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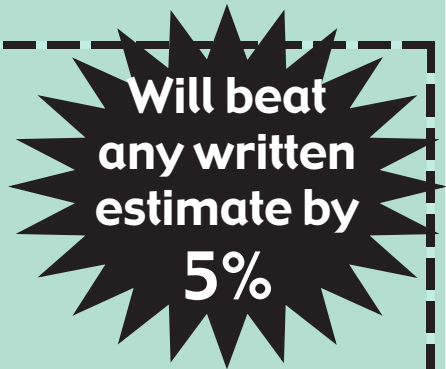
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Rocky Mtn Bighorn Sheep
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Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep

Ovis canadensis

The Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep is the largest wild sheep inhabiting North America. A large ram (a male sheep) may weigh over 300 pounds and stand over 42 inches tall at the shoulder. They are generally a dark brown to gray/brown color with a white rump patch, muzzle and back of legs. Their coats may appear considerably lighter in spring before the winter coat is shed revealing the darker summer coat beneath.

Rams have horns that are massive and tightly curled close to the face. An ewe (a female sheep) will have smaller shorter horns that curve only slightly. Ewes typically weigh 125-150 pounds.

Rocky Mountain Bighorns are found in British Columbia and Alberta, Canada and in the western United States south to New Mexico. (*National Bighorn Sheep Center*)

The bighorn sheep is a species of sheep native to North America. It is named for its large horns. A pair of horns might weigh up to (30 lb) the sheep typically weigh up to

(315 lb). Recent genetic testing indicates three distinct subspecies of *Ovis canadensis*, one of which is endangered: *O. c. sierrae*. Sheep originally crossed to North America over the Bering Land Bridge from Siberia; the population in North America peaked in the millions, and the bighorn sheep entered into the mythology of Native Americans.

By 1900, the population had crashed to several thousand, due to diseases introduced through European livestock and overhunting.

Male bighorn sheep have large horn cores, enlarged cornual and frontal sinuses, and internal bony septa. These adaptations serve to protect the brain by absorbing the impact of clashes. Bighorn sheep have preorbital glands on the anterior corner of each eye, inguinal glands in the groin, and pedal glands on each foot. Secretions from these glands may support dominance behaviors.

Bighorn sheep live in large herds, and do not typically follow a single leader ram, unlike the mouflon, the ancestor of the domestic sheep, which has (*Continued on next page.*)

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Highlander Wildlife

a strict dominance hierarchy. Prior to the mating season or “rut,” the rams attempt to establish a dominance hierarchy to determine access to ewes for mating. During the prerut period, most of the characteristic horn clashing occurs between rams, although this behavior may occur to a limited extent throughout the year.

Bighorn sheep exhibit agonistic behavior: two competitors walk away from each other and then turn to face each other before jumping and lunging into headbutts. Rams’ horns can frequently exhibit damage from repeated clashes. Females exhibit a stable, nonlinear hierarchy that correlates with age. Females may fight for high social status when they are integrated into the hierarchy at one to two years of age.

Rocky Mountain bighorn rams employ at least three different courting strategies. The most common and successful is the tending strategy, in which a ram follows and defends an estrous ewe. Tending takes considerable strength and vigilance, and ewes are most receptive to tending males, presumably feeling they are the most fit. Another tactic is coursing, which is when rams fight for an already tended ewe. Ewes typically avoid coursing males, so the strategy is not effective. Rams also employ a blocking strategy. They prevent a ewe from accessing tending areas before she even goes into estrus. Bighorn ewes have a six-month gestation.

In temperate climates, the peak of the rut occurs in November with one, or rarely two, lambs being born in May. Most births occur in the first two weeks of the lambing period. Pregnant ewes of the Rocky Mountains migrate to alpine areas in spring, presumably to give birth in areas safer from predation, but are away from areas with good quality forage. Lambs born earlier in the season are more likely to survive than lambs born later. Lambs born late may not have access to



sufficient milk, as their mothers are lactating at a time when food quality is lower. Newborn lambs weigh from (8 to 10 lb) and can walk within hours. The lambs are then weaned when they reach four to six months old. The lifespan of ewes is typically 10–14 years, and 9–12 years for rams. *Wikipedia (This photo and the cover photo courtesy of Steve ‘Grizz’ Adams. SteveAdamsPhotos.com)*

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Roses, Fiddleheads And A Ram's Horn

By Valerie Wedel

Some say the roses of Persia are famous for their beauty. And that roses are a symbol of spiritual purity, glowing in golden sunlight... Fiddlehead ferns, on the other hand, quietly sprout up in damp, shady places around our country, unfurling their leafy green selves in a thousand shades of green. They dearly love the Pacific Northwest, home of our world's only temperate rainforest. At home here in our mountains of Colorado, shy wild sheep dance among the clouds on our highest mountain peaks, wearing huge, beautiful, swept back, curling horns.

What could a Persian rose, or a small, curling fern, have to do with a dancing, wild ram's horn?

The magic and mystery of nature shows us that each of these different forms grows in a pattern described by Phi, the Golden Ratio. This pattern of numbers has been known since ancient times. The ratio of phi is approximately 1:1.6. This ratio creates the Golden Spiral. One sees this Golden Spiral in the whorl of rose petals, the curl of a baby fern, and the swept back curve of ram's horns.

Ancient Egyptians knew of this mysterious geometry. You can trace the Golden Spiral on the sphinx, and the great pyramid of Giza, when you stand in front of the sphinx. By the way, some scientists now believe the sphinx dates back all the way to the last ice age, due to weathering patterns on the stone, and where her eyes gaze at Spring Equinox... On that one day, She gazes straight into the rising sun at dawn, in the House of Leo – during the last ice age!

Ancient Greeks also knew of this geometry. One can trace the Golden Spiral on the facade of the Parthenon, for example. The Greeks probably learned of phi from the Babylonians, who probably learned of it from the Sumerians.

The people of Sumer lived thousands of years ago in what is present day Iraq, in the Near East. From the Sumerians we have 60 degrees in a compass, our method

of counting time (60 seconds/60 minutes/24 hours). We have the constellations – including Leo. From them we have base 10 counting systems also. And we have advanced mathematical equations, written down on clay tablets!

The Sumerians lived and thrived, with a fascinating and highly advanced civilization, about 5000+ years ago. They were the seat of culture whom the younger Babylonian civilization looked to and copied from. In turn, the Greeks looked to Babylonia for advanced science and mystery studies. Pythagorus, who was credited with discovering the Pythagorean Theorem by Europeans in recent centuries, actually learned it in Babylonia. The Babylonians learned it from the Sumerians – who wrote it down on clay tablets about 4,500+ years ago.

Can you imagine all the way back to a world with high civilizations of art, music and architecture... 5000+ years ago? If you would like to construct your own Golden Spiral, you are following in the footsteps of some of our greatest thinkers, from some of our greatest civilizations ever known on our planet!

What is this beautiful mystery of nature? How can it be that a ratio known by us as Phi appears in the curl of a ram's horn, the shape of rose petals, the growth of a fern? It appears also in the growth of a nautilus shell...

Phi and the Golden Spiral are part of a body of knowledge that today we call Sacred Geometry. The Golden Spiral, and many other forms, can be created with nothing but a compass and a straight edge. They were the secrets of our ancient builders, of those who built some of the greatest monuments our world has ever seen.

