



**Week ending Friday, October 1, 2021**

### Arctic Minimum

The sea ice surrounding the North Pole reached its lowest coverage of the year on Sept. 17. While not a record low this year, sea ice cover has dropped by about 50 percent since the 1980s, which scientists say has been a direct result of greenhouse gas emissions. This summer's more stubborn ice forced Russia to use icebreakers to clear a path through its summertime Northern Sea Route after it remained blocked for the first time since 2008.

### Eruptions

Many residents of Spain's La Palma Island were told to seal doors and windows with tape and

wet towels to protect against potentially toxic gases emitted by the eruption of Cumbre Vieja volcano. Almost 600 homes have been lost to lava since the Canary Island volcano began erupting on Sept. 17. • Guatemala's Fuego volcano spewed ash and lava during a 32-hour eruption just southwest of the capital. • Hawaii's Kilauea volcano erupted with fountains of lava in its summit crater.

### Arboreal Confusion

Extreme weather events brought on by climate change have disrupted the annual fall foliage season, especially in parts of North America. The leaves of deciduous trees from eastern Canada and New England to the Rockies typically transform into hues of yellow and red at this time of year. But heat waves, drought and leaf-stripping hurricanes have shocked some trees into a state of arboreal confusion. "Instead of trees doing this gradual change, they get thrown these wacky weather events. They change all of a sudden, or they drop leaves early," Colorado arborist Michael Sundberg told The Associated Press.

### Tropical Cyclones

Tropical Storm Gulab uprooted thousands of trees and utility poles while flooding parts of India's central Bay of Bengal coast and interior areas. • Typhoon Mindulle was predicted to skirt Japan's eastern coast days after Tropical Storm Dianmu soaked central Vietnam, Laos and Thailand. • Hurricane Sam, Tropical Storm Teresa and Tropical Storm Victor spun over various parts of the North Atlantic basin.

### Deadly Stings

Dozens of endangered African penguins were stung to death by a swarm of honeybees on a beach near Cape Town. The South African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds told reporters the bees appeared to target the eyes of the 63 dead penguins. "We checked the other bodies again and found stings still embedded around the eyes in almost all of the birds," said foundation president David Roberts. It is possible a nearby beehive was disturbed, causing the bees to become defensive and attack the birds.

### 'Cooked' Mussels

Some of Greece's hottest summer weather in decades decimated parts of the country's mussel harvest and the baby mussel seeds that would have grown into next year's mature population. Fisherman Stefanos Sougioultzis told Reuters that it was "as if they boiled in their own environment." The high water temperature in the Thermaic Gulf near Thessaloniki in northern Greece not only caused the mussels to suffer heat stress, but it also encouraged a thick white mass, described as a kind of tube worm, to cling to the mussels and gradually kill them. Many fishermen feel the gulf will become too warm for the mussels in the hotter summers to come.

### Earthquakes

A sharp tremor on the Greek island of Crete killed one person and injured about 20 others as it caused significant damage. • Earth movements were also felt in central Pakistan, India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands, a wide area of Japan's Honshu Island, eastern Taiwan and southeastern Dominican Republic.

## Earthweek: Diary of a Changing World

Written by Gallupsun Staff

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