



Week ending Friday, December 3, 2021

Hybrid Salmon

Canadian officials say a new hybrid species of Coho and Chinook salmon has been found between Vancouver Island and the British Columbia mainland, possibly the result of climate change. Andres Araujo at Fisheries and Oceans Canada says the hybrids look like a mix of the two species, and genetic markers confirm that they are indeed hybrids. He and colleagues point out that dry conditions in recent years have lowered the water level of the Cowichan River spawning area, which delayed the Chinook's late-summer spawning. This probably brought those fish into contact with the Coho and allowed them to interbreed later in autumn.

Earthquakes

One of the world's most powerful quakes this year injured at least 12 people and damaged hundreds of homes in northern Peru's Amazon region. • Earth movements were also felt in southwestern Turkey, the India-Myanmar border region and central parts of Tibet.

La Niña Cooling

Unusually warm weather should prevail in many regions of the world during the coming months despite the La Niña ocean cooling in the Pacific, according to the U.N. weather agency. “The cooling impact of the 2020/2021 La Niña, which is typically felt in the second half of the event, means that 2021 will be one of the 10 warmest years on record, rather than THE warmest year,” World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) chief Petteri Taalas said in a statement. However, he added this will be only a short-lived respite from the trend of hotter conditions predicted in the years to come due to greenhouse gas emissions. The WMO predicts a 70 percent to 80 percent chance of La Niña through March of 2022.

Eruption Surge

The 10th week of La Palma’s volcanic eruption saw hundreds of powerful seismic tremors lead to new lava vents opening up, releasing fresh streams of lava. One flow from the Cumbre Vieja volcano threatened a Canary Island neighbourhood that had already been evacuated three times since the intense eruption began on Sept. 19. Volcanologists say the greatest volume of lava is now coming from a new, secondary cone. Satellite images reveal that nearly 2,750 buildings have so far been destroyed by the eruption.

Rabbit ‘Hotels’

Plummeting rabbit populations across the United Kingdom have prompted its National Heritage organization to ask landowners to create innovative rabbit “hotels” to help the bunnies survive. A new rabbit haemorrhagic viral disease has seen rabbit numbers decrease by 88 percent in the East Midlands and 83 percent in Scotland between 1996 and 2018. Across all of Britain, populations fell by 43 percent between 2008 and 2018. The Shifting Sands project asks people to arrange piles of branches around rabbit warrens to provide safety from predators and to create new sites for females to give birth. Experts say the grazing rabbits promote wildlife diversity, helping rare plants and invertebrates to thrive.

Different Meltdown

An underground ice wall that was created to contain contaminated groundwater seepage at Japan's meltdown-plagued Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant has itself partially melted, according to operators. The Tokyo Electric Power Co. says it is launching "remedial work" to strengthen the wall of frozen ground. Large amounts of radioactive water have been stored at the facility since a 2011 combined earthquake and tsunami disaster knocked out power to the plant's cooling units, triggering reactor meltdowns. Residents in the region are concerned about plans to release stored water still contaminated with tritium about 1 kilometre offshore in the spring of 2023.

Tropical Cyclones

Late-season Typhoon Nyatoh formed just west of Guam and then curved northward over the central Pacific. • Tropical Storm Teratai formed briefly just south of Sumatra.

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