Pick up a compass this summer! If you are interested, there are tutorial links here. This and some of the other forms, such as the six-petaled flower of the ancient world, also known as the Flower of Life, appear and reappear all over the world. They can be seen in the shapes of buildings, and as decorative art motifs across thousands of years and different cultures. *(Continued on next page.)*

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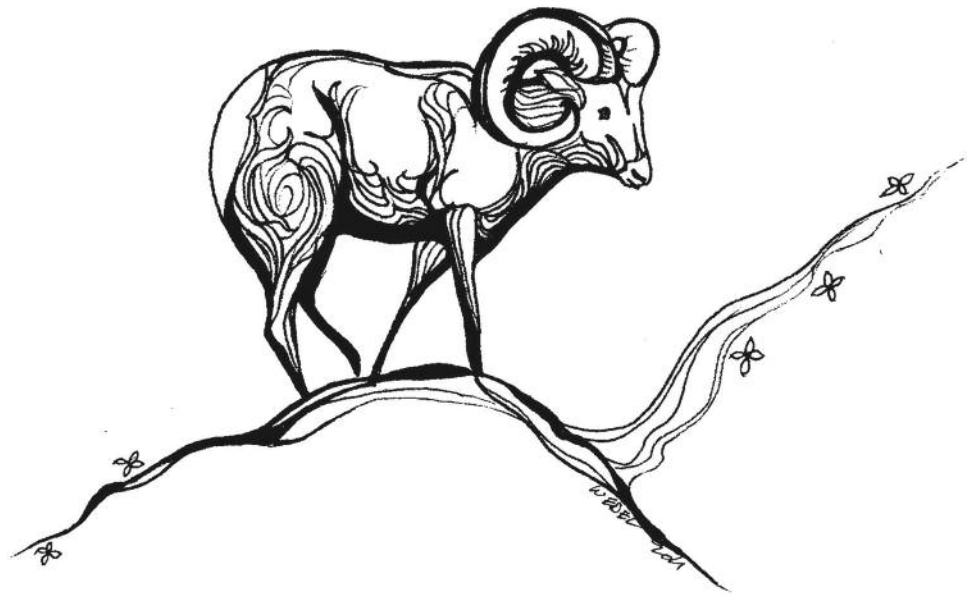
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Highlander History

Like the mystery of nature, these forms are a mystery of our people. When you take the time to draw them, people sometimes find them enchanting, contemplative, and even renewing. They appear in religious art – illuminated manuscripts from early Europe, for example, such as the Book of Kells. They can be seen in the layout of Native American architecture, such as the kivas of the ancient Pueblo Dwellers at Chaco Canyon, as well as other places, here in North America.

This summer, why not pick up a compass? Make your own Golden Spiral! To the mystery of our Rocky Mountain Ram's horns... and the beauty of a single rose.



Fun Further Reading: Skinner, Stephen. Sacred Geometry. Sterling Press, New York & London, 2006. Really cool Sacred Geometry Tutorials: The Golden Spiral: <https://youtu.be/9-ur6s0B86g> Square in the Circle & the Four Petaled Flower:

https://youtu.be/AFC_SBVNEh0 The Six Petaled Flower from the Ancient World: <https://youtu.be/Qg08H9iM2aI>

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Forest Service Camping Closures ~ RMNP Input

Five undeveloped areas on the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest will be temporarily closed to camping while the Forest Service explores more sustainable ways to manage these areas. While “dispersed” camping is generally allowed across most of the National Forest, it can have severe impacts, especially when occurring within 100 feet of streams.

Outside of developed campgrounds last summer, National Forest visitors created thousands of new campsites as they pulled off roads and damaged resources, trampling vegetation and compacting soils with tents, campers and vehicles. Visitors built hundreds of new rock campfire rings and negatively impacted municipal water supplies with human waste and trash. Working closely with local county officials, the Forest Service has targeted the following areas for temporary management changes while exploring long term solutions: **Vasquez Creek and Little Vasquez Creek** - Located just south of the Town of Winter Park, Vasquez and Little Vasquez creeks serve as the drinking water supply for the town’s thousands of residents and guests. It is also a key access point to Winter Park’s famed mountain bike trail system. In recent years, Vasquez (FSR 156) and Little Vasquez (FSR 148), both narrow access roads to the Arapaho National Forest in this area, have become riddled with new visitor-created campsites, crammed between the road, the hillsides and the creek. There are no restroom facilities, trash receptacles or permanent campfire rings in this area. Public concern has been growing about the potential for a wildfire start from an escaped campfire. In addition, campers are impacting water quality by using the ground in this constricted drainage for their restroom. This temporary closure order will prohibit camping within a quarter-mile on either side of Vasquez and Little Vasquez for one year.

Maxwell Falls - Located southwest of Evergreen, the Maxwell Falls and Cub Creek trailheads are enormously popular launching points for a day hike through a dramatic canyon. This area also draws campers and late-night partiers who have campfires that are often left unextinguished. The proximity of residential neighborhoods at the top of the canyon walls and nearby put these communities at great risk of being impacted by an escaped campfire from below. In close coordination with local fire departments, the Jefferson County Sheriff and other local elected officials, the Forest has designated this area as “day use only”

for the next five years. It is now prohibited to camp, have a campfire or be in the Maxwell Falls area between sundown and sunrise.

Rainbow Lakes Road - Located northwest of Nederland, Rainbow Lakes Road (FSR 116) serves two major trailheads (Sourdough and Rainbow) and a popular developed campground (Rainbow Lakes). Camping along the road has been steadily increasing, and last year the number of visitor-created campsites skyrocketed, creating an almost continuous line of trampled vegetation and visitor-built campfire rings along the Forest Service portions of road. Most of those campsites are located less than 100 feet from the North Boulder Creek, which is a primary source of drinking water for the City of Boulder. People camping for free along the road overwhelmed the concessionaire-managed campground at the end of the road by dumping trash and using its restrooms while cars parked along the road created emergency access issues. Camping will be prohibited within a quarter-mile of either side of the road for one year. Camping is still allowed in the campground and in the designated dispersed campsites at Caribou.

Ceran Saint Vrain - Located west of Jamestown, the Ceran Saint Vrain trail is popular with day hikers, mountain bikers and anglers. Along this 2-mile stretch of hiking trail, Forest Service staff identified more than 70 campsites created by visitors. Almost all the sites are located within 100 feet of the South Saint Vrain Creek. Trampled areas along the creek, along with human waste, are causing water quality issues in this area. Conflicts between day users who want to access the creek and campers trying to enjoy some

(Continued on next page.)

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Highlander Issues

privacy are common.

Overcrowded parking at the trailhead creates emergency access issues and patrolling the 2-mile stretch of nonmotorized trail is challenging for law enforcement and the Forest Services' limited crews. The area is plagued by unattended campfires and is surrounded uphill by private property. The limited size of the area doesn't support both overnight and day use opportunities. This prohibits camping within a quarter-mile of the creek for one year, allowing the forest to focus on the quality of the day-use experience while giving the area time to recover from previous overnight camping impacts.

