

A study released this week found [a 69% drop in wild animal populations globally](#) over the past 50 years. Latin America including the Amazon and the Caribbean were especially hard hit.

Human development of natural areas for suburbs, cities, mining, roads and agriculture, and the resulting habitat loss for animals, is the primary driver of this global extinction.

While climate change receives a lion's share of the environmental media attention, biodiversity collapse is an equally existential threat to all life on earth, including humans. The two crises are inextricably linked with all solutions to one being solutions to the other and vice versa.

LINK: <https://www.popsci.com/environment/living-planet-index-70-percent-decline/>

Gopher tortoise populations are [apparently doing well](#) according to the government agency tasked with monitoring their numbers and the animals will not receive additional federal protection across their habitat range. If you believe the numbers, that's good news, the downside, of course, is the lack of additional protection.

This decision being lauded by a forestry organization likely tells you whether to receive it as good news or bad as a conservationist.

LINK: <https://www.actionnewsjax.com/news/local/us-gopher-tortoise-not-threatened-over-most-its-range/UXL7YWVD6ZATXK3QWK47VDVHVY/>

Wildlife advocacy groups are [unhappy with the decision](#).

<https://www.cbsnews.com/miami/news/us-fish-and-wildlife-officials-deny-increased-gopher-tortoise-protections/?ceid=2023608&emci=7b72f019-794a-ed11-b495-002248258d38&emdi=b363e788-2f4b-ed11-819c-002248258e08>

The U.S. Department of Energy has estimated that domestic offshore wind generation potential is roughly equal to double the nation's total electric demand. Due to our languid offshore winds, Florida won't be contributing to that output.

One major obstacle in embracing wind power – aside from gas, oil and coal interests – [getting that wind power](#) to the people who need it.

LINK: <https://floridaphoenix.com/2022/10/09/for-offshore-wind-aspirations-to-become-reality-transmission-hurdles-must-be-cleared/>

Hurricane Ian [devastated bee colonies across Florida](#), colonies which represent about 15% of the nation's colonized population which is critical for large scale agricultural pollination.

Looping back to the first story in the newsletter, if native bee numbers hadn't been collapsing for years, farmer's wouldn't be so dependent on colonized bees to pollinate their crops.

LINK: <https://wusfnews.wusf.usf.edu/economy-business/2022-10-12/florida-bee-colonies-destroyed-by-hurricane-ian-smashed-drowned-starving>

[The 2022 Right Whale Festival](#) at Main Beach Park in Fernandina Beach is just around the corner: Saturday and Sunday, November 5 and 6.

Each fall, pregnant North Atlantic right whales travel more than 1,000 miles to the coastal waters of the Southeast U.S. where they give birth to and nurse their young. Less than 350 remain making right whales one of the most endangered whales and mammals in the world.

Join non-profit organizations, artists, musicians, marine mammal scientists, as well as state and federal agencies with the common goal to raise awareness for this critically endangered species and promote ways to protect them from extinction.

LINK: <http://www.rightwhalefestival.com/>

Another major national opinion piece highlighting America's toxic relationship with turfgrass lawns and its various evils comes from [the New York Times](#). Native plants in home landscaping is now a movement.

LINK: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/CidLx2xgs1n/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY%3D>

There was a time when longleaf pine covered an estimated 92 million acres, from East Texas all along the Gulf Coast, south into Florida and north to Virginia—an area almost as large as California. After the “sawmill bonanza” of the early twentieth century, only 3.2 million scattered acres of longleaf remained; of that, only twelve thousand acres were “old growth.” Gathered all together, it wouldn't be enough to cover the island of Manhattan.

[The history of longleaf pine destruction in America](#) and its long, slow, uncertain road to recovery.

LINK: https://orionmagazine.org/article/longleaf-pine-conservation-colonial-history/?mc_cid=26d744d483&mc_eid=ca7b50c7fb