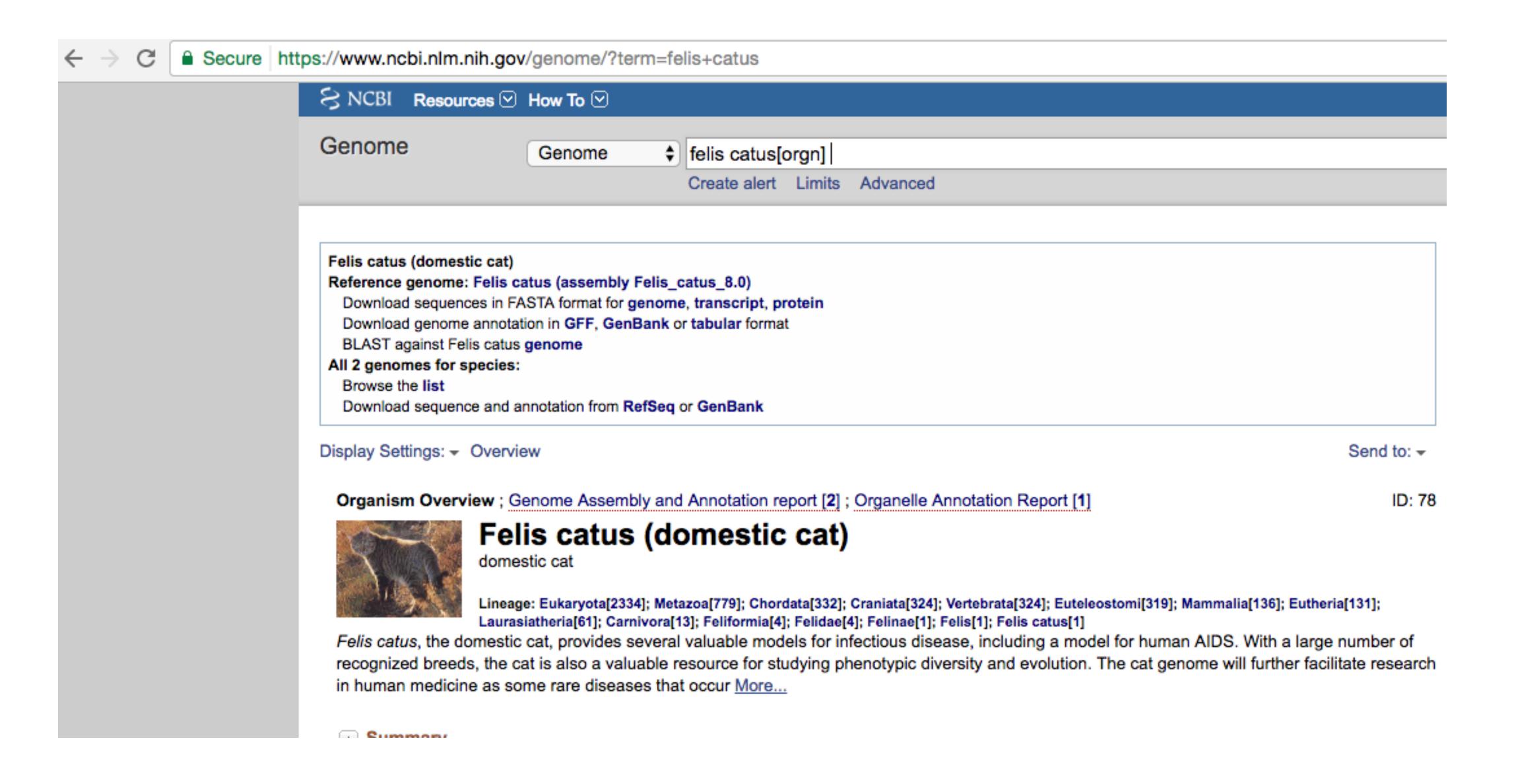


Kirby, 17 year old male cat

#### You could try to get the cat genome from the NCBI nucleotide db



#### One good way to get the cat genome is via the Genome