

The Higgs Boson



For nearly half a century, physicists had searched for the Higgs boson, a hypothetical elementary particle purported to be an integral component of the material world. It was the only Standard Model of particle physics never to have been observed, and its existence was postulated to resolve inconsistencies in Electroweak Gauge Symmetry as well as certain Scrabble words. To confirm its existence, physicists had conducted thousands of complex experiments at research laboratories such as CERN in Switzerland and Fermilab in Illinois, but to no avail. So imagine their surprise – and, yes, chagrin – when Orestes P. Dinklaker of Flotsam, Nebraska announced that, no big deal, he had a Higgs boson in his backyard chained to a tree “cuz,” he drawled, “it’s a danged squirrely little subatomic particle.”