

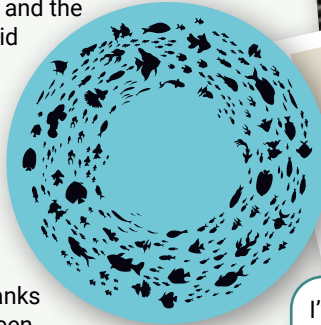


THE STORY SO FAR... Winning or Losing?

For three years I collected thousands of news items from around the world.

From all that material I chose 19 chapters, everything from farming and fishing to food, energy and money. I guessed at the future (2022), produced a newsletter to try and keep up with change, which affects, and will affect our species, and many others, on that unique so-called "our" planet e.g. "Our Changing Planet" (BBC-1, April 2022 - to be followed through for seven years by a team of well-known presenters). Just what they'll inherit on Earth remains to be seen and my book, "Planet Crunch", was/is an attempt to put a perspective on winning or losing. Personally, I don't feel optimistic because our species is too greedy, aggressive, stupid and short-sighted to be able to find answers for a peaceful, healthy, biodiverse planet. But there is some good news, some winning rather than losing and the media can be helpful. Certainly Sir David Attenborough can, and has been. But he's a rare species and can't live forever. I worked with him, most enjoyably, in the past, on "Life on Earth" and "The Living Planet". Now my book "Planet Crunch", and some one hundred films, on YouTube and Vimeo, was/is an attempt to put my point-of-view in those 19 chapters. Thanks to the generosity of my family I have been able to give copies of the book away, and provide access to the films for free. Many people donated to charity and I am pleased to say, school education benefited and the whole project of "Planet Crunch", the films, and the book, was widely (3,000+) circulated. So this is an update, deliberately controversial, but hopefully, useful in its own personal way – in the style of the book.

Richard Brock



I've chosen 6 subjects to come right up-to-date:

- 1 **Tourism**
- 2 **Coffee/Chocolate**
- 3 **"PooDunnit"**
- 4 **Fishing/Oceans**
- 5 **Winners & Losers**
- 6 **Cheer you-upplement**



1

"PENT-UP DEMAND" ...sounds like a fertile politician from the past, or, my MP (middle class?) Jacob Rees-Mogg, with six children. In both cases, too many, people for a limited planet.



No, it's what the tourism business has been saying since the beginning of 2022. Not a happy Christmas because millions of potential customers had been stuck at home in Covid lockdown, missing sunny seaside, ski-ing, in fact anywhere for a getaway holiday. The airlines, hotels, car hire companies, and cruise ships were desperate to get up, up and away again after two years of stagnation. Four months later, by the spring of 2022, several problems arose, one after another, which were to affect people, wildlife, the planet and those frustrated travel companies suffering from "pent-up demand". The notorious Boris Johnson had refused to endorse

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continued from page 1

1 "PENT-UP DEMAND"...

proposals for a third runway at Heathrow, despite a ruling in favour of the airport by the UK's highest court, a project needing £14 billion (*The Times* 17/12/2020), and that was to be just for starters. But what about emissions and climate change? Just how green can airports, airlines and aviation be in the face of the so-called pent-up pressure? And can cruise ships make a comeback?



Without stringent health controls they can become a scary choice incubating on the high seas. Masks, vaccinations and spacing. Royal

Caribbean said a resurgence of Covid-19 infections hampered people's travel plans with its net loss widened to £1.17 billion (£945 million) in the quarter ended 31 March from \$1.13 billion a year earlier. The Ukraine war caused a crash in bookings. Then came Easter 2022 and chaos, starting at Manchester and Heathrow, due to lack of staff and predictability. Crisis-hit airport bosses claimed more than "£100m in public money to compensate". "Police on standby after Manchester airport mayhem" (headlines in *The Daily Telegraph* 6/4/2022). Staycations in the UK boomed. Not always cheap – but good for you, rather than more long flights = bad for the planet, though ecotourism is a cause to be reckoned with = jobs for local people. Lost luggage, thousands of cancellations, refunds withheld, phones not answered. Then, at the end of April came the "Passport Shambles" (headline in *The Times* 26/4/2022). There's a long way to go to satisfy that "pent-up demand", whether it's the greedy travel companies, or the very long-suffering passengers, still waiting for their refunds, their lost bags or passports. Long range electric planes are many years away certainly with even longer distances, like Qantas



London to Sydney (20 hours non-stop). In the meantime "ghost flights" are used with no or few passengers, just to maintain slots for later. What a

waste of fuel, creating more emissions, when the world is trying to reduce global warming, and climate change.

Could the following be more "Pent-up" demand?...