Winiger Ridge - Located west of Gross Reservoir, Winiger Ridge provides 26 designated campsites with metal fire rings. Recently, visitors have been pushing closer to the reservoir, creating new campsites along County Road 68J/FSR 68.2B, which is a rough 4WD road that is very difficult for emergency services and firefighters to traverse. In many cases, campsites have been set up on private property due to the fragmented landownership of the area. Issues with unattended campfires, trash, resource damage from off-road driving and trespassing on private property have led to the decision to close this corridor to camping for two years while staff focuses on providing higher quality sites along Winiger Ridge. Eventually, more designated sites may be added along Winiger Ridge to meet higher demand. In addition to these areas, the Forest

Service still has closures in place for the Williams Fork Fire, East Troublesome Fire and Cameron Peak Fire. As soon as the snow melts, Forest personnel will be focused on assessing and stabilizing the burned areas. These areas are expected to remain largely closed to the public until critical life-safety road and trail stabilization needs can be addressed. Visitors should make sure to plan ahead and get the most accurate recreation information by checking the Forest Service's **Know Before You Go** webpage. In addition to weather forecasts and road and trail conditions for the area, visitors should be sure to research how to find campsites, know how to properly store their food, and check whether campfires are allowed.

Dear Readers,

Rocky Mountain National Park wants your input and you have until July 19th to give them your comments. They are developing a long-range Day Use Visitor Access Strategy to develop strategies to protect the park resources while balancing visitor access, staff and visitor safety, and considering the strain on park facilities. Superintendent Darla Sidles said, "We are eager to continue engaging with our stakeholders and connect with park visitors from near and far, to help identify shared values, clarify key issues, and begin to develop potential management strategies to help the park prepare for our long-term day use strategy. We hope to hear from current park visitors as well as those who have told us they no longer visit Rocky Mountain National Park because of crowding and congestion." Two public meetings were already held and the recordings should be available at <https://visitorusemanagement.nps.gov/ROMO>. To make your comments, go to https://parkplanning.nps.gov/ROMO_DUVAS, see the box on the left titled, "Project Links" and click on "Open for Comment." You can also mail comments to: Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park, 1000 US Highway 36, Estes Park, CO 80517. You can also call Park Information line for more information at 970-586-1206. Here's your chance to let Rocky know of your perspective, ideas, insights and frustrations. Rocky's visitorship consists of 35-40% regional visitors with a high rate of repeat visitors which shows how invested we are in preserving and enjoying our local national treasure. Let your voice be heard!

Diane Bergstrom



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Mapping Mammal Migrations

CSU scientists join first global initiative to map mammal migrations

Colorado State University Professors Joel Berger and George Wittemyer are world-renowned experts on wildlife conservation for large mammals.

The scientists are part of a newly formed international team of more than 90 researchers and conservationists who will create the first-ever global atlas of ungulate — or hooved mammal — migrations, working in partnership with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, an environmental treaty of the United Nations.

The Global Initiative on Ungulate Migration was launched with the publication of a commentary, “Mapping out a future for ungulate migrations,” in the May 7 issue of the journal *Science*.

Creating pathways, tracking migration corridors

More than 15 years ago, Berger’s research with the Wildlife Conservation Society led to the creation of The Path of the Pronghorn, a 6,000-year-old migration route that connects summer range in Grand Teton National Park with winter range far to the south in western Wyoming’s Upper Green River Valley. In 2008, the U.S. Forest Service established the route as the nation’s first federally designated wildlife corridor.

Berger has worked closely for years with the WCS, where he is a senior conservation scientist. Wittemyer has conducted research on mule deer migration in Colorado and has extensive expertise in Africa, where he’s studied elephants since his college days. He works with organizations, including Save the Elephants – where he serves as chair of the scientific board – to identify migration corridors for the endangered species and has been involved in novel approaches to improve pathways. Lead author Matthew Kauffman, a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey in Wyoming, previously released the first attempt at a North American map, with an aim to start aggregating as much information as possible about mammal migrations.

“We want to start to integrate the same type of information across other continents and get more scientists involved to truly create a global map,” said Wittemyer. The international team has partnered with the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals to create the new initiative. The CMS is a unique treaty that brings countries and wildlife experts together to address the conservation needs of terrestrial, aquatic and avian migratory species and their habitats around the world.

Maps will help with decision-making for land managers, policymakers, communities

Detailed maps of the seasonal movements of herds

worldwide will help governments, Indigenous people and local communities, planners and wildlife managers to identify current and future threats to migrations. The team also hopes the maps will advance conservation measures to sustain them in the face of an expanding human footprint around the world.

“A global migration atlas is urgently needed because there has never been a worldwide inventory of these phenomenal seasonal movements,” said Kauffman. “As landscapes become more difficult to traverse, the maps can help conservationists pinpoint threats, identify stakeholders and work together to find solutions.” Wittemyer said migration for mammals is threatened at a level never before seen.

“Because these animals have such large spatial requirements for year-round survival, they tend to be more susceptible to changes humans are causing on the landscape,” he said. “Through this atlas, we hope that we can motivate people and government officials to recognize and protect important areas and corridors.”

Berger said migration is one of those essential ecological processes that must be conserved if we want species on the ground.



Know Before You Go

Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland managers are exploring new strategies to help visitors have safe and enjoyable outdoor experiences this summer while protecting wildlife, clean water and healthy forests. From selling passes online for the most popular developed recreation areas to shifting some of the most visited areas to day-use only, National Forest managers are planning for another very busy recreation season amidst an ongoing worldwide pandemic.

“For outdoor recreationists, the most important message this year is to ‘Know Before You Go,’ said recreation program manager Erich Roeber. “Just like you might plan a family vacation or research a product before purchasing, public lands visitors really need to do their homework this year before they head out on an adventure. Otherwise, they might show up somewhere and realize they needed to buy a pass in advance, or book a reservation, or that they can’t

camp in the same exact place where they camped last year.”

2020 brought a 200% increase in outdoor recreation across Colorado’s northern Front Range, with a large number of first-time visitors seeking an escape from the constraints of social distancing. This resulted in long lines and wait times at welcome stations, overflowing parking at trailheads, and cars parked unsafely for miles along county roads, obstructing roadways.

To reduce crowding at welcome stations, restrooms and parking areas this year, the Forest Service is developing a timed-entry pass system for Mount Evans and Brainard Lake. While the project is still in development, all pass sales will occur online on Recreation.gov and passes are expected to be available to purchase beginning in late May. Mount Evans is tentatively scheduled to open June 4 and the Brainard Lake welcome station is tentatively scheduled to open June 11.

Outside of developed campgrounds, National Forest visitors created thousands of new campsites as they pulled off roads and damaged resources, trampling vegetation and compacting soils with tents, campers and vehicles. Visitors built hundreds of new rock campfire rings and negatively impacted municipal water supplies with human waste and trash.

To help some of these trampled places heal, the Forest Service is working closely with local county officials to target a few areas for temporary “day-use-only” designations this year. Recreation staff will use the opportunity to explore more sustainable options for



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managing these places into the future.

2020 was also a bad year for human-wildlife interactions as bears entered campsites and tents in areas where visitors hadn't properly stored their food. To help keep Colorado's wildlife wild and reduce unwanted encounters, the forest service is collaborating with Colorado Parks and Wildlife in developing food storage requirements for visitors across the National Forests.

Most notably, 2020 was a year during which human-caused wildfires burned 25 percent of the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, devastating communities, destroying homes and taking lives. The Forest Service and our communities are still healing from these fires.

Recovery is expected to take years. As soon as the snow melts, Forest personnel will be heavily focused on assessing and stabilizing the burned areas; and the burned areas are expected to remain largely off limits to the public until critical life-safety road and trail stabilization needs can be addressed.

