



Week ending Friday, September 3, 2021

Northernmost Isle

Members of a Danish research expedition to Greenland's northern coastal waters say they accidentally discovered what is now believed to be the northernmost island on the planet. While unsuccessfully trying to locate and land on Oodaaq Island to collect samples, they instead "landed on a strange unvegetated bunch of mud, moraine deposits and gravel surrounded by sea ice on all sides." After checking their position, they found they were not on Oodaaq, but on land about 800 metres farther north than what was previously thought to be the island nearest to the North Pole. The team wants the newly-discovered island to be named Qeqertaq Avannarleq, which means "the northernmost island" in Greenlandic.

Earthquakes

Western Turkey was jolted by a tremor in Kütahya province.

- Earth movements were also felt in areas from Corinth to Athens in southern Greece, northern Sicily, Trinidad, and California's southern Sierra Nevada.

Disasters Soar

Natural disasters such as deadly heat waves and floods are now occurring five times more often than they did 40 years ago, which the UN weather agency says is directly linked to human-driven global heating. The World Meteorological Organisation's new "Atlas" reviews the human tragedies and economic losses from weather extremes and water, and is said to be the most detailed ever produced. It shows that such disasters have killed more than 2 million people since 1970 and have cost \$3.64 trillion in losses.

Island Rumbings

Hundreds of tremors and ground deformation continued at Hawaii's Kilauea caldera for a third week, but with decreasing intensity. The Hawaiian Volcano Observatory had raised the alert level to a watch in mid-August due to the rumbings, which could have meant magma was intruding into the southern parts of the caldera. That alert level has since been lowered to an advisory. Kilauea erupted nearly continuously from January 1983 to April 2018, destroying two towns on the Big Island and causing other damage to the area.

LED Losses

The switch to more energy-efficient light-emitting diodes (LEDs) in many of the world's streetlamps has not only disrupted insect behaviour, but researchers say it is also leading to a decline in at least some insect populations. Researchers from the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology say they found 50 percent fewer moth caterpillars living immediately around the LED lights along rural roads in southern England, compared to their numbers near traditional illumination. The scientists say the trend is alarming since small birds, hedgehogs and predatory insects feed on the caterpillars, while larger birds and bats eat the adult moths.

Nuclear Tunnel

Contaminated water now stored in about 1,000 tanks at Japan's crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant will be released offshore into the Pacific through a newly planned undersea tunnel. Operators say they will drill through bedrock beneath the seabed and begin releasing the water about 12 metres below the ocean's surface beginning in the spring of 2023. They say the

scheme is designed to avoid interfering with local fishing. The stored water from the plant's meltdowns will first be diluted with large amounts of seawater to reduce the concentration of the radioactive material.

Tropical Cyclones

At least 14 people were killed from Louisiana to the Northeast as Hurricane Ida inflicted the most costly damage of any natural disaster in U.S. history.

- The Mexican states of Michoacán, Colima and Jalisco were drenched by Hurricane Nora.
- Hurricane Larry churned the eastern Atlantic as Tropical Storm Julian formed briefly off New England.

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