2

THE REAL COST OF CHOCOLATE AND COFFEE

Did you have a Happy Easter?... Easter eggs – chocolate in all its forms? Well, Cadbury's did not.

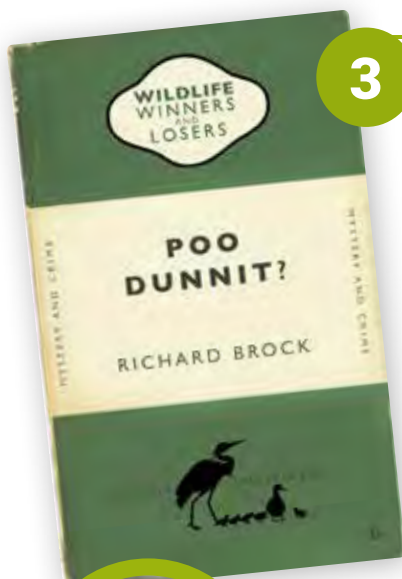
Owned now by food giant Mondelez in Chicago, USA it got a nasty shock, when *Channel 4's Dispatches*, the respected and long-running series was shown at peak time with *Cadbury's Exposed*. The company claims to care for its employees. Its profits are huge. So how embarrassing is it when *Dispatches* secretly films the truth in Ghana, West Africa, where the cocoa for chocolate comes from, grown by local farmers, harvested by their families, and paid a pittance. To learn this is to spoil one's Easter and hurt Cadbury's and Mondelez's reputations established over many years of expensive advertising about how good and green their product is (was). Preview from *The Guardian* (4/4/2022)...

"A deeply uncomfortable watch for anyone looking forward to a visit from the Easter bunny, Anthony Barnett's report explores the human cost of Cadbury's chocolate treats. Secret filming reveals children as young as 10 working in poor and dangerous conditions. Last year, Mondelez made \$4billion, and its boss Dirk Van de Put earned more than £18 million. On the famous Dairy Milk purple packaging... 100% sustainably sourced cocoa. Life... aims to make lives better. The education and entrepreneurship (what?!) training we provide makes for farmers and thriving local communities."

So, how accurate was that *Dispatches* programme? What it certainly showed was the relentless demand on the Earth's resources, growth and human greed. It's also true of that other favourite, coffee. To grow both cocoa for chocolate, and coffee, the original natural landscape is often changed from a biodiverse one to something like a monoculture with the use of pesticides and the impact of climate change.

Massive companies like Coca-Cola/Costa, Nestlé, and Starbucks with 33,000 outlets, profit: \$405 million. Not just the costs of those two global addictions. But to nature. However, look at Costa Rica, the small Central American country that recently won the Earthshot Prize for reversing decades of deforestation by planting trees, doubling the area, boosting ecotourism by £4 billion. A bit of good news on "Planet Crunch" something to chew on?





3

"POO DUNNIT!"



This story is about the long and beautiful River Wye between Wales and England, from source to mouth, through one year, about one of the most changing parts of Britain.

A crime has been committed with a wildlife and human view, we look at the River Wye as it is, has been, and could be!...in other words, how the river could be winning or losing, and that's due, as usual, to us. Let's explore the potential, and see if there's time to repair damage done, and how the future might look if wildlife and people who care are given a chance, to help this river corridor into the future. The two characters we'll follow all the way downstream, the heron and the mallard duck are well-adapted to land, water and the air and we'll be with them all the way down to the sea in 2022. And that brings us to another crucial world...



4

THERE ARE (NOT) PLENTY MORE FISH IN THE SEA

...which is a great shame. Because they are potentially very productive, in fact, a crucial food supply for millions of poor people all across the planet, from pole to pole, and around the tropics too.

They're even more productive and prolific than the species that consumes them – the humans that depend on them with, apparently, often, little concern for the marine life of the future. Surely, as a so-called intelligent species we can share the oceans sustainably? But let's check the food webs and find out how it's working out?

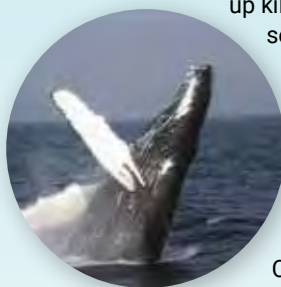
We are all basically plankton, those billions of tiny creatures that move through the oceans, and ultimately support what we eat, and what we breathe in terms of oxygen production.