database



#### There are actually 2 cat genome assemblies in NCBI

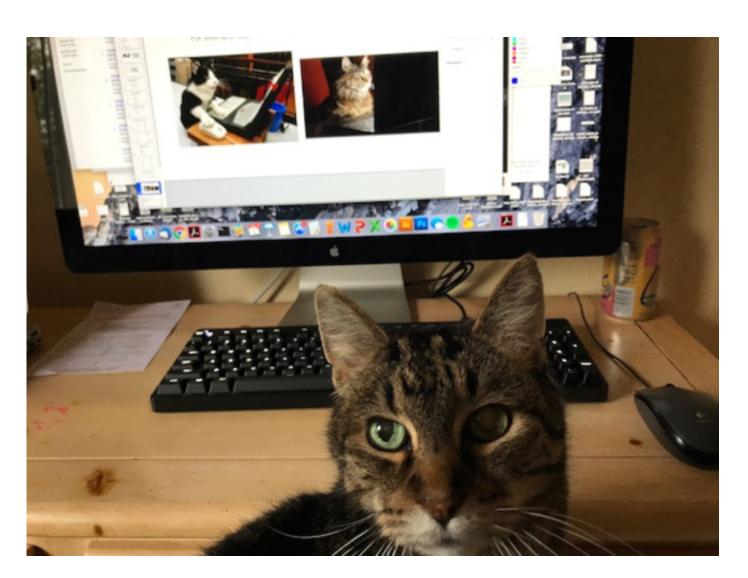


# In reality, there are as many cat genomes as their are cats

#### Or maybe 2x as many...

