

Conservation in the News: March 2018

The NAL Meeting in Washington struck many of the same chords it did last year. Most notable was Doug Tallamy's lecture on Bringing Nature home to all of our gardens:

“ Doug Tallamy, University of Delaware

Entomologist, Doug Tallamy, made the case that insects run the world for many ecosystems. With the collapse of native bees around the country, there is no more important task than planting native plants to provide food for insects, and especially caterpillars. Many bird species and butterflies rely solely on specific proteins called carotenoids only found in caterpillars. By changing our own garden landscape from a dead ecosystem of lawn grass to an array of native plants, trees and shrubs, you can create a living habitat for many species. Changing his own yard to natives, Tallamy counted 780 different species just in his backyard!”

Wendy Paulson of the Bobolink Foundation and her husband Henry M. Paulson, former secretary of the treasury under George W. Bush made the following important observation:

“Poor government policies are at the heart of many of our environmental problems, such as continuing to subsidize the production of carbon fuels. **Volunteerism is a serious strategy for conservation and local advocacy is the most critical step.**”

Great new sustainable insulation invented recently out of wood

<https://www.treehugger.com/sustainable-product-design/nanowood-insulates-well-plastic-foam.html>

“Plastic trash—the new threat for coral reefs worldwide”

March 8, 2018 by Karl Gruber, Particle

The study analyzed more than 150 reefs across the Asia-Pacific region, including Indonesia, Australia, Myanmar and Thailand. Based on the researchers' estimates, more than 11.1 billion plastic items are currently entangled on coral reefs.

This figure could increase by 40% by 2025 if things don't change.

“The problem with this plastic waste is that it attracts unwanted microbes. These microbes greatly increase the chance corals will develop diseases... Coral reefs from places contaminated with plastic had an 89% chance of developing a disease. In plastic-free regions, these odds were just 4%!

"Plastic debris acts like a marine motorhome for microbes," said the study's lead author, Joleah Lamb

<https://phys.org/news/2018-03-plastic-trash-the-threat-coral-reefs.html>

MOTUS tracking of migratory birds using tiny devices that emit beeps which can be picked up by towers that record their presence:

<https://www.birdlife.org/americas/news/tiny-transmitters-tracking-birds-north-south-america>

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Adidas has made a million shoes out of ocean plastics. Stopped using using plastic bags in stores in 2016, using paper instead and commits to making all footwear and apparel from ocean plastics by 2024.

https://www.ecowatch.com/adidas-shoes-ocean-plastic-2547494872.html?utm_source=EcoWatch+List&utm_campaign=3da56fe190-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_49c7d43dc9-3da56fe190-85327165

“20,000 Scientists Have Now Signed 'Warning to Humanity'”

“The "Warning" became one of the most widely discussed research papers in the world. It currently ranks 6th out of 9 million papers on the Altmetric scale, which tracks attention to research. It has also inspired pleas from political leaders from Israel to Canada.”

https://www.ecowatch.com/warning-to-humanity-scientists-2544973158.html?utm_source=EcoWatch+List&utm_campaign=3da56fe190-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_49c7d43dc9-3da56fe190-85327165

“ How to make money from your land as a renewable energy developer”

<https://www.banklesstimes.com/2018/03/19/how-to-make-money-from-your-land-as-a-renewable-energy-developer/>

Mayor of Georgetown, Texas, shows the way...

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/texas-town-future-renewable-energy-180968410/>

I enjoyed reading this article. You probably are aware that this is a proposal to build a Shell “cracker” plant outside Pittsburgh. This plant would emit over 2 million pounds of Carbon dioxide annually in order to produce plastics which are poisoning our oceans and ourselves. But the first question, really a statement, was that [the future of this installation may well be in doubt, and with sufficient outcry from environmentalists it could be stopped](#). The talk was dedicated to the students of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, and Emma Gonzalez.”“We are behind her,” Schweiger read a quote from Gonzalez’s mom, “but we should have been in front of her years ago.’ I couldn’t agree more with Emma’s mother.” After all, the world clearly needs these young people to flourish, and we owe it to them to do what we can to leave the world a better cleaner one.

<https://www.publicsource.org/pittsburghers-ask-leading-environmentalist-what-can-be-done-to-fight-climate-change-and-impacts-of-the-planned-cracker-plant-fracking/>