We interfere at great risk as scientists are now finding out. And, with what we take, from seaweed to salmon, we're all involved in the survival of the sea. That's what Ocean Rebellion are trying to tell the Blue Planet. But who's listening? The signs are certainly there...from suntan lotion chemicals in sea grass killing off bonefish in Florida to salmon farming in Scotland having to use chemicals to cope with lice which can eat the fish alive. Filter-feeders like mussels, oysters, and scallops have the highest levels of micro plastic contamination among sea food

– followed by crabs and lobsters, and then fish. Millions of tiny plankton are the basis of the marine food chain, and now millions of man-made tiny plastic particles are flushed out of our washing machines to end up killing birds, fish, turtles,

seals and whales. In tests, 3,500 trillion plastic microfibers from clothes-washing in the US and Canada ended up in the sea each year. As top of the food chain we eat that poisoned sea life. Serious widespread protection of breeding areas for potentially immensely fertile fish would be a crucial start, so says Prince Charles no less! (*The Times* 13/4/2020).

Meanwhile there's plans to make "smoked salmon" from algae/seaweed. There's a thought!





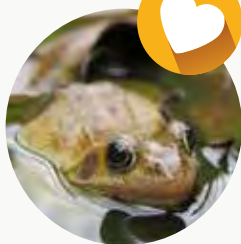
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WINNERS AND LOSERS

The story of life on Earth is astonishing. With David Attenborough's guidance, back in 1979, we tried to tell that story with topical examples.

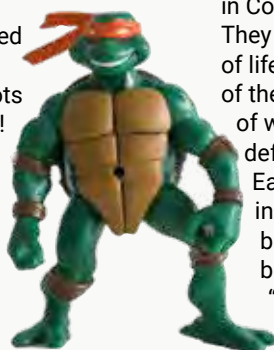


Times have changed; species and places have been altered by man. Some have been lost, but others have been helped, and may be called winners. This is a summary, worldwide, from the simplest creatures up to the most advanced (but probably not the wisest = us). We'll go from individual species to whole landscapes as we "crunch" the vulnerable, unique planet Earth. Who'll win or lose?



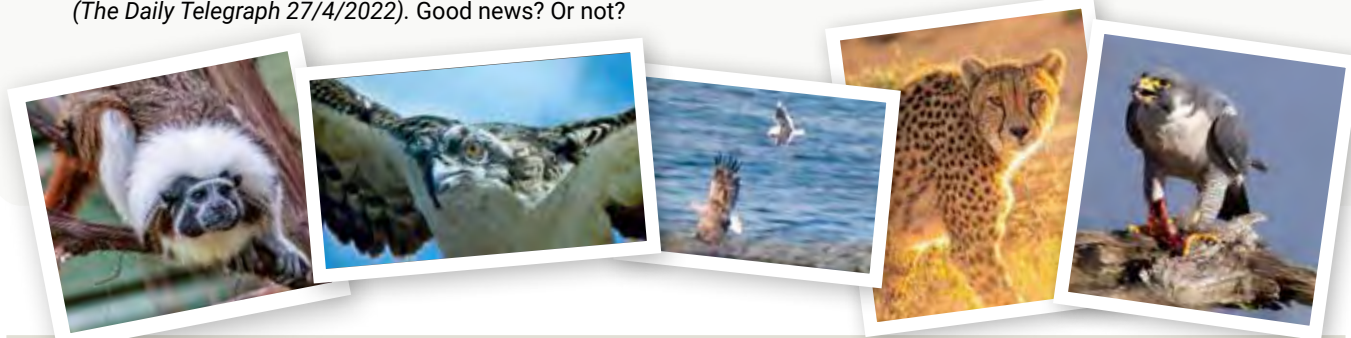
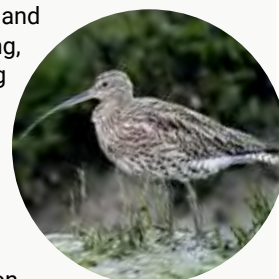
Backbonedless deadly Portuguese man o' war jellyfish swarmed in Cornwall (*The Daily Telegraph* 19/4/2022). And a new species altogether was filmed off Australia. Nearby, another new winner was found, a kind of cricket in the mountains of New Zealand. But the bad news is that its survival may be at risk by global warming, a familiar man-made threat. There's even a new species of millipede named after Taylor Swift the famous singer (*Nannaria swiftae*). And in Britain special areas have been made for small blue butterflies, planted with kidney vetch, a perfect habitat for them.

...On to the vertebrates, animals with backbones like frogs and toads. In one local area near Bristol, England, Toad Patrols rescued 1,500 toads, 500 frogs and 45 newts on their migrations to breeding ponds. Those that fall by the wayside are provided with about 25 ladders to climb out. Well done, Margaret Finn, the organiser and lots of children volunteers. Definitely winners! And the northern pool frog is one of the rarest amphibians on Earth. But extra supplies were (re)introduced from Sweden and the pool frog is back, and doing brilliantly! Some species may do too well. Introduced terrapins (reptiles), with about 4,000 in Britain, probably released as pets due to the famous 90s cartoon, "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (*The Daily Telegraph* 27/4/2022). Good news? Or not?



