



Week ending Friday, April 9, 2021

Eagles Soar

America's iconic bald eagles have recovered from the brink of extinction brought on by the once-widespread use of the pesticide DDT half a century ago. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says the national symbol now numbers nearly 317,000 individual birds with an estimated 74,400 nesting pairs. Only about 417 pairs had survived by 1963 because of the eggshell-thinning phenomenon caused by the now-banned DDT.

Martha Williams, deputy director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, called the recovery "one of the most well-known conservation success stories of all time." She says she hopes all Americans get the chance to see at least one majestic bald eagle in flight.

Earthquakes

Los Angeles was jolted by a moderate earthquake that awakened residents well before dawn.

- Earth movements were also felt in Indonesia's Banda Sea, the far southern Philippines and the Bhutan-India-Nepal border region.

Food and Climate

While the volume of food produced by farms around the world has increased significantly over the past 60 years, new research finds that agricultural productivity has actually fallen by 21 percent due to Earth's warming climate since the 1960s. Writing in the journal *Nature Climate Change*

researchers say climate change has "basically wiped out about seven years of improvements" during the period. "It is equivalent to pressing the pause button on productivity growth back in 2013 and experiencing no improvements since then," lead author Ariel Ortiz-Bobea said. The study points to the danger global heating poses in feeding the planet's growing population.

Breakout Lava

Two new fissures began spewing lava and steam near where Iceland's Mount Fagradalsfjall awakened with dramatic lava flows in late March.

Hikers and other visitors who had come to the country's latest tourist attraction were ordered to evacuate. But Iceland's disaster agency said the new cracks are not a serious threat and are not expected to affect traffic at the nearby Keflavík International Airport. Scientists say new fissures could mean the eruption is moving northward from its original breakthrough location.

Easter Bunny Hunt

New Zealand hunters resumed their annual tradition of shooting thousands of invasive bunny rabbits over the Easter weekend after a four-year break in the slaughter. The fundraising event was launched more than 25 years ago with teams gathering from across the country.

Organizers say a total of 11,968 rabbits were shot, but they concede the cull isn't expected to make much of a dent in the massive bunny population. The animals were brought to New Zealand in the 1800s and quickly overran the landscape, ravaging the native biodiversity and

agriculture.

Cosmic Glitches

Cosmic rays have been found to be responsible for a huge number of malfunctions in computers and other electronic devices. The high-energy protons and atomic nuclei that move through space at nearly the speed of light often strike Earth's atmosphere. Japan's Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Company has determined that 30,000 to 40,000 malfunctions happen in its network alone each year due to the phenomenon. The problems arise when electronics are struck by neutrons produced when the cosmic rays collide with oxygen and nitrogen in the atmosphere. This can cause devices from computers to mobile phones to freeze.

Tropical Cyclones

Developing Cyclone Seroja triggered catastrophic flash floods in East Timor and two adjacent provinces of Indonesia. The inundations killed at least 182 people, washed out bridges and submerged thousands of homes.

- A weak and unnamed tropical storm churned the eastern Indian Ocean.

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