


Week ending Friday, November 22, 2019

Tropical Cyclones

 Typhoon Kalmegi produced an extended period of heavy rain as it drifted over northern portions of the Philippine island of Luzon.

- Tropical Storm Raymond formed briefly to the south of Baja California before its remnants produced widespread rain across the southwestern United States.
- Late-season Tropical Storm Sebastian churned the western Atlantic to the northeast of Puerto Rico.

Java Blast

 Villages near Central Java's Mount Merapi volcano were dusted with ash after the volcano erupted for two minutes with columns of debris and vapor.

Indonesia's disaster agency warned residents to remain clear of a 2-mile danger zone due to the threat of ash, superheated clouds and volcanic explosions.

A 2016 Merapi eruption killed at least 340 people and forced more than 60,000 others to evacuate their homes.

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A new study finds that emissions of the ozone-eating greenhouse gas nitrous oxide have increased more than expected.

Researchers from the Norwegian Institute for Air Research and other institutions found that the increased use of fertilizers containing nitrogen has been the main driver in the increase.

“We see that the N2O emissions have increased considerably during the past two decades, but especially from 2009 onwards,” said author Rona Thompson.

While fertilizer use has made it possible to grow a lot more food, the researchers say it resulted in destruction of stratospheric ozone and further climate change.

Earthquakes

 Two people were injured when a magnitude 7.1 temblor wrecked buildings in Indonesia's North Maluku province.

- Earth movements were also felt in northern India and western Nepal, Laos and Thailand, central Morocco, western Argentina and interior Southern California.

Insect Apocalypse

A new report suggests that half of all insects on the planet have been lost since 1970 from a combination of habitat destruction, climate change and the increased use of pesticides.

Published in the journal *Biological Conservation*, the report warns that 40% of the 1 million insect species known to science are facing extinction.

But conservationists say many of those insects can be rescued by slashing pesticide use and making areas around our global communities more wildlife friendly.

"If we don't stop the decline of our insects, there will be profound consequences for all life on Earth [and] for human well-being," said Dave Goulson of Britain's University of Sussex.

Amazon Losses

Deforestation of Brazil's Amazon region soared to its highest level in a decade as agribusiness, miners, loggers and developers felled portions of the world's largest rainforest.

Brazil's National Institute for Space Research announced that 3,769 square miles of forest were lost during the 12-month period ending in July, or about a 30% spike from the previous 12 months.

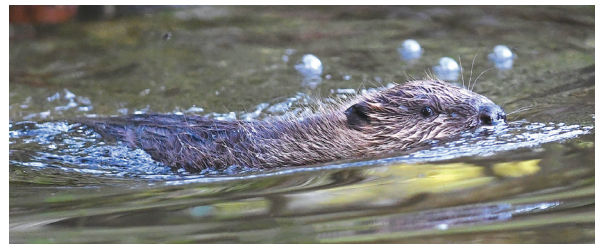
Environmental advocates blame the increase on Brazil's president, who has slashed the budgets and staff of the agencies in charge of preventing such illegal activities in the Amazon.

- Damming Solution

Britain announced plans to reintroduce beavers to combat the unprecedented floods that have recently inundated communities and farmland. The animals were hunted to extinction in the 16th century.

Beavers will “help make our landscape more resilient to climate change and the extremes of weather it will bring,” said Ben Eardley, project manager at one of the reintroduction sites.

Wetlands and forests were once barriers to severe floods across Scotland and England before centuries of human development vastly reshaped the countryside. It's hoped the beavers will be a successful first step in restoring those natural protections against flooding.



Bringing back Britain's beavers may help restore the nation's historic ecology and prevent severe floods. Photo: David Parkyn/Wildlife Trust (UK)