Life on Earth continued with the next major event, the coming of the birds, with reptilian scales to avian feathers, it enabled them to

spread almost everywhere. It was really only humans that messed it up. Today we try to care for birds on our bird tables, with the latest Garden Birdwatch showing house sparrows, blue tits, starlings, wood pigeons, blackbirds and robins in the top six counted. Away from the gardens, Dartford warblers have increased with a lot of help from their friends, The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) – membership over one million, and winning. But some species are struggling, like the sensitive curlew whose breeding grounds are off limits – certainly to dogs. Wardens protect a colony of little terns on the British North Sea coast on their summer visit from wintering down south in West Africa. And, particularly winning are British birds-of-prey, like peregrines and ospreys, made famous on live television, with their first egg being laid in the Scottish Islands (*The Daily Telegraph* 26/4/2022). Great publicity for a great winner who started it all. Now white-tailed eagles have been brought back to Scotland too. But they may take lambs – not such good news for farmers. From birds to mammals, like Asiatic cheetahs – back from the brink. Surprisingly, perhaps, in Iran, where three "healthy cubs" were born in captivity (*The Daily Telegraph* 2/5/2022). Such successes like little monkeys – endangered cotton-top tamarins down to 7,000 in the wild in Colombia, and bred at Chester Zoo, Chester in England. They offer hope for the future of the amazing biodiversity of life on Earth that's evolved over eons. At the equivalent of the last few seconds, we have arrived with the chances of winning rather than losing. So, will it be more deforestation in South America? Hunting in the Middle East? Over-fishing the potentially fertile oceans? Or, instead, tree-planting worldwide? In tropical Ecuador a bright orange flower has just been re-discovered after being thought to be extinct. It was actually named "extinctus". That's what happens to serious losers. Let's hope that doesn't happen to us because of too many humans and the end of life on Earth – as we know it. Just.





Follow the story of Life on Earth from plants up to us with a great new nature reserve and a future rich dive site.

Woman Guilty in Lettuce Row

A woman has pleaded guilty to abusive behaviour after threatening shop staff with a knife, claiming that she needed lettuce to feed her pet tortoise. Arlene Howard, 67, from Warrington, Cheshire, thought she could "slip in and out" of her local McColl's, where she was banned, to get the lettuce, her lawyer, Gary Heaven, told Warrington magistrates' court. She had been drinking before the incident, and he added that she was "slightly eccentric". Ms Howard was ordered to undergo 120 days of alcohol monitoring. (i 19/2/2022).

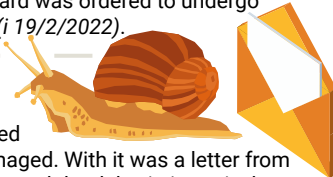


Cheers!



Snail Mail

Sir – Last year I received a letter, posted near Exeter, which was very badly damaged. With it was a letter from Royal Mail, apologising for the damage and the delay in its arrival. The letter explained that "the item was found during a scheduled collection from a posting box and had been damaged by snails. Unfortunately, despite regular cleaning and placing pellets in the boxes, we find that slugs and snails still occasionally manage to creep into the apertures, fall down into the box and start eating the glue on the stamps and envelopes." **Paul Powell-Jackson, Headcorn, Kent (Daily Telegraph 24/1/2022).**

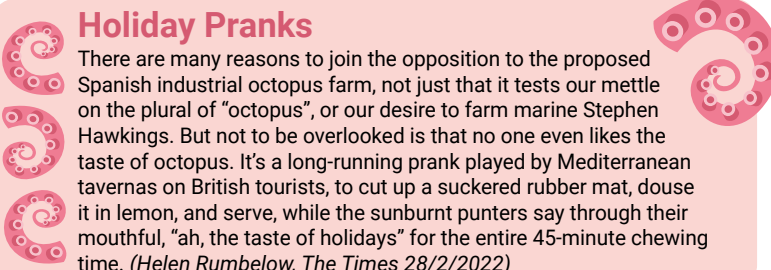


Seen On The Van Of A Pest-Control Company:



Holiday Pranks

There are many reasons to join the opposition to the proposed Spanish industrial octopus farm, not just that it tests our mettle on the plural of "octopus", or our desire to farm marine Stephen Hawkings. But not to be overlooked is that no one even likes the taste of octopus. It's a long-running prank played by Mediterranean tavernas on British tourists, to cut up a suckered rubber mat, douse it in lemon, and serve, while the sunburnt punters say through their mouthful, "ah, the taste of holidays" for the entire 45-minute chewing time. (Helen Rumbelow, *The Times* 28/2/2022)