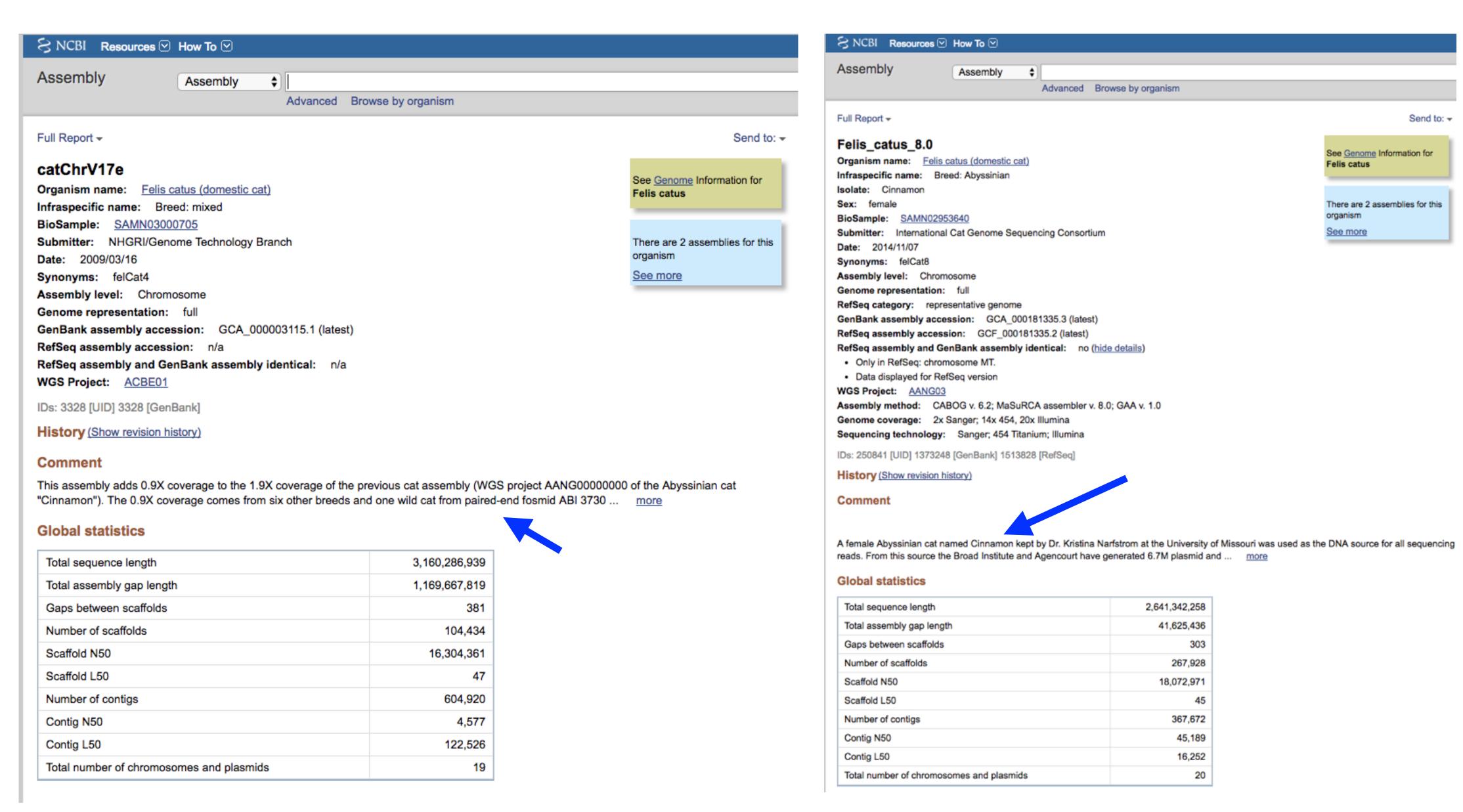




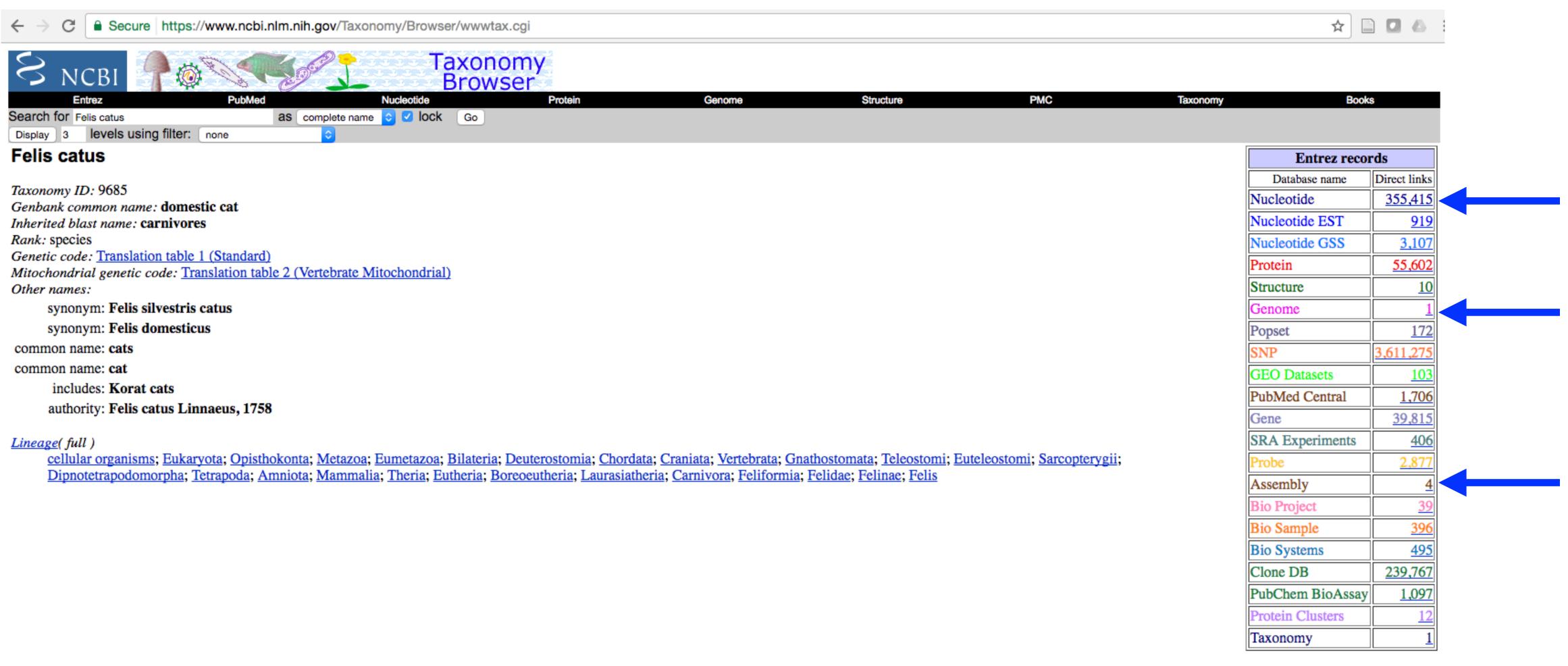


Kirby, 17 year old male cat

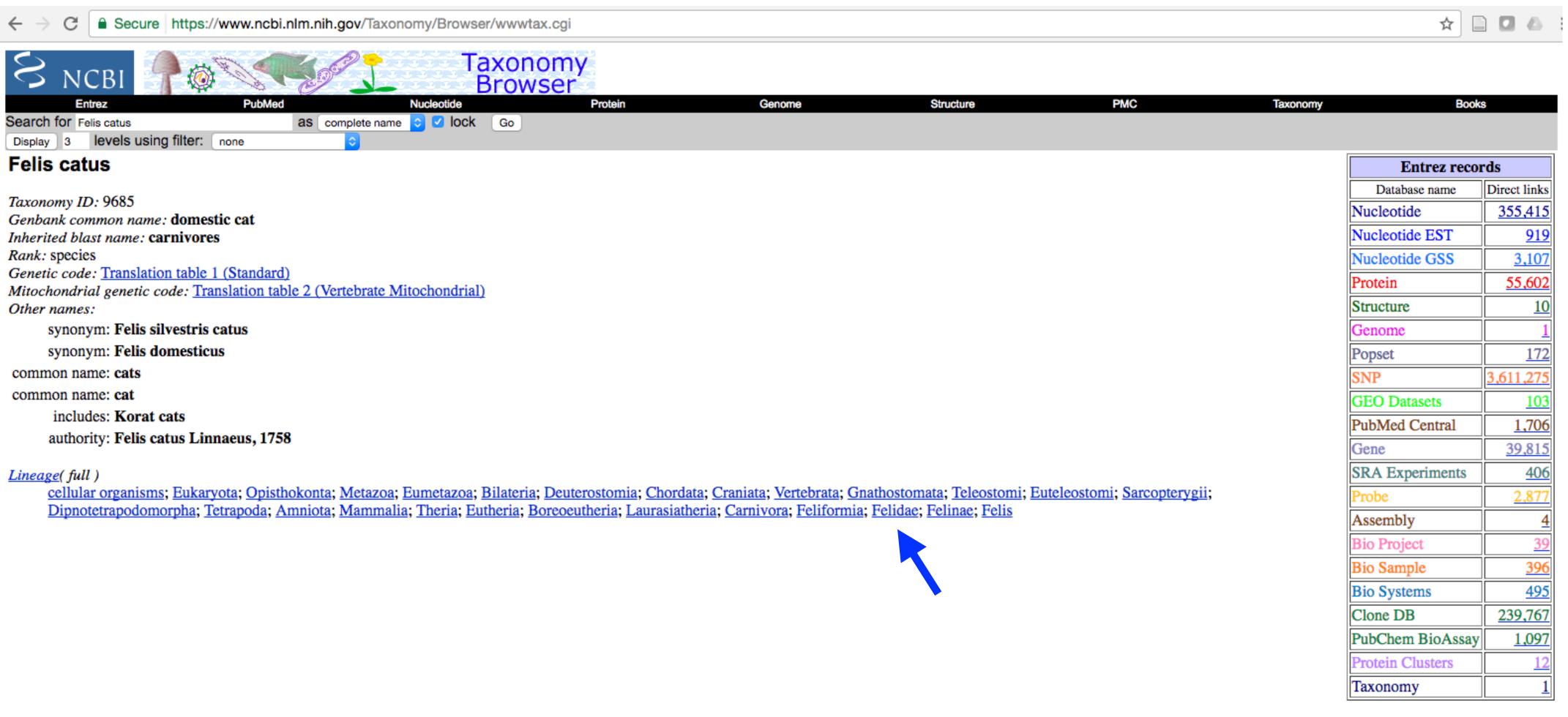
# There are 2 cat genome assemblies in NCBI