Unfortunately, much of Colorado is still in some degree of drought, ranging from severe to exceptional. While precipitation has improved this spring, it may not bring enough moisture to prevent large logs and trees from catching fire easily. Due to this danger, compounded by the increase in visitors, the Forest Service is working closely with its state and local partners to determine the best time to implement fire restrictions as temperatures warm up. Regardless of when fire restrictions go into place, the public is urged to be extremely cautious with all potential sources of ignition this year.

More information will be shared in the weeks to come as the Forest Service works with its community partners and public lands neighbors across the northern Front Range and Grand County to finalize these plans.

In the meantime, get the most accurate recreation information by checking official Know Before You Go resources on the local National Forest website and elsewhere. In addition to weather forecasts and road and trail conditions for the area, visitors should be sure to research how to buy passes, how to find campsites, and whether campfires are allowed.

Please be safe out there this summer.

#CareforColorado and #RecreateResponsibly

Editor's Note: Most Highlander readers are mountain residents, but for those that read the online issue or pick up a copy in the western suburbs - please, we cannot urge visitors to the Foothills enough to be ultra careful. This is our backyard you are coming to in search of recreation.

Just imagine hordes of folks descending upon your city neighborhoods with tailgating, BBQ's, RV's and campfires every night all summer... it is not only worrisome about wildfires, it invades our quiet lifestyles and our daily viewing of local wildlife. Be respectful and practice the ethics of leaving only footprints.

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Mindful Meditation Is Easy - Take A Short Walk

Article by Donna Isaac

Renewal brings hope. Each spring and summer, as life renews itself and flourishes, perhaps you also feel renewed; you have more clarity and focus as the energy of nature feeds you. I hope you wake, look at the world with awe and wonder, and feel a renewed sense of your purpose in each day.

In 2020, these seasons have arrived with nuanced meanings. As you celebrate longer hours of sunlight, notice how spring and summer give you more time to assess and plan for the new directions recent events in history now offer. You (and others) are likely experiencing a renaissance and awakening to the importance of private moments of self-awareness.

Rebirth is part of the natural cycle and rhythm of nature. It reminds you to think about how you are renewing your individual self. Recognize your own resilience as you look to the future. Connect with who you are, and all that you have learned about yourself and your community during these past few months. It is a time to awaken to new possibilities—and to decide to act on them.

Create some time alone and allow yourself to bask in the

quiet. Breathe into it. Your breath always brings you into present moment awareness. Allow the breath to support you as you breathe consciously, recognizing your unique presence in the world.

By bringing yourself into stillness daily and by using silence to deepen your awareness, even for a brief time, you renew yourself. The practice of meditation is essential. It allows you to go deep within yourself, without expectations, and to observe and recognize yourself as you are. Attention to breath and mindfulness go hand-in-hand as you use the quiet to center and ground yourself to move forward into your day's activities. Mindfulness is bringing your full awareness to the present moment without judgment. Daily practice in mindfulness brings peace, strengthens your love of self, and allows you to become more resilient.

One excellent way to spend time in mindfulness is through a walking meditation. Begin with a five-breath standing practice. Stand tall and feel your connection with the earth beneath your feet, even if you're wearing shoes. Close your eyes if you are comfortable. Feel deeply connected through miles of earth to this planet's very core. Take five deep breaths in through your nose and release

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long exhales out your mouth. Try for a count of four on the inhale and a count of six or eight on the exhale. A longer exhale enables you to calm your nervous system and make it stronger. Notice how you feel. You can repeat this grounding practice as many rounds as needed to bring yourself into a calmer state before you begin walking.

Walk slowly and purposefully around your yard or neighborhood. Without identifying anything, walk with your eyes open to colors and patterns. A walking meditation forces you to be present in each moment, as you place one foot in front of the other. Feel the air against your skin. Look at the patterns of leaves, tree branches, flowers, sidewalk cracks, neighbors' homes, insects, animals. Hear the natural sounds around you. Breathe normally. And—enjoy the walk itself—your own self-powered forward motion.

This walking meditation can be done for about 10 minutes. The connectedness you feel with the natural environment is very real, nurturing, and calming. Deepak

Chopra suggested that people go outside each day, preferably in bare feet, and feel the energy that connects the body to the earth. When you have returned to where you started, use the five-breath grounding practice again to regain your center. Stay in the stillness around you, before returning to your day's plans and schedule. This practice can offer you serenity and clarity.



One of my favorite poems about renewal is by Edna St. Vincent Millay. It is titled *Renascence*, it has over 200 lines, and it was written in 1912. Here is an excerpt (find the entire poem at: www.public-domain-poetry.com/e...

“Enjoy your own awakening to renewal

and remember that the grounding breath exercise can be used at any time when you might feel anxious or off-kilter. By centering yourself and calming your nervous system, you are always ready to move forward and find joy.”

Donna Isaac is the founder of Mindful By Design: www.mindfulbydesign.info. She is a meditation and mindfulness coach and teacher who works with nonprofit organizations and their boards to facilitate mindful leadership practices.

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Foundation For Affordable Housing?

Student-led tiny house project lays foundation for affordable housing conversations

In Spring 2021, 24 Colorado State University students representing eight different majors teamed up to research, design and construct a tiny house on wheels outside the Nancy Richardson Design Center on campus.

The project is part of IDEA 450 Design Thinking Collaborative, an interdisciplinary, student-led capstone course for graduate and undergraduate students to engage industry and community partners to address and solve real-world problems.

Since February, the class has been working in rotating shifts to complete the build before the end of the spring semester. The group intends to auction off the finished piece to support future tiny house projects on campus.

Tiny house, big impact

Nearly 11,000 Coloradans experienced homelessness in 2018, and almost a third of those went without shelter for the entire year. According to the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development's 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report, roughly 580,000 people in the U.S. experienced homelessness on a given night. These numbers have only risen for four years straight.

"This project calls attention to prevalent housing insecurity issues Coloradans are facing and educates people on the need for affordable housing solutions," said Design and Merchandising Assistant Professor Maria Delgado, Ph.D., the course's co-instructor.

Delgado and the students hope the project will raise awareness and spark dialogue around alternative and

affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, as well as anyone who may prefer a smaller dwelling for benefits like improved energy efficiency and lower maintenance costs.

The team created a CSU RamFunder campaign to support future tiny house projects on campus. Additional funding was provided by the Richardson Design Center and donations from industry partners including GE Appliances, Pella, Flatiron Steel, Distinctive Spray Foam, Huber Engineered Woods, Takagi and The Light Center, among others.

Built to last

Nina Struble, a fourth-year interior architecture and design student, worked on the design team and created the 3D model for the tiny house using the parametric design software Revit. Struble also coordinated the diverse student team and project groups to ensure equal representation through the design phase, and to mitigate any potential issues between the digital design and physical construction. "It was cool to see how everyone's minds differ," she said. "It's been nice to have people from different fields." The class is working with the National Organization of Alternative Housing to receive the organization's certification, ensuring the structure's integrity and compliance with national and international safety, construction and energy efficiency standards for tiny houses on wheels.

"It's been really enlightening to work with NOAH," said Struble, highlighting NOAH's support in allowing the students to learn without being overly critical.

CSU Facilitates Management has also provided support to students through class engagement consultations and demonstrations. "Seeing our design come to fruition is pretty awesome," Struble said. The course's other co-instructor and Adjunct Professor Mitch Holmes designs and builds custom tiny houses for customers nationwide through his company MitchCraft Tiny Homes. With his expertise, Holmes has helped Struble and the team navigate the NOAH certification process and construction while also sharing his passion for sustainability and alternative housing. 'Healthy, stable, affordable' the tiny house movement has grown in popularity in recent years – with a noticeable spike during the coronavirus pandemic – but city land-use codes and zoning regulations often present barriers for residents interested in alternative housing options. "For

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tiny homes to be a viable city option, communities must work with municipalities to advocate for ordinances that integrate tiny home village language, which will expand current housing options,” said Delgado.