Flying Spiders Are Among Us



Would you still fancy sex if you knew your lover would probably eat you afterwards? It's hard enough to get in the mood as it is. But God bless the male *Philoponella* spider which, rather than enjoying a post-coital cigarette, must jump for its life on its front leg joints to avoid the female scoffing it alive. And yet still it persists, brains in its trousers like certain politicians. Humans share a few similarities with spiders, so next time you catch a chap tiptoeing out at 4am, shoes in hand, saying, "I forgot to feed the cat," remember this is just the spider inside him. Sometimes male spiders kinkily try to wrap the female legs in silk first too avoid being cannibalised, possibly saying: "Er, just trying something new, love. I read it in *50 Shades*." You know what this sorry tale teaches us? No good comes from sex on the web. (Carol Midgley, *The Times* 27/4/2022)

A Forking Good Idea



It is an excellent idea to use a fork-type implement to lift the lid on a toilet (Letters, 16 April). Here in the North West Cape of Australia, we use a similar device. Not so much for maintaining personal hygiene, but more to check for snakes, scorpions or spiders. **Julian Hodge, Exmouth, North West Cape, Australia (The Guardian 18/2/2022)**

Forget Flowers, Nothing Says I Love You Like a Fish Sent by Drone



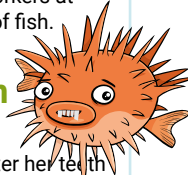
When a lovesick resident decided to woo his sweetheart, who was stuck at home under lockdown in Shanghai, he knew flowers and chocolates wouldn't cut it. Instead he used a drone to fly a fish head through her window, which landed on her bed, followed by half a head of cabbage, a portion of sticky rice and a love note. (*The Times* 13/4/2022)



Hallelujah, it's Raining Fish in East Texas

The American west has seen its fair share of wild weather in recent weeks with California battered by heavy rain and Nevada struck by snowstorms. However, a town in east Texas can claim the strangest phenomenon. Residents in Texarkana reported fish falling from the sky in a rare example of "animal rain". Officials in the city about 180 miles from Dallas said the palm-sized creatures had probably been swept up in a waterspout then dropped back to earth during a storm. Residents were assured this was nothing to worry about. "While it's uncommon, it happens," an official said. Some in Texarkana spotted an opportunity. "I started to get me a bucket and pick them up for fishing bait," Tim Brigham told the station KSLA 12. Workers at a tyre fitters had to down tools and clear the car park of fish. (*The Times* 3/1/2022)

Vets Treat Fish for Being Long in The Tooth



A pufferfish has undergone emergency dental work after her teeth grew so big she was unable to eat. Goldie, a porcupine pufferfish, was taken by her owner, Mark Byatt, to the vet after he noticed she was losing weight because her long teeth prevented her eating properly. Medics at Sandhole veterinary centre in Snodland, Kent, confirmed the five-year-old fish's teeth needed to be sawn down. They sedated her using a water bowl filled with a mild anaesthetic solution so that they could cut off one inch from her teeth. To calm Goldie during the procedure, the water was kept well oxygenated. "This meant she was still breathing nicely throughout, but was able to be held for brief periods out of the water without becoming too stressed," Carrasco said. (*The Guardian* 25/1/2022)



Methuselah – a fish who likes to eat fresh figs and get belly rubs – is believed to be the oldest living aquarium fish in the world. In the Bible, Methuselah was Noah's grandfather and was said to have lived for 969 years. The fish is not quite that ancient, but biologists at the California Academy of Sciences believe it is about 90, with no known living peers. The 4ft-long (1.2m), 40lb (18.1kg) Australian lungfish was brought to the San Francisco museum in 1938 from Australia. A primitive species with lungs and gills, Australian lungfish are believed to be the evolutionary link between fish and amphibians. *Haven Daley (i 27/1/2022)*

Tiny Frog Hitchhikes to UK on Bunch of Bananas



A frog that had travelled 5,000 miles from the west coast of Africa to the UK has been found in a bunch of bananas at a primary school. A teacher at Heswell Primary School in Merseyside had discovered the fingernail-sized frog while she was unwrapping the pupils' morning snack. Staff were able to capture the stowaway from the Ivory Coast before the RSPCA collected it. The amphibian, believed to be a reed frog, is now with a specialist keeper. RSPCA inspector Anthony Joynes said it was the first time in his 13-year career that he had been called to a stowaway frog. (*Daily Telegraph* 12/2/2022)