#### You could also get at the cat genome via the Taxonomy database



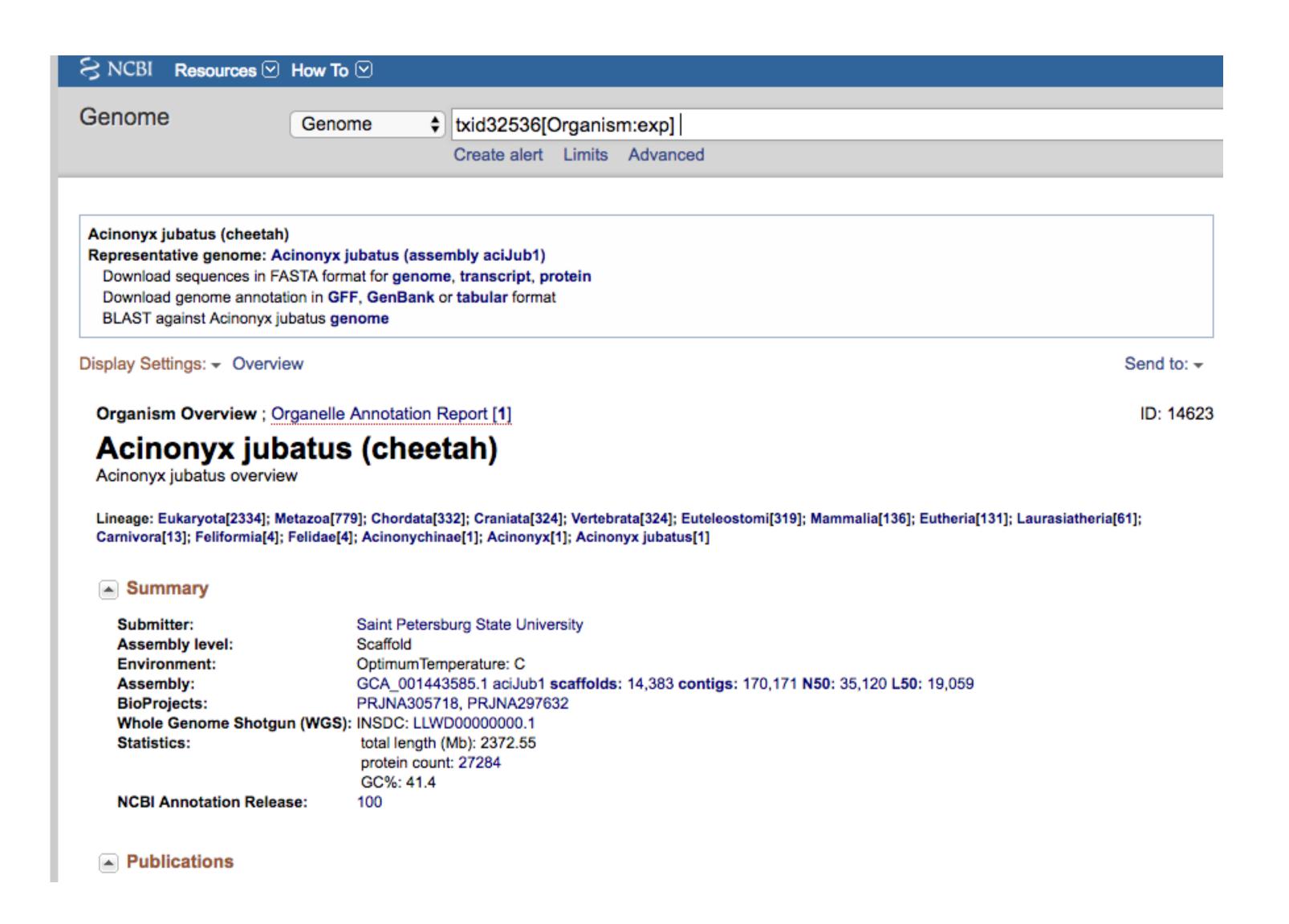
## You can go up the taxonomic tree in the Taxonomy db



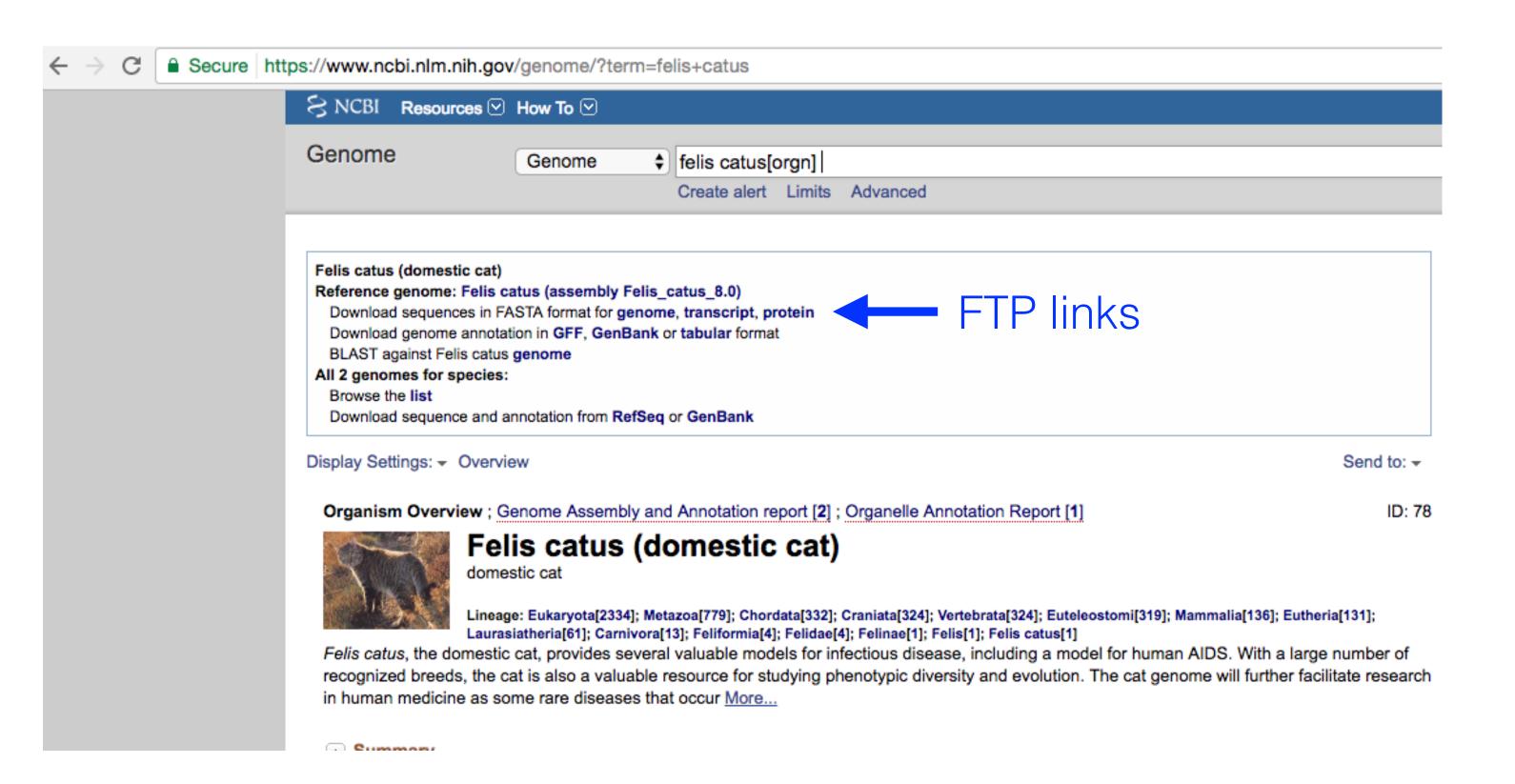
#### You can go up the taxonomic tree in the Taxonomy db

