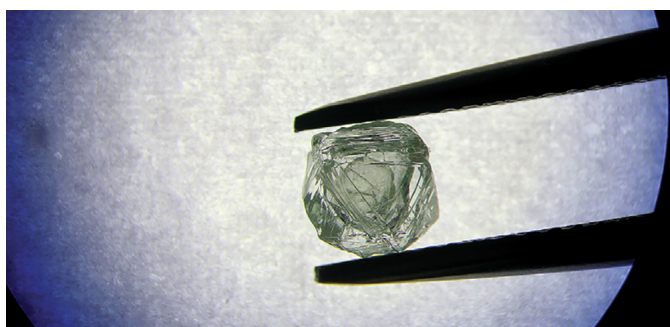


# Earthweek: Diary of a Changing World

Written by Gallupsun Staff

Friday, 25 October 2019 07:58

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## Coastal Spill

Brazilian officials are pointing their fingers at Venezuela for a massive oil spill that has polluted hundreds of miles of beaches in nine northeastern states during the past few weeks. The spill has killed numerous sea turtles and kept swimmers and fishermen from the contaminated coastal strip. Brazil's Environment Minister Ricardo Salles said the spill appears to have come from Venezuela, and that more than 110 tons of oil have been recovered. "It could be something criminal, it could be an accidental spill, it could also be a ship that sank," said Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro.

### Earthquakes

Late reports from eastern India say a strong temblor on Oct. 3 seriously injured two people when the shaking collapsed a roof in the state of Manipur.

- Earth movements were also felt in Indonesia's Maluku province, northeastern Taiwan, New Zealand's North Island, Acapulco and the San Francisco Bay Area.

### Popo Blasts

A series of 14 explosions in one night rocked Mexico's Popocatepetl volcano, shooting ash, steam and other vapor into the sky southeast of the country's capital. Four more blasts occurred during the next two days, causing Mexico's disaster agency to warn nearby residents to stay away from the towering mountain. Also known as "Popo," the volcano has produced regular eruptions since it roared back to life in 1994 after decades of slumber.

### Tropical Cyclones

Metropolitan Tokyo was on alert as Category-5 Typhoon Hagibis approached from the south.

- Remnants of Hurricane Lorenzo brought significant flooding to parts of southern Ireland and England.

### Nested Diamond

What is believed to be the first diamond within a diamond ever discovered has been unearthed in a Siberian mine. Dubbed the “Matryoshka Diamond” for its resemblance to traditional Russian nesting dolls, the 0.62-carat gem has an interior diamond that moves freely within a transparent outer one. Officials of Alrosa mining company say they aren’t quite sure how the unique stone formed, and they are shipping it off to the Gemological Institute of America for testing.

### Mega Hogs

The loss of about half of China’s pig population this year due to outbreaks of African swine fever has prompted the country’s pig farmers to begin growing their swine to sizes never before seen. Bloomberg reports a farmer in Guangxi province is breeding pigs that weigh 1,100 pounds at maturity, about the same mass as a polar bear. Pig farmers big and small across China say they are trying to grow their hogs as large as possible to compensate for the swine fever losses. Many producers say they are trying to increase their pigs’ weight to about 385 to 440 pounds, up from the previous average of 275 pounds.

## **Pest Stripes**

The misery that cows suffer from biting flies could be greatly reduced, thanks to a novel paint job for the animals devised by a team of Japanese researchers. They found that by painting white stripes on cows, similar to those on zebras, the number of flies landing on the cows fell by more than 50 percent. Flies seem to avoid landing on black-and-white surfaces due to the difference in the polarization of light reflecting off the two shades, which confuses the flies. Writing in the journal PLOS One, scientists say fewer flies on the striped cows led to a sharp decline in the fly-defense movements made by the bovines, such as stomping of the feet and flipping of the head.

**Dist. by: Andrews McMeel Syndication**

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