Cars Banned From Road to Let Mating Toads Cross Safely



Mating toads have forced the closure of a road for three weeks – to allow them to cross safely. The amphibians take the same route every year when they come out of hibernation and head to ponds where they breed near Richmond Park, south-west London. A section of Church Road in Ham will be closed until April 1 as Richmond council wants

to protect the toads and reduce the risk of accidents caused by drivers distracted by the migration. The road is manned by a volunteer-run "toad patrol" to enforce the ban. The scheme, which started in 2010, is popular with many residents who describe it as "very British", despite some saying they have not seen any animals making use of the route. "I think it is a good idea to protect the toads," said Dorris Watt, 64, from Ham. "The toads live here don't they? So it's their right of way." "Only in England would you close a road for toads to cross," added Chris Cann, 67, from Twickenham. Charity Froglife, which recruits volunteers for the project, said that while many routes in Britain try to aid migrating amphibians, Church Road is one of the very few that completely shuts down to traffic. (Daily Telegraph 14/3/2022)



Cold Weather Warning... it's Raining Iguanas



Residents of south Florida are being warned of an unusual new hazard as they go for a stroll in the cold weather. The national weather service tweeted: "This isn't something we usually forecast, but don't be surprised if you see Iguanas falling from the trees." Stacey Cohen, of Palm Beach Zoo, said the iguanas, which can weigh up to 17lb (8kg), liked to sleep in the trees but struggled "to hang on" in the cold. Temperatures fell to minus 3C on Sunday. (The Times 1/2/2022)

where's the party?



Diet Coke, and Make it Snappy:

Gator Gatecrashes Party Stocks

A gregarious alligator in Naples, Florida, seemingly could not wait for a family's birthday party to begin, so it slipped into a garage where supplies were being stored and chugged down a slab of Diet Coke. The uninvited guest surprised Karyn and Jamie Dobson when they opened the connecting door from their house after hearing a crash, the Wink News website reported. "I open the door about a quarter way, peek my head in, and there's the alligator," Jamie Dobson said. He said the 8ft reptile was backing away, with froth from the cans all over the floor. The couple had bought several slabs of drink for a party a few days later. "There was Diet Coke spewing everywhere because the gator tore open the box (and) had a few cans, probably thought it was beer maybe," said Karyn Dobson. "We were all standing there like a scaredy cat. People have sent me texts and emails...they have all these comments (like) 'What a great birthday present.'" The alligator is believed to have sneaked in after the couple returned from walking their dog and neglected to close the garage door. The Dobsons said they had recently moved to the area from Chicago and were not aware of the danger of leaving the door open. "(It's) something (that being) from the midwest I really haven't experienced before," Jamie Dobson said. A trapper caught the alligator and took it to a non-residential area. Wildlife officials say they rarely pose a direct threat to humans. (Guardian 3/5/2022)

Elephant Dung Gin an 'Earthy' Delight



Move over juniper and citrus, a particularly "earthy" brand of gin has recently hit the shelves – made from elephant dung. South Africa's Indlovu gin was launched in 2018 but has undergone a pandemic-related boom. It is now stocked around the world, with 1,500 bottles exported per month. The elephants effectively do the work in flavouring the gin, said distiller Les Ansley, as they find the variety of herbs and fruit that give the spirit its unique taste. One bartender, Johanna Jones, described the tippie as "earthy". (i 19/2/2022)

"Picasso was burgled and did a drawing of the robbers. Police arrested a horse and two sardines." Aah, Barry Cryer.

"I said to my parrot...how are you enjoying lockdown?" He replied, "What...in this cage?" Ooh, Barry Cryer. (Sunday Times)



Over-Friendly Seal Taken Into Rehab

An over-friendly wild seal has been taken into rehab to wean it off human contact. The seal, called Spearmint, had been spotted in multiple locations in Plymouth Sound, Devon. Rescuers hope to release the seal into a remote area of Scotland after volunteers raised more than £5,000 for its relocation. The North Atlantic grey seal, an endangered species, had become "habituated to humans" after being fed by tourists. Photos show it interacting with swimmers and climbing on to paddleboards on crowded beaches. In early April, Spearmint was found wandering the village of Kingsand before being caught at Firestone Bay, Plymouth, and returned to rehab at the RSPCA West Hatch Animal Centre in Taunton, Somerset. A spokesman for the British Divers Marine Life Rescue said: "Spearmint's behaviour had sadly been affected by people feeding her in the wild, resulting in her becoming over-friendly."



Wild Thing

A woman releases a baby sea turtle hatchling and guides it towards the sea at Lhoknga Beach in Aceh province, Indonesia. Wildlife groups say the lack of tourists on many of the world's beaches during the pandemic has made it easier for the turtles to nest.