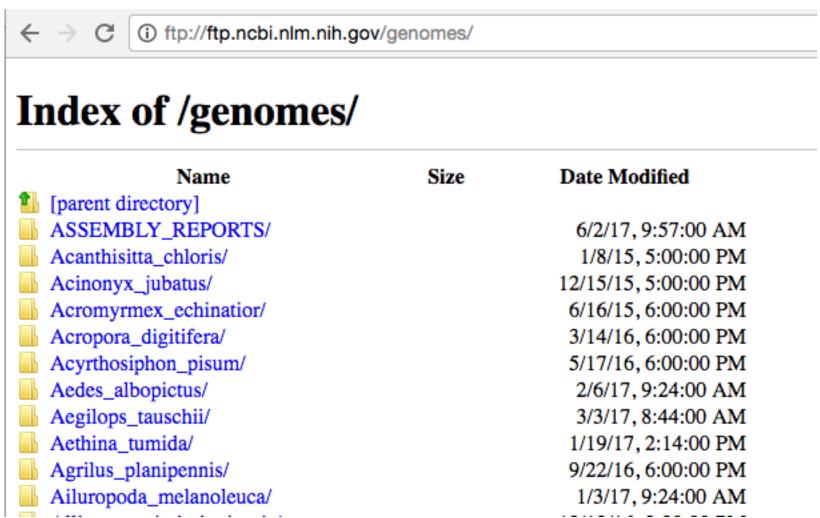


#### You can go up the taxonomic tree in the Taxonomy db



#### You need not rely on your browser to download data

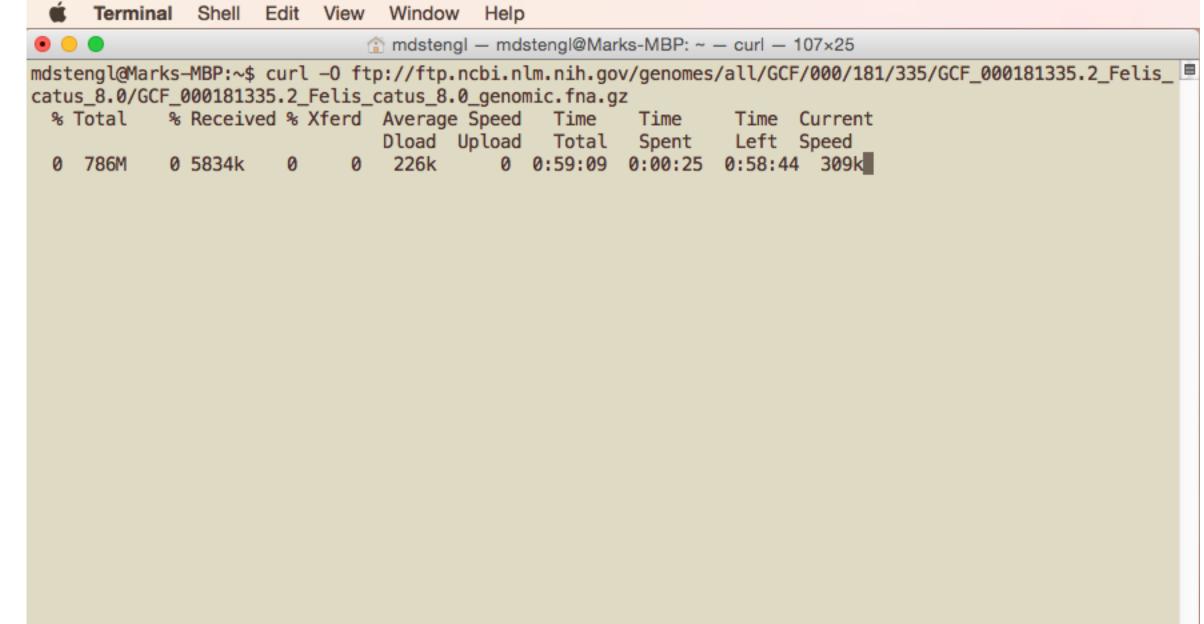




#### You can download data from the command line

This is often useful when you're working on a server.