Fort Collins planners Sylvia Tatman-Burruss and Ryan Mounce are working to update the language in the city’s Land Use Code to be more inclusive of smaller housing units or other alternative dwellings. In March, the interdepartmental team completed an update to the city’s Housing Strategic Plan, which now includes language and guidance to achieve its vision of ensuring everyone in the city has access to healthy, stable, affordable housing. The plan assesses who currently has access to such housing, with design strategies for all residents regardless of status or identity; addresses residents’ physical and mental well-being; recognizes housing as “the most important platform for pursuing all other life goals” and a requirement for quality of life and health; and ensures adequate housing supply to prevent residents from having to spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

Tatman-Burruss is working with CSU graduate student Maria Steffen and political science senior Lauren Myli to compile and evaluate definitions for terms such as “tiny houses on wheels” and “accessory dwelling units” – evaluating how cities such as Seattle and Denver have incorporated and implemented them.

“The students are helping us understand aspects of our code that are constraining,” said Tatman-Burruss. “We plan to take their work and have that inform our approach to smaller dwelling units in different areas of the city. It’s very useful work.” Steffen and Myli are comparing other cities’ existing land use and construction code requirements for alternative housing types with those of Fort Collins, collecting data to support the justification of legalizing various alternative housing types to inform future codes and ordinances. “Tiny houses provide something for the homeless population that other shelters have a hard time providing,” said Steffen, who is on track to graduate with a master’s in occupational therapy in August. “And that is privacy and a greater sense of dignity, with a lockable space to call their own.” Building more tiny homes and other alternative housing designs may not solve the nation’s affordable housing crisis overnight, but eliminating barriers to building them could help residents and families across the U.S. secure shelter, save money, and live healthier, stabler lives. “The legalization of tiny houses, especially tiny houses on wheels, could help address Colorado’s population explosion and increasingly high housing costs – especially for those with lower incomes and fewer resources,” Steffen said.

Editor’s Note: County resistance is often tied to lower property tax values, a factor that need not be a negative.

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Previous page top left: *Julie on Lincoln.*

Top right: *Manx from Dennis.*

Middle right: *Sgt. Duke from Dennis.*

Bottom left: *White cat from Virginia*

This page top left: *Chino on his birthday from Sally.*

Top right: *Angel from Emma.*

Middle right: *Buddy.*

Bottom left: *Cat snuggles with Boxer.*

Choosing A Beneficiary

From Jim Plane – State Farm Insurance

What factors should you consider when choosing a beneficiary?

It's simple: Fill in the blank on the life insurance application and you've named a beneficiary. But don't write off the task as unimportant. Naming the right person to receive the proceeds of a life insurance policy is an important decision that could have long-ranging effects on your loved ones.

Why is choosing a beneficiary important?

Certain accounts ask you to name a beneficiary, such as life insurance policies, pension plans, and retirement accounts. Upon your death, proceeds from these accounts will typically go directly to the beneficiaries and bypass probate, the slow and expensive legal process of distributing your assets after you pass, which helps your beneficiaries avoid some red tape.

Tips to consider when selecting a beneficiary

Choosing a beneficiary is a very personal decision, and different for everyone. In some cases, people want to use a

death benefit to protect their loved ones, and others might see it more as a financial transaction. Here are some tips to keep in mind when you are selecting your beneficiary.

Insurable Interest

The person or entity named as a beneficiary has to have an insurable interest in the insured person. While the insured generally has the right to name any beneficiary, there must still be a legitimate financial interest between the parties. In most cases, beneficiaries rely on the insured for financial support, such as the spouse or dependent children, so there is an apparent financial interest and purpose of insurance between the parties.

Age

Most insurance companies, pension plans, and retirement accounts will not pay benefits to someone under age 18. A better option is to create a trust for the minor and name a trustee to manage the account until the child reaches the age you specify in the trust.

Ability to manage money

If your beneficiary is not able to manage money, establish a trust and name a trustee to invest and disburse funds on his or her behalf.

Contingency

Name a secondary beneficiary so that if your first beneficiary dies before you, the account proceeds pass directly to the secondary beneficiary without probate.

Options

Your beneficiary can be a spouse, child, or other individual(s); a trust; a charity or organization. If you don't specify a beneficiary, your assets will go into your estate and be distributed according to your will.

State or policy life insurance beneficiary rules. Some states or insurance companies might restrict who you can name as your beneficiary. Consult an attorney to provide legal guidance for these state specific issues.

Estate as a beneficiary.

It's rarely recommended to name your estate as a beneficiary, since doing so means those assets may be subject to probate.

Don't "set it and forget it"

Because so many things change throughout life, review your beneficiary designations every few years — and always after a life event such as a marriage, the birth of a child, adoption, divorce, remarriage, or death — to make sure they're current. Otherwise, you may risk leaving the proceeds to an ex-spouse or someone who has died before you.

Get specific information about beneficiaries from a legal or tax adviser.



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Colorado Predator Hunt Ruled Illegal

By **JAMES ANDERSON** *Assoc. Press March 31, 2021*

DENVER (AP) — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service illegally helped pay for a Colorado program to kill dozens of mountain lions and black bears in an experiment to determine if the predators were partly responsible for declining mule deer populations, a federal judge has ruled. U.S. District Court Chief Judge Marcia Krieger in Denver found that Fish and Wildlife failed to do a required analysis of the program’s environmental effects, possibly so it could fast-track federal funding for most of the \$4 million program.

This decision stops that funding for state-authorized kills of mountain lions and black bears in southern Colorado’s Upper Arkansas River Valley. A second Colorado Parks and Wildlife program in northwestern Colorado’s Piceance Basin has been completed.

Concerned about declining populations of mule deer, which help sustain Colorado’s nearly \$1 billion hunting industry, Colorado Parks and Wildlife decided in 2016 to conduct an experiment to see if limited killing of mountain lions and black bears would have an impact on deer numbers.

The plan would test whether removing some lions and bears, which also prey on deer, would produce higher deer survival rates. As many as 15 lions and 25 black bears would be killed each year for three years in one area near Rifle, in northwestern Colorado. About 60 lions could be killed over three years in southern Colorado in a study lasting nine years. To help fund the experiment, Fish and Wildlife largely relied on an environmental analysis by the U.S. Agriculture Dept. that didn’t specifically address the Colorado plan, according to a lawsuit filed by the Center for Biological Diversity, WildEarth Guardians and the Humane Society of the United States. That analysis was required for any federal

funding. The lawsuit also argued that declining deer populations stemmed from human development, including oil and gas leasing, and that killing those predators would damage local ecosystems. Colorado Parks and Wildlife says its research is ongoing and that other factors could include maternal and fetal conditions and changes in the availability of forage.

“Fish and Wildlife really didn’t go into the environmental impact that removing mountain lions and black bears would have on those areas,” said Andrea Zaccardi, a senior attorney at the Center for Biological Diversity. “The mule deer are suffering mostly from a reduction in habitat.” Actual numbers of predators killed under the program weren’t immediately available. Colorado’s Division of Natural Resources, which oversees Colorado Parks and Wildlife, referred a query for comment to Fish and Wildlife. That agency didn’t immediately respond to a telephone message and email seeking comment on this ruling. Krieger ordered the Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct a more complete and focused environmental analysis of the program.