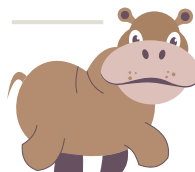
(Daily Telegraph 22/2/2022)

Animal-Lover Frees Croc Stuck in Tyre for Years

Indonesia: A 17 foot crocodile that spent almost six years with a tyre around its neck has been freed. Although often seen in the river at Palu City, Central Sulawesi, it eluded conservationists. Tili, 34, a resident who works as a bird seller, used chicken as bait and ropes to haul it in with help from neighbours. "I hate seeing animals trapped and suffering," he said. (The Times 9/2/2022)

Lizard's Musical Box

A gecko has survived for months inside a box of musical instruments after it was shipped from China in October. The common house gecko, which was named Thin Lizard by RSPCA staff, was found by employees at a company in Maidstone, Kent, that imports musical instruments when the delivery from 4,800 miles away was opened. (The Times 4/2/2022)



Hippos Create a Dung Whirlwind When They Hear Rivals Roar

No one likes being interrupted by the shouts of a stranger, but it takes a hippo to respond by spraying dung. When the "wheeze honk" of a hippopotamus calls out across the African savannah, it is more than merely the sound of one of the world's last mega-herbivores at play. It is also a call sign, scientists have found, communicating that particular hippo's presence to its friends – and enemies. That is the conclusion of a study in which scientists hid speakers in a nature reserve in Mozambique and played the wheeze-honks of familiar and unfamiliar hippos. They found that when hippos heard the sound of an individual in their immediate social group, they didn't respond. Neither did they react much to those calls of near neighbours, with whom they were accustomed. When, however, a stranger wheeze-honked into earshot, the response was markedly different. The hippo headed off in the direction of the unfamiliar call, presented its behind and – while vigorously spinning its tail to produce the required sprinkling effect – defecated. (The Times 25/1/2022)





CHEER-YOU-UPPLEMENT

Spring Bumper Bundle

Save the Planet with a Smile!



Well I never...

Leopard rescued after falling into farmer's well

A leopard has been rescued after falling into a 50ft farm well in the western Indian state of Maharashtra. Forest ranger Akshay Mhetre said the animal was rescued an hour after a rescue team received a call from a farmer at the weekend. The team lowered a trap into the well and guided the leopard into it using bamboo sticks. It may have been chasing another animal when it fell, they said. *"If the leopard had not been spotted in time, he would have died of hunger,"* said wildlife expert Manish Kumar. The five-year-old animal was fed and checked and will soon be released back into the forest. Leopards are common in the Niphad Taluka area, where sugar cane farms make ideal hiding spots. (i 22/2/2022)



'Brad Pitt' Cougar Roams LA

Residents of Los Angeles are used to seeing celebrities out and about, but they may not have expected to see the "Brad Pitt of mountain lions" roaming the streets. The big cat is known as P-22 after being noted as such in a scientific study by the US National Park Service. He was spotted strolling through the hilly Silver Lake neighbourhood this week, with people sharing the unusual night-time sighting on social media. Researchers believe P-22 is originally from the Santa Monica Mountains in southern California and somehow found his way across busy freeways to LA's Griffith Park in 2012. He has been living there ever since but with no females in his territory, P-22 cuts a lone figure. Beth Pratt, who heads the non-profit National Wildlife Federation's #SaveLACougars campaign, said: *"He's the Brad Pitt of the cougar world. He's handsome, has aged well, but has struggles with his dating life."* (i 11/3/2022)



RSPCA Called Out to Save Stuffed Tigers and Floating Chairs

(The Times 17/1/2022)

R.I.P...

Landmine-sniffing hero rat dies 'peacefully' aged eight

A mine-clearing rat awarded the "George Cross for animals" has died at the age of eight. Over a five-year career, Magawa the rat sniffed out more than 100 landmines and explosives in Cambodia, clearing more than 141,000 sq m of land, an area around the size of 20 football pitches. He was bred in Tanzania and trained by the Belgian charity Apopo to alert his handlers to mines. The charity said the African giant pouched rat "passed away peacefully" at the weekend. Magawa was able to detect chemicals in the explosives and could search a tennis court-sized field in 20 minutes. In 2020 he became the first rat to receive the PDSA Gold Medal – the equivalent of the George Cross for animals – for his "life-saving devotion to duty". (i 12/1/2022)



Hungry mice tackle American football kit

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ (i 14/2/2022) ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Beavers Set to Nibble Again in The Capital

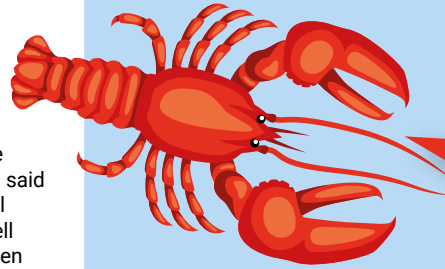
After being hunted to extinction in Britain, beavers are being brought back to London for the first time in more than 400 years.

