



Week ending Friday, July 2, 2021

Record Heat

The punishing heat wave that has baked much of western Canada up to the Arctic and down to the northwestern U.S. is being made more intense by hotter temperatures at night in areas that normally cool down after sunset. Experts say that this is making nights much warmer than the normal daytime temperatures. Simon Donner of the University of British Columbia said the hot nights are like a fingerprint of climate change. “This is exactly a specific sort of prediction that scientists have been making — that we would have warmer nights,” said Donner. The “heat dome” has caused hundreds of deaths and set an all-time heat record for Canada’s west.

Earthquakes

The eastern Turkish city of Bingöl and surrounding areas were jolted by a magnitude 5.2 quake.

- Earth movements were also felt around the Afghan capital of Kabul, on the Philippine island of Mindanao and in western Cuba.

Avian Mystery

Birds from Washington, D.C., to Kentucky have recently been found suffering from a mysterious illness that causes them to have crusty eyes and swollen faces that prevent them from flying. The affected species have so far been blue jays, common grackles and European starlings. People who have discovered the ill birds say they act like they are blind and are not afraid of people. Since bird feeders and birdbaths can spread disease among feathered creatures, experts advise residents in the affected region to stop feeding the birds and to clean their feeders and baths with a 10 percent bleach solution, wearing gloves to avoid exposure to any pathogens.

Tropical Cyclones

Resorts and other communities along Mexico's Pacific coast, as well as the southern tip of Baja California, were drenched by passing Hurricane Enrique.

- Tropical Storm Danny formed just off the South Carolina coast, then later drenched a wide swath of the southeastern U.S.
- Tropical Storm Elsa formed over the western Atlantic and threatened to strike Cuba and Florida during the following week.

Epic Flight

A species of butterfly migrates thousands of miles from sub-Saharan Africa to Europe during years when the weather is favorable. The Painted Lady's 8,700-mile migration is the longest known in the insect world. "We know that the number of Painted Lady Butterflies in Europe varies widely, sometimes with 100 times more from one year to the next," Tom Oliver of England's University of Reading, said. That variability can now be explained by the weather, which may also affect other insects as the climate warms. "We enjoy seeing the beautiful Painted Lady Butterflies in our gardens in Europe, but climate change will also lead to shifts in invasive species that are crop pests or those that spread diseases," Oliver warns.

Loving the Heat

Rattlesnakes are one of the few species that may actually benefit from global heating, according to a new study by the California Polytechnic State University. Since rattlesnakes depend on the sun and ambient temperatures to warm themselves, researchers say the hotter conditions will give the rattlers a longer active season and more time to hunt and feed. “We are so used to climate change studies that forecast negative impacts on wildlife — it was interesting to see such starkly different findings for these snakes,” researcher Hayley Crowell said. “A warmer climate may help these snakes heat up to temperatures that are more optimal for digestion or reproduction,” he added.

Eruption

Costa Rica’s Rincón de la Vieja volcano produced one of its biggest outbursts in years, spewing ash and debris in a three-minute eruption.

Ash and sulfuric odors were reported in the nearby communities of Gavilán de Dos Ríos and Bromelias.

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