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• 5 = Excellent: Plants are very healthy and uniform; flowering is impressive

Selection of “Top Performers”

On November 20, 2020, a conference call was convened with CSU staff and the Perennial Trial Garden Subcommittee. Pictures of entries from the 2018 planting were posted to the Perennial Trial website for review. Data from the growing season was compiled and emailed to each evaluator prior to the conference call for review. After discussion and looking at the pictures taken throughout the season, each plant was voted on by each member of the committee as to whether it should be awarded the designation as a “Top Performer.” The following is the list of winners selected as a “Top Performer” perennial.



Soft lavender blue flowers were prolific and brought strong flower power later in the summer. Flowers were relatively tall and held above foliage for maximum show but had good structure and did not lodge. Plant were uniform and very attractive with glossy, green flat leaf blades.

2. Echinacea ‘Sombrero® Tres Amigos’ (Echinacea x hybrida) from Darwin Perennials

(Previous page bottom.)

Flowers were unique with an “evolution of color” that resulted in about three different shades of color during the season. Blooms were vibrant with a rich saturated color. Abundant flowers remained in bloom a long time and created an impressive overall show. Plants had a good growth habit with strong branching and no disease.

3. Penstemon ‘DAKOTA™

(Pictured here.) Burgundy’ (Penstemon digitalis) from Terra Nova Nurseries - Dark burgundy foliage was a key reason for the superior rating. Multiple shades of burgundy added interest to the dark foliage *(Continued page 25.)*

“Top Performer” Perennials from the 2020 CSU Perennial Trial

1. Allium ‘Summer Beauty’ (Allium lusitanicum) from Stonehouse Nursery, LLC *(Top, previous page.)*

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and help make the white/lavender flower color really stand out. Blooms are very prolific with a long flowering period. It was noted that although the flowers are very impressive, the plant looks very showy even when not in flower due to the attractive dark foliage that remained clean all season and never had got “floppy ear.” Plants were very reliable and had 100% survival over three seasons.

4. Phlox ‘Ka-Pow®’ series (Phlox paniculata) from Darwin



Perennials (Pictured here above.)

Evaluators were impressed with the entire series as all had similar height, were very uniform and resistant to powdery mildew. Flowers had a long period of bloom with no color fade. Series had a range of colors that went from soft lavender to a vibrant pink. The pink entry was noted to have some shades of coral which is unique to Phlox.

5. Salvia ‘Blue by You’ (Salvia nemerosa) from Darwin Perennials. Vibrant blue flowers were very showy with



prolific amounts of blooms early in the season and an impressive repeat later in the season after a hard cut back of old blooms. The unique blue color is a great addition to the pallet of Salvia colors in the trade and evaluators said they “had to go see it” from across the garden. (Pictured here.)



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Update: BuffaloFieldCampaign.org

Update From the Field:

Migration is Upon Us

After a winter of anticipation, migration is finally underway in the Hebgen Basin!

Moving with determination and purpose, family groups led by pregnant mothers are making their way to spring calving grounds in Gallatin National Forest.

Horse Butte, their destination and calving grounds have two prized resources for the buffalo: large patches of snow-free earth and nutritious green grass.

The excitement among migrating buffalo is evident as yearlings prance, play and graze on their way back to their birth place. It is a joyous time for the buffalo and all of us that love these sacred animals. It is only a matter of days before we see the first buffalo calves born.... By the time you're reading this they should be here!

Every year we are so thankful that Horse Butte was designated as year round buffalo habitat in 2015. After years of advocacy and hard work, local villagers, along with our campaign members pushed former Governor Bullock to recognize the need for permanent habitat protecting calving grounds on Horse Butte. Designating year-round habitat protects them from harassment and hazing at the hands of the Montana Department of



Livestock.

For the last 6 years, new buffalo calves enjoyed their first months of life without disturbance from the State of Montana, and that is certainly something to celebrate!

During spring calving season, our field patrols have the important job of ensuring that the buffalo can safely cross the highways. With two sets of daytime patrols and a night patrol, we deploy our "Buffalo on Road" signs wherever there are buffalo present near the road to give drivers time to slow down and exercise caution, for their own safety and the safety of the herd.

Spring is one of the most important and rewarding times to be out in the field standing with the buffalo. After a long winter, it is refreshing to see our friends, the buffalo, return like they always do.

Calving season gives us the opportunity to re-connect with locals and travelers to West Yellowstone, because everyone appreciates the roads are safe for both buffalo and people.

Oftentimes on patrol we will get stopped by a local or a traveler who want to share how much they love when the buffalo find their way to spring calving grounds on the National Forest and privilege us with their presence.

People here and afar love buffalo, let them roam is the common belief and slogan for our last wild herd of bison. We need to keep the pressure on D.C. to keep them wild!



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Remote Workers Flocking To Western Towns

By Jonathan Thompson Jan. 1, 2021 High Country News

In the spring of 2020, FIS Worldpay, a payment-processing company, sent more than 200 of its Durango, Colorado-based employees home to work remotely, in order to stem the spread of the novel coronavirus. Even when pandemic-avoidance measures were loosened over the summer and many workplaces filled back up, the 81,000-square-foot building remained dark. Then, in November, the Jacksonville, Florida-based company announced that the staff would continue to work remotely, and that the Durango building — the largest of its kind in town — would close for good.

This phenomenon — one-time cubicle workers becoming full-time telecommuters, liberated from corporate headquarters — deprived Durango of one of its largest private employers and has driven up office vacancy rates nationwide. Yet at the same time, it is also fueling housing booms in so-called “Zoom towns,” Durango included, as the born-again remote workers seek out more desirable areas. *(Downtown Durango pictured.)*

Zoom towns are scattered across the United States, but the most popular ones seem to be small- to mid-sized, amenity-rich communities, with plenty of public land nearby, from Bend, Oregon, to Flagstaff, Arizona, along with a whole bunch of best-place-to-live-list towns.



In most cases, their real estate markets were already overheated. But they exploded in the wake of the pandemic’s first wave, driving home prices to astronomical levels and putting homeownership even further out of reach for the typical working-class person. The telecommuter-migration is just one of many reasons behind the current real estate craze. Rock-bottom interest rates have also contributed, along with wealthy investors seeking refuges during tumultuous times. “It’s clear that many buyers are being driven out of large cities by both COVID-19 and civil unrest,” wrote the authors of the Jackson Hole Report, regarding the recent uptick in homes priced over \$3 million. “Most have been contemplating a move for some time, and felt now was the right

time.” The Zoom economy has come at Durango from two directions. The housing market went berserk in the third quarter of 2020, and the median home price shot up to about twice the amount that a median-income earner could afford. Meanwhile, economic development officials are trying to figure out what to do with a giant, empty office building. One option: Convert it into affordable housing.

Jonathan Thompson is a contributing editor at High Country News.

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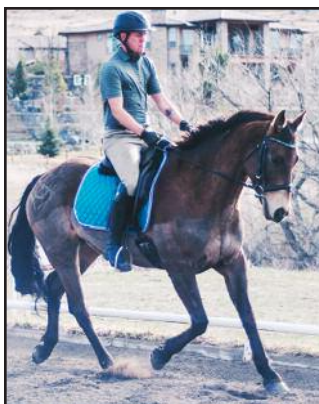
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Eco Anxiety

By Holly Schaeffer April 20, 2021 EarthTalk

What It Is And How To Cope With It

As a general rule, life has its fair share of a-ha moments. Sometimes, they're brilliant realizations that instantly make us feel better, showing us the path forward. Other times, however, they can be downright depressing.

