

British memory retention study is detailed

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British scientists say they've found that the ability to remember the details of a natural scene is unaffected by the distraction of another activity.

The Oxford Brookes University researchers say such information is retained in "working memory," reinforcing the notion that humans maintain useful information about previous fixations in long-term working memory rather than the limited capacity of visual short-term memory, or VSTM.

Memory has traditionally been divided into VSTM and long-term memory. VSTM usually involves the retention of about four objects at a time, followed either information loss or the transfer of information into long-term memory.

The researchers say the study -- conducted by Professor David Melcher in Oxford, England -- provides evidence that an intermediary "working memory" better describes the nature of information retained while engaged in a particular task.

The study was recently published in the online, free access Journal of Vision.

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