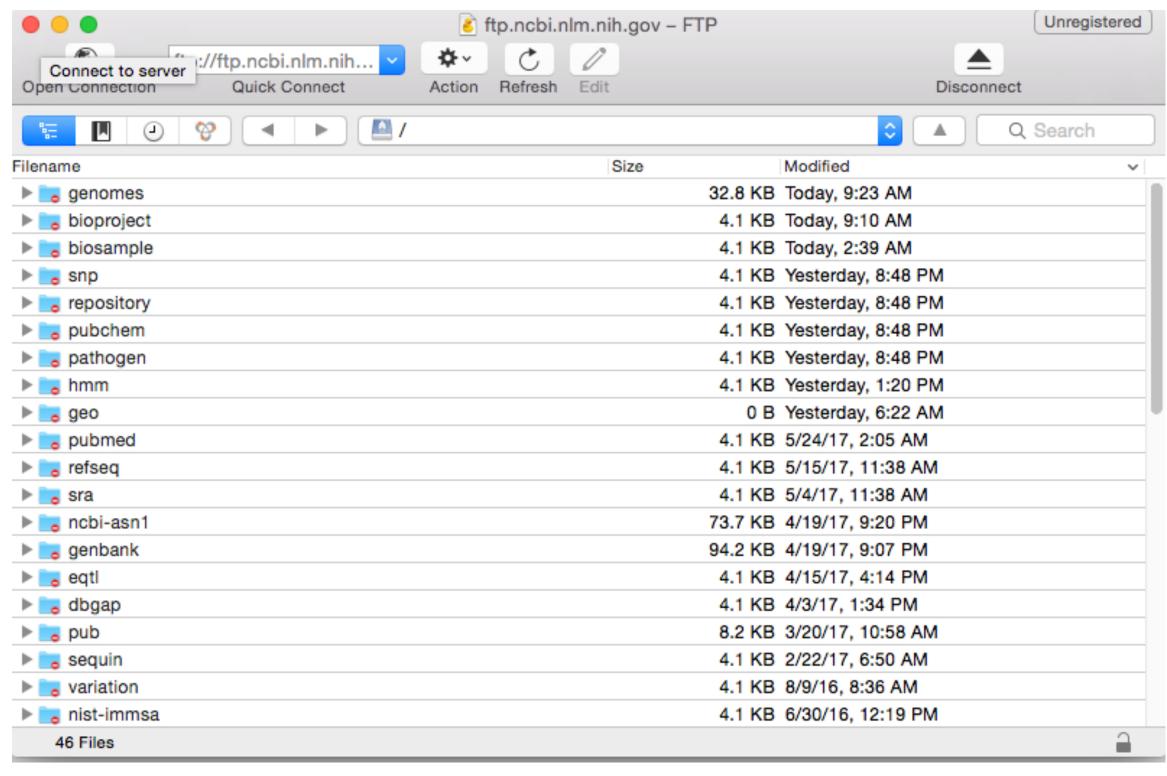


**curl** is a file transfer utility built into Linux, MacOS similar utilities exist for Windows

#### GUI-based software for file transfer

#### Cyberduck

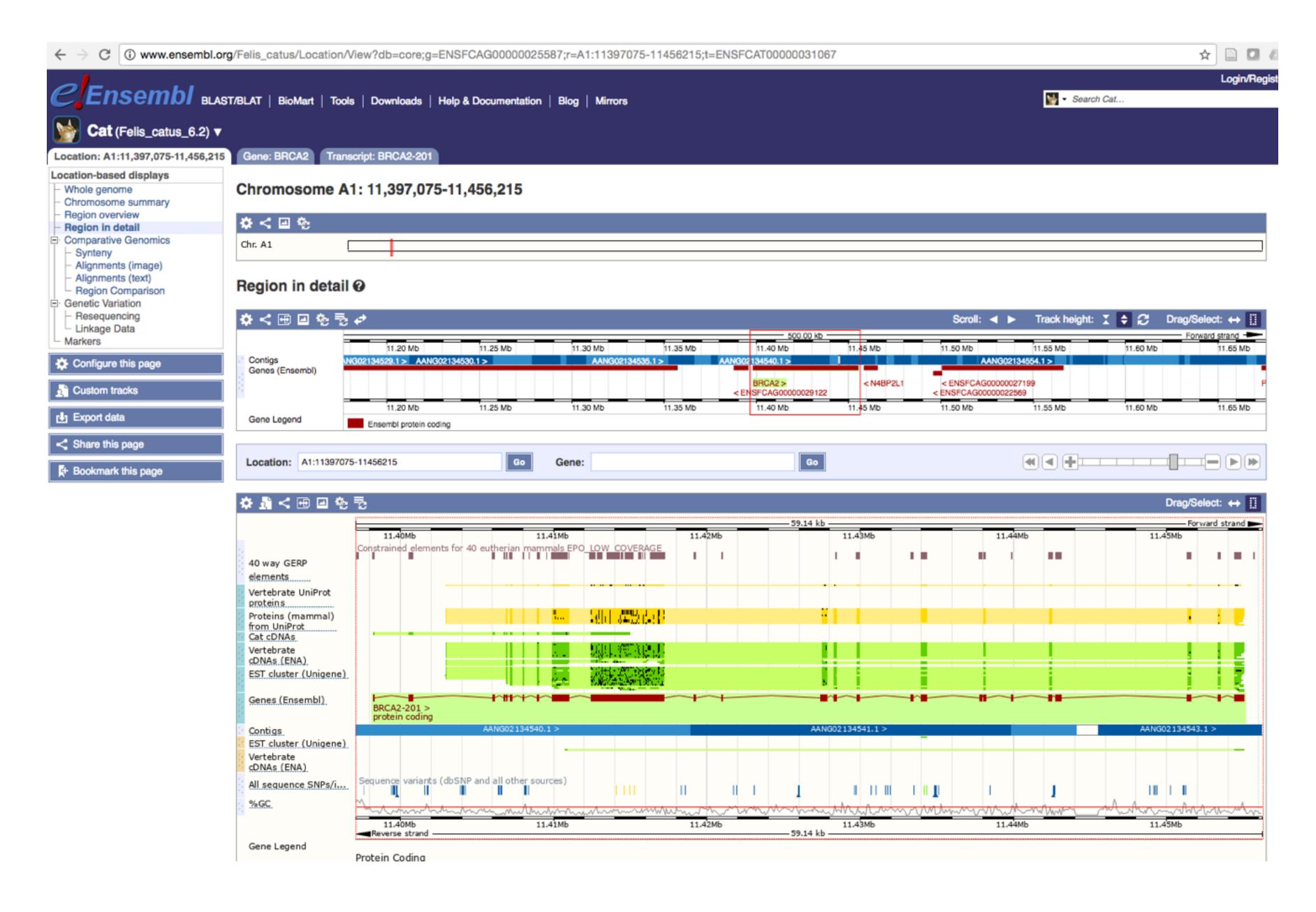