Coming to terms with our consumerist habits and their negative implications for the world around us can be one of those not-so-great realization moments. And, if you're anything like me, they might give you a bad case of eco-anxiety.

So, whether you're trying to wrap your head around your carbon footprint, worrying about where this world is going, or simply need to stop yourself from working yourself up over the things you can't control, here's everything you need to know about eco-anxiety & what you can do about it.

Defining Eco-Anxiety

The first time anyone used the term eco-anxiety was in 2017. It was when the American Psychological Association released a report titled "Mental Health and Our Changing Climate: Impacts, Implications, and Guidance."

This document defined eco-anxiety as "a chronic fear of environmental doom." It found that as many as 49% of the people living in areas affected by Hurricane Katrina experienced such a mood disorder and that one in six of the

same people suffered from PTSD.

And things seem to be getting worse (as the world struggles to make genuinely impactful changes on a global level). According to a 2020 Washington Post poll, 57% of American teenagers said that climate change scared them. Moreover, as many as 52% stated that it made them angry. But what does eco-anxiety look like in the real world? Is it really such an impactful psychological condition? Or is it a driving force we could use to stop climate change?

The Symptoms

One of the most important things we must understand about eco-anxiety as a condition is that it's not the same as a clinical anxiety disorder. Nonetheless, despite not being recognized as a mental health issue, it can still cause significant problems to a person's wellbeing.

Most often, eco-anxiety manifests as a feeling of helplessness. It can also take the shape of anger, fatalistic thinking, or guilt and shame over our carbon footprint. When it gets out of hand, it can have effects similar to PTSD. Sometimes, it can cause depression or panic attacks. In other instances, it may lead to obsessive thinking or physical outcomes like sleep problems and appetite changes.

How to Cope

The most challenging part of living with eco-anxiety isn't the issue of identifying the state. More often than not, it's

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actually coping with its implications.

The simple fact is, climate change is here. And it's most likely to remain a big part of everyone's lives (whether they're ready to admit it or not). And no matter how committed we are to reducing our carbon footprint, we will never be able to do enough to fully reverse it. For that to happen, society as a whole will have to make some significant changes.

But that doesn't mean we should give in to the sense of dread. Or even work ourselves to the bone trying to right the world's wrongs.

Instead, it means we must find the best possible ways we can contribute to making the world a better place.

Making Personal Behavior Changes

One of the most obvious paths to combating climate change (and our eco-anxiety) is to identify the areas of our life where we can make ecological improvements.

For example, we can always adopt small but impactful habits. We can do our best to conserve energy at home, learn about the ecological impact of different materials, modify our diets, or alter/remove our ways of commuting.

Moreover, we can choose to learn as much as we can (from reputable sources) and share that knowledge with the people around us.

For example, social media apps have shown to be great platforms for battling climate change. On them, there's an increasing number of users addressing ecological topics, bringing prevalent issues closer even to those who thought eco-friendly living had no impact on them whatsoever.

Using Our Voice (& Money) to Drive Change

The second and perhaps more impactful thing we can do about ecological issues that hit close to home is to think about ways to contribute on a larger scale.

For example, we can contact our elected representatives regarding ecological issues we feel passionate about. Or, we can join a local community that has the opportunity to act on a bigger scale than individuals.

We can even help prevent pollution by being mindful of where we spend our money, ensuring that we always opt for eco-friendly products.

Understanding Limitations of Individual Efforts

Finally, the last step of overcoming eco-anxiety is to remind ourselves that the question of climate change isn't something that can be solved by individual efforts.

Yes, anyone can make a difference, no matter how small. And if everyone on the planet made even the tiniest change in their lives, it would amount to a great deal.


But we must also remember that climate change is a political issue. And that means that the biggest results depend on world leaders, corporations, and entire industries.

So, if you find yourself feeling overwhelmed by your inability to do enough, it's not a bad idea to remember that there are many, many more players in this game we're all part of. And, if that doesn't help, then know that it's OK to reach out for help.

After all, you're not alone on this rock we all call home. And having someone to express your concerns to might just help you identify the things you can and can't control. Or, it may give you your next Eureka moment and lead you to a breakthrough solution that will help to put a stop to climate change once and for all.


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Butterflies Are Disappearing

By Oliver Milman March 10, 2021 High Country News

The climate crisis has caused a steep decline in butterfly sightings in the Rocky Mountain range.

This story was originally published by the Guardian and is reproduced here as part of the Climate Desk collaboration.

The varied and beautiful butterfly species that dot the West are being cut down by the climate crisis, new research has found, with rising temperatures helping cause a steep decline in butterfly numbers over the past 40 years.

There has been a 1.6% reduction in the total number of butterflies observed west of the Rocky Mountain range each year since 1977, researchers calculated, which amounts to a staggering loss of butterflies over the timespan of the study period.

“Certainly many butterfly species are becoming so rare it’s hard for some people to see what were once widespread, common species.”

The declines are winnowing away much-loved species such as the monarch butterfly, which is known for its spectacular mass migrations to California each year but has lost 99% of its population compared with 40 years ago. “With the monarch it seems we are on the verge of losing the migration, if not the species itself,” Forister said.

The research, published in Science, analyzed citizen-gathered sightings of butterflies in 72 locations spanning all of the western U.S. states. In all, more than 450 butterfly species were included in the study.

Across all of these sightings, the researchers found an annual 1.6% drop in butterfly numbers in the West, which is consistent with the rate of decline of other insects found by researchers in different places around the world, fueling concerns of a deep crisis among the creatures that help supply much of our food, break down waste and form crucial foundations to the web of life.

While butterflies, like other insects, are being negatively affected by habitat loss and toxic pesticide use, the researchers accounted for these factors in their study and found that the heating of the planet, even without those other pressures, is causing the steady decline of butterflies.

This could be because plants are drying up more rapidly at the end of summer, meaning nectar resources are more scarce for butterflies, or that warming winters are interfering with the stasis-like state butterflies enter during colder months, meaning they are in worse condition when spring arrives.

“We have a lot of wide open land in the West and people often struggle to understand that a few degrees in temperature can make a big difference, but they can,” Forister said. “We are seeing these climate change impacts even in nice, natural areas and my feeling is that areas damaged by agriculture or urbanization are already lost to the butterflies.”

Forister said while temperatures will continue to rise, people can provide butterflies with some breathing room by conserving areas rife with wildflowers and cutting back on certain chemicals.

“The declines are extremely concerning ecologically,” said Dara Satterfield, a butterfly researcher at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, who was not involved in the

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study.

“We know butterflies and moths act as pollinators, decomposers, nutrient-transport vessels, and food sources for birds and other wildlife.”

“This study is consistent with other large datasets from around the world, showing us that recent decades have presented new hurdles to survival for numerous butterfly species.”