A joint project has high hopes for a male and female beaver that are being released in the grounds of a historic mixed farm in Enfield, north London. The animals, both two years old, will begin their new



lives today at a specially designed 15-acre enclosure in the grounds of Forty Hall Farm, Enfield Council and Capel Manor College said. The farm is already home to many rare breeds of animal. It is run by the college, a further education institution that specialises in learning about the environment. Ian Barnes, Enfield council's deputy leader, said that reintroducing native species to the London borough was part of the authority's aim to challenge

climate change and bolster ecosystems. Beavers are natural engineers. They restore wetland habitats through dam-building and felling trees; slowing, storing and filtering water in the landscape, which attracts other wildlife and reduces flooding downstream. Barnes said it was hoped that the beaver reintroduction project would eventually *"reduce the risk of harm from flooding following extreme rainfall, protecting hundreds if not thousands of local homes."* (The Times 17/3/2022)



Lobster Industry Paid to Help Whales
(i 12/3/2022)

Whaling To End After Drop In Meat Demand

(The Times 5/2/2022)



Australia Drops Humpback Whales from Endangered Species List

(The Times 28/2/2022)

Zoo Rings The Changes to Get Gorilla Off Phone



A teenage gorilla has had his screen time cut after zoo officials thought he spent too long staring at the mobile phones of visitors. Amare, a 415lb gorilla at Lincoln Park zoo in Chicago, often looked in fascination at the pictures shown to him through the glass. Keepers have installed barriers in front of the viewing window and he is now interacting more with his mates. (The Times 21/4/2022)





CHEER-YOU-UPPLEMENT Save the Planet with a Smile!

Spring Bumper Bundle



Bear Necessity

Sir – With reference to the letters (Apr 20) on fouling Snowdon, we were each given a trowel for the duration of our walking holiday in Canada. It was considered essential safety equipment to avoid our scent from being detected by bears. We were not told whether to dig the hole before or after relieving ourselves but thoughts of a bear ensured a rapid process.

Helen Burnside, Wakefield, W. Yorks.
(The Times 22/4/2022)



Russian proverb cited in The New York Times:

If you invite a bear to dance, it's not you who decides when the dance is over.

It is the bear.



(The Week 26/2/2022)



Cereal offender:

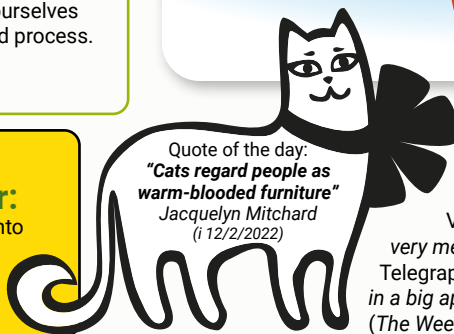
bear breaks into 28 homes to steal food.

(The Times 21/2/2022)

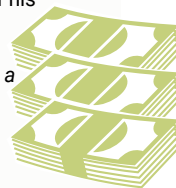


...dog life that became the only life during lockdown looks set to trundle on. Nuclear apocalypse? Simply insert nose in dog's fur. I am reminded of something Mark Twain may actually have said: "The more I learn about people, the more I like my dog." (The Times 2/3/2022)

Quote of the day:
"Cats regard people as warm-blooded furniture"
Jacquelyn Mitchard
(i 12/2/2022)



The late Karl Lagerfeld was so devoted to his cat Choupette, he left her a share of his \$200 million estate. But his friend Carine Roitfeld, ex-editor of French Vogue, was rather less besotted. "She's a very mean cat, actually," she told The Daily Telegraph. "She bites. And she's fine. She lives in a big apartment with her own maid." (The Week 9/4/2022)



Rural Beauty in Highlands Sold (The Daily Telegraph 1/3/2022)

Burnt-out cargo ship finally sinks



What a dive site! Good for rich fish. A burnt-out cargo ship carrying thousands of luxury cars, including Porsches and Bentleys, has sank off the Portuguese Azores archipelago nearly two weeks after it caught fire.

The captain of the nearest port on the island of Faial said the Panama-flagged Felicity Ace sank because of structural problems. (i 2/3/2022)

21 million Britons receive at least one unwanted gift each Christmas.



wildlife
W&L
winners and losers
how to turn losers into winners



Wildlife filmmaker Richard Brock says:



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