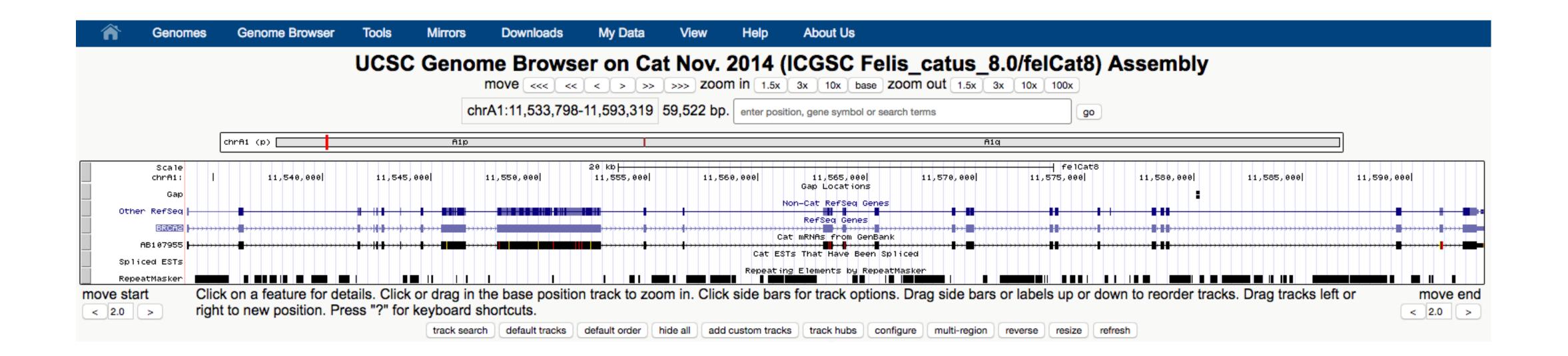
ftp://ftp.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/



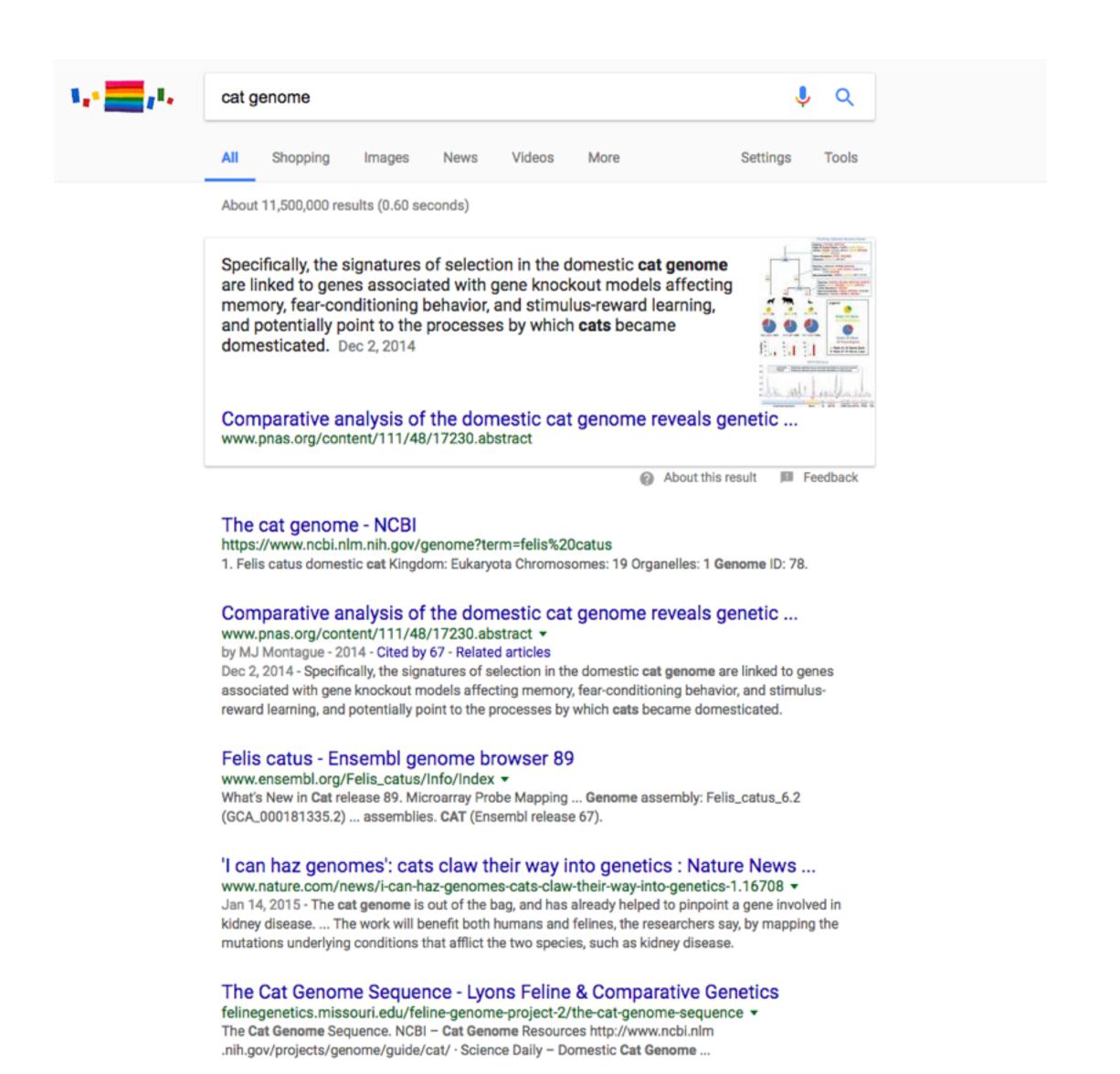
#### Genome browsers, like Ensembl and UCSC, offer additional functionality