Oliver Milman is an environment reporter for Guardian U.S. Populations of the Mourning Cloak butterfly, pictured here, have collapsed in recent years. Alan Vernon/CC via Flickr

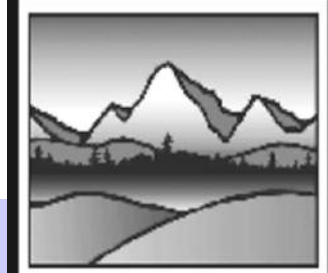


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Restoration Of Polluted Rivers

Long-term monitoring shows successful restoration of mining-polluted streams

Colorado State University Professor William Clements has spent the past 30 years analyzing how watersheds damaged by mining pollution would respond to remediation. He's studied the most toxic of these waterways – Superfund sites as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

His research has focused primarily on the Arkansas River near Leadville, Colorado, where a long history of mining in the watershed began as far back as 1859. Clements, a scientist in CSU's Department of Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Biology, said that the patterns of recovery that have occurred over time in Colorado and other states is a true conservation success story.

He joins a team of researchers to highlight these findings in a new paper that will be published in the June issue of *Freshwater Science* and is now available online.

The streams highlighted in the study – including ones in California, Colorado, Idaho and Montana – recovered from severe pollution damage from different metals within ten to fifteen years.

“So much of what we've presented to the public in the environmental realm has been gloom and doom,” said Clements. “It is good every now and then to have these success stories. We found that these systems can indeed turn around with a little bit of attention and time.”

The four mining-impacted watersheds in the study are among the few acid mine drainage sites where scientists have conducted extended studies to monitor the effectiveness of remediation efforts.

More than 100 CSU students contributed to research. Over the past 31 years, Clements said the project in Colorado has involved over 100 CSU undergraduate and graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers. The research was a collaborative effort among CSU, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Clements was an assistant professor at CSU when the project was launched in 1989. The research started with a very small grant from the EPA and led to a long-term study. It's been a challenge to keep a 31-year study going, he said. “Neighbors and colleagues and students volunteered to help out in the lean years with field work,” he said.

Did he imagine a transformation from a Superfund site to a Gold Medal trout stream, as designated by the Colorado Wildlife Commission?

“Absolutely not,” he said. “At the start, the study was designed to see what the effects of the mining pollution were. We studied aquatic insects in the upstream and downstream portions of the river and compared them to see what it would take to restore the river to its natural state. There was no way to see this remarkable transformation thirty years ago.”

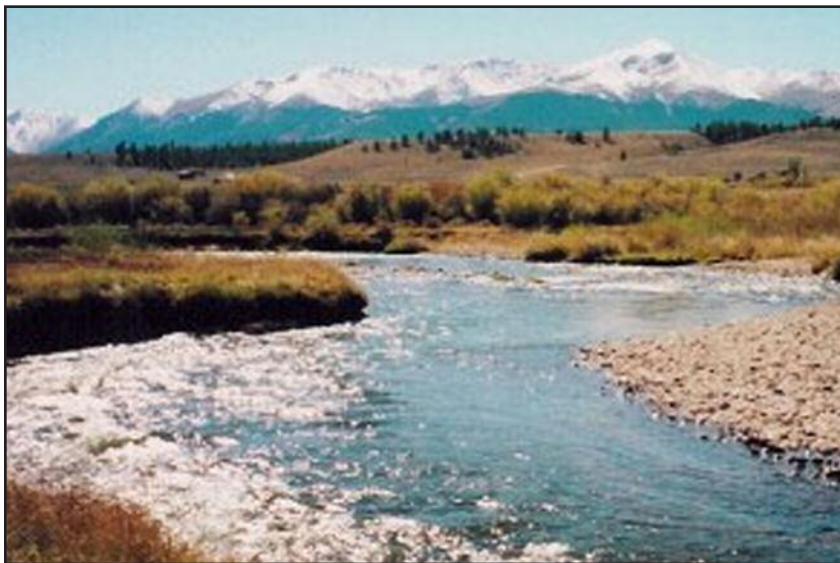
Clements said these insects – including mayflies, stoneflies and caddisflies – play important roles in the flow of energy in the river, contributing to the decomposition of leaves and recycling of nutrients.

Lessons learned could help restore other rivers. What he and the other scientists observed can also be applied to other polluted watersheds.

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Clements currently has a similar Superfund research project in the Clear Creek watershed, near Blackhawk, Colorado. He is also optimistic about restoration efforts in the Animas River, which was polluted in 2015 following a wastewater spill caused by the Gold King Mine. Photos from the polluted river – which turned yellow – went viral and were featured in news coverage around the world. “There are a large number of abandoned mines throughout the West, particularly in Colorado,” said Clements. “They are not always big Superfund sites, but there are lots of opportunities to take what we’ve learned about the historic

effects of metals that began about 150 years ago and restore these waterways.”

The CSU team will continue to monitor the Arkansas River, observing which species – including aquatic insects and trout – exist upstream and downstream. Clements said how we define restoration success is partially a philosophical question, and the results might be viewed differently, depending upon the eyes of the beholder.

“There’s every indication that the Arkansas River may eventually get there, but it certainly hasn’t completely recovered,” he said. “Even though you eliminate original stressors that caused the shift, it may never go back to where it was hundreds of years ago. But the story here is really about this remarkable turnaround and how these systems in different states got to the same place is pretty thrilling.” Clements said another benefit in Colorado related to the restoration efforts is that there is more public access to the Arkansas River, thanks to Colorado Parks and Wildlife and several federal agencies. “There used to be a lot of private land up there,” he said. “Now there’s a great deal of river access and it’s put the Arkansas River on the map in terms of the tremendous fishery.” (*Arkansas River near Leadville, CO.*) USFWS


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Power Update

June
2021

Wildfire Mitigation a Cooperative Priority United Power Taking Proactive Steps to Prevention

As your cooperative, United Power takes the growing threat of wildfires seriously. Leadership at the cooperative has continuously embraced a proactive and progressive approach to wildfire prevention. The co-op is now several years into implementing a comprehensive multiyear mitigation plan in Coal Creek. United Power's goal is the safety of its members and the protection of the communities they live in.

United Power made preparations to enhance its existing fire mitigation plan in early 2013 with a change in facility design and placement, making them more accessible and clear of potential hazards. The implementation also included an expansive vegetation management policy and phasing in a new insulated electrical line.

Crews working with United Power will be out in the co-op's territory much of this spring and summer working to trim vegetation near lines. If you see them in the field, please remember to stay safe and keep your distance.

While the purpose of the cooperative's enhanced vegetation management plan is to keep its infrastructure clear of as many growth hazards as possible, the covered insulator provides an additional level of protection when contact is made, such as a tree falling into the line following a strong storm. The strength of the line along with the covered protection goes a long way in preventing fires caused by electrical equipment in the mountain service territory.

The new line has been one of the more high-profile and visible elements of the fire mitigation plan, but the team at United Power went much further in developing system improvements to mitigate the wildfire risk to members. Always looking for an opportunity to develop a better system, the co-op became an early adopter of drone maintenance



inspections and is an industry leader in both system automation and the deployment of smart devices.

Drones are able to quickly survey miles of line in a rapid period of time, freeing line crews to focus on preventable outages, which has been especially useful in the mountains where the terrain can often make pole inspections time consuming and difficult. The number of man-hours saved, and outages prevented, from this innovative inspection format is incalculable.

Automated field devices further allow the system to identify and isolate problems to restore power quickly while minimizing the number of members affected. Smart devices are able to immediately report problems back to the cooperative's system operators. These improvements, along with the installation of advanced trip savers and fault detectors, help improve outage response and mitigate the potential for fires.

For more information about United Power's efforts to prevent wildfires and its fire mitigation plan, go to www.unitedpower.com/fire-mitigation.



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