

IT'S ALL CONNECTED

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Nature, Climate, and Environmental Good News to Celebrate in the New Year

Happy New Year to you all. Keeping up with good tidings and cheer of the holiday season, we want to share a select few feel good projects, laws, studies, and groups taking steps to make a difference for the better:

Effective January 2023, California was the first state to restrict placement of single-use toiletry items in large hotels. And, as of January 1, 2024, [California Assembly Bill AB 1162](#), expanded to prohibit the use of single use toiletry items in hotels of all sizes. Hence, these establishments may no longer provide single use shampoo, conditioner, lotions, or bar soap. “We have reached a tipping point for action and more needs to be done that transitions consumers and businesses towards more sustainable alternatives” stated Assemblymember Ash Kalra.

One year ago, Miami and a couple dozen other Florida cities finally banned smoking on its beaches, with a [“let’s get the bad butts off the beach”](#) campaign. This is wonderful news since cigarette butts account for a huge amount of trash on beaches worldwide. Florida joins many other states and countries with this new law.



Photo by Laura Schare

A research study illustrated that [bumbees engage in play](#). We’ve long known that mammals and birds play, and adding insects to the mix brings up all kinds of questions about emotions, feelings, and sentience, and how we humans might need to adjust our views toward other life forms.

In the Pacific Northwest, a vast coalition of groups have come together along with the Biden Administration and signed an initiative aimed at [restoring the salmon, steelhead,](#)

[and other native fish populations](#) that are being decimated by several dams on the Snake River.



At 50 years, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) has been fantastically effective since its inception in 1973, but it is under attack by politicians and capitalists who view the protections as far too reaching thereby thwarting some expansion and development plans around the country. In fact, the ESA is now more than ever an important and much needed protection for many species and their habitats. As climate change effects grow and expand, many of our nature neighbors will need help managing their survival. Take five minutes to better understand the [history and challenges of the ESA here](#).

In July, Florida signed a bill into law allocating \$100 million for continued restoration of critical [manatee and sea turtle habitat at Indian River Lagoon](#) in South Florida. These monies will help protect over 4,000 plant and animal species as well as improve water quality in the greater area.

We know that spending time outdoors, especially in greener nature areas is good for the body and soul. So get your “Green Hour” on and get outside. The National Wildlife Federation has [lots of suggestions](#) to help you and your loved ones connect with nature. Though it sounds hokey, it is true that the more time we spend in nature, the more we care about it, and the more we will do to protect it. So grab your friends and family and get out there.

This past August, the state of Louisiana broke ground on a [\\$50 billion Coastal Master Plan](#) to redirect Mississippi River sediment in an effort to restore precious wetlands south of New Orleans. This project will not only bring back valuable wetlands and establish healthy ecosystems for flora and fauna, it will help provide a buffer from storm surge and flooding.



The Audubon Society ranching division announced its [100th certified bird-friendly ranch](#) in Colorado this past year. In their own words, “Audubon Conservation Ranching’s purpose is to stabilize declining grassland bird populations in partnership with ranchers – on whose land 95 percent of grassland birds live.”

For those of you who enjoy social media, please join our [How to Help Wildlife](#) Facebook group to further discuss, share, and learn about more ways to help wildlife and nature.

Big victories and little ones come together every year, every month, and every day. We celebrate and thank all who strive to help protect, restore, and sustain Mother Earth for all inhabitants today and those of the future.

Quick Connections

Books, websites, documentaries, podcasts, events, quotes, and more



In [An Immense World](#), author Ed Yong takes the reader on a journey through other worlds right here on Earth. Our human way of visualizing and connecting is just the tip of the iceberg and what he reveals is marvelous nature magic.



“Once the climate crisis has gotten your attention, you can’t look away. Once you fully understand the magnitude of the problem, you can’t erase it.” - **Greta Thunberg**



Which winter animal are you? Take the [quiz here](#).



Free [raptor poster download](#) from Eastern Sierra Audubon with artwork by John Muir Laws.

Community Connections

We want to connect with you. Do you know of any nature or environment efforts by groups or individuals that should be highlighted? Please share their story with us and we'll give a shout out to those taking steps and making a difference large and small.

We read each and every response and will share selected reader stories in upcoming newsletters.

Your feedback is important. [Tell us](#) how we are doing and what you would like to see covered in future newsletters.

Every connection counts! Please help grow our community of everyday heroes by sharing this newsletter with a friend or colleague.

Thank you,

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