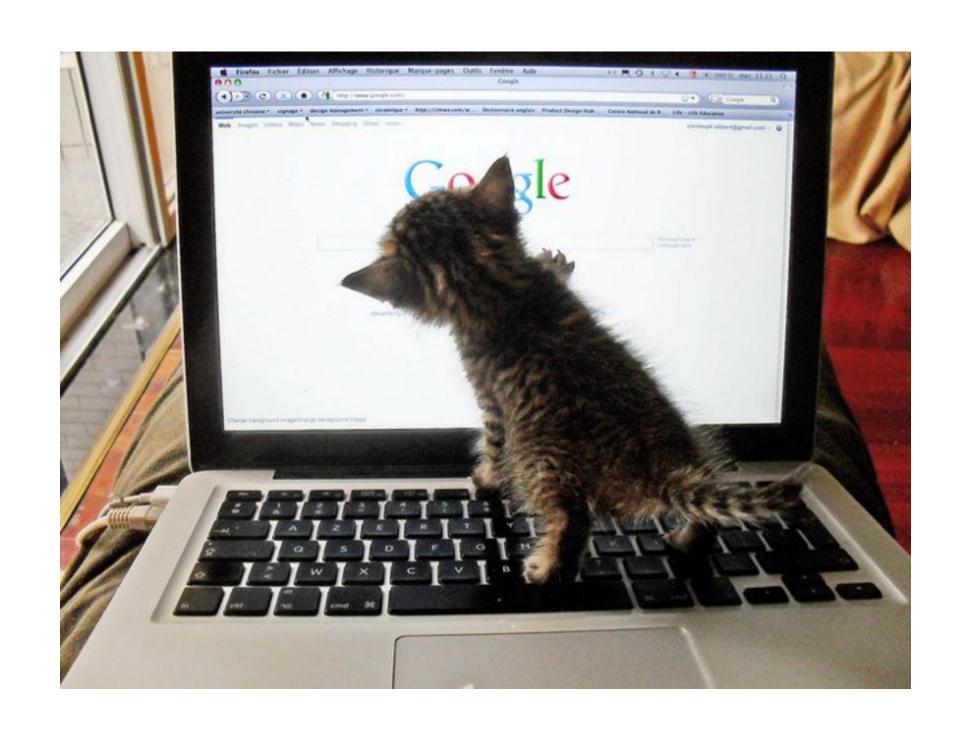
#### Genome browsers, like Ensembl and UCSC, offer additional functionality

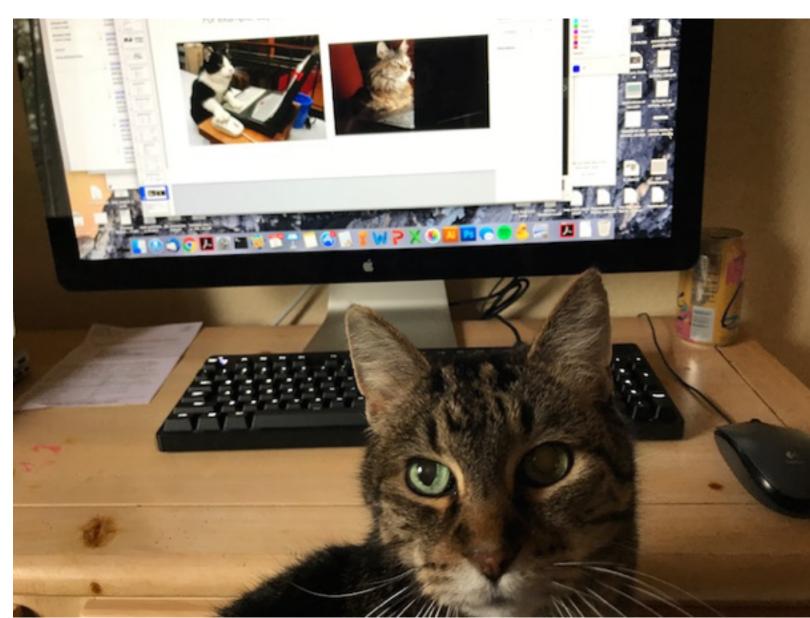


## Finally, there's absolutely nothing wrong with using Google



# Questions?







Kirby in 2000, wondering where his GenBank CDROMs are