

GENTLE.NEWS

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"Biology gives you a brain. Life turns it into a mind."

— Jeffrey Eugenides

Celebrating Habitat Month

July is Habitat Month at NOAA Fisheries! All month long, we'll be sharing how we conserve and restore habitat to sustain our nation's fisheries and support coastal communities. NOAA conserves habitats like wetlands , rivers , and coral reefs to support fisheries—but habitat isn't valuable just for the home it provides for fish and wildlife. Healthy habitats help keep our drinking water clean, protect us from storms and flooding, and support industries like boating and fishing. From jobs to seafood to tourism, coastal habitats are vital to America's national and local economies. Follow us here and on X (formerly Twitter) at @NOAA-Habitat . You can also stay up-to-date on our latest habitat conservation stories all year long by subscribing to HabitatNews .

Habitat Features Saving a Chesapeake Bay Watershed Marsh for Fish, Wildlife, and People

A NOAA-funded project on Virginia's Ragged Island is restoring habitat for fish, oysters, and birds. The project will also prevent hundreds of tons of sediment and pollution from entering the Chesapeake Bay. More about work to save a Chesapeake Bay watershed marsh

Restoration of Florida's Robinson Preserve Benefits Fish, Visitors, and Local Economy

Investments in the restoration of Florida's Robinson Preserve are paying off for fish, visitors, and the local economy, according to a recent economic study and fisheries monitoring results. The 700-acre coastal preserve—once degraded farmland—now supports a healthy sportfish population, attracts

about 240,000 visitors each year, and generates millions of dollars in economic activity. Read about the NOAA-supported restoration at Robinson Preserve Habitat Restoration Helps Put Anglers Back on the Pier, Hikers Back on the Trail When environmental disasters like oil or chemical spills disrupt waterfront access, NOAA restores habitat to reconnect communities to the outdoors. Through our Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program, we work to quantify recreational losses and determine the economic and social value of the lost use of the resource. Then, we use settlement funds to restore the injured habitats and fund restoration projects. Learn more about how NOAA works to restore recreational access Updates from Partners on Engaging the Recreational Fishing Community to Restore Habitat through the National Fish Habitat Partnership Through the National Fish Habitat Partnership, NOAA Fisheries supports projects that restore habitat in collaboration with recreational anglers. Partners are reporting progress on several ongoing projects that actively engage local communities and recreational anglers to conserve fish habitat. Learn more about the ongoing projects with partners in Maryland, Alaska, and Hawai'i NOAA-Funded Research Highlights Economic Effects of Oyster Reef Restoration Scientists at Morgan State University forecast that restored oyster reefs—especially when paired with eelgrass recovery—boost habitat, blue crab harvest, and the economy. Oyster reefs provide habitat and food for commercially important species, including blue crabs. More healthy reef habitat means more blue crabs are available for harvest and for your dinner table. That provides financial

benefits to watermen and supporting industries along the way. Learn more about how restored oyster reefs help support local economies [Restoring Habitat, Bolstering the Economy, and Supporting Jobs in Florida Coastal](#) restoration might bring to mind images of wetlands, sand dunes, and tidal marshes—but there's another impact of this work: jobs and economic growth. An economic analysis shows that community-led restoration contributes broadly to local, state, and national economies. It finds that \$72.5 million invested across 12 habitat restoration projects in Florida is estimated to support jobs and wages and increase both spending and economic activity. Learn more about the results of this economic analysis [Muskegon Lake Removed from List of Most Degraded Great Lakes Sites](#) Muskegon Lake has been officially removed from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Areas of Concern list. It was originally designated one of the most environmentally degraded sites in the Great Lakes 40 years ago. NOAA, the EPA, and other partners worked for decades to restore the area. We addressed environmental challenges such as fish and wildlife habitat loss, contaminated soils, and hardened shorelines. Read about our habitat restoration work in the Muskegon Lake area [Interactive Tool Gives Virginia Communities Data on Economic Effects of Marshes and Living Shorelines](#) Chesapeake Bay marshes and living shorelines play important roles in the ecosystem and benefit nearby communities. NOAA and partners, including the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, work to restore these important places. VIMS researchers developed a tool that individual land owners, communities, and resource managers can use to

help them make decisions about marsh and living shoreline projects in Virginia's Middle Peninsula. Learn how the tool calculates the benefits of marsh restoration projects

Oyster Restoration Investments Net Positive Returns for Economy and Environment A report by the North Carolina Coastal Federation shows that NOAA and partners' investments in oyster restoration produce almost double the amount in economic and environmental benefits. The economic report found that for every \$1 spent on oyster reef restoration, the state sees \$1.70 in return. Learn how oyster restoration projects support jobs and local economies

Yakima River Salmon Get a Lifeline with Removal of Causeway NOAA funding helped the Yakama Nation and partners remove a causeway in Richland, Washington, that had wreaked havoc on Yakima River salmon and steelhead populations. Now, fish have a better chance of surviving migration in and out of the river. Read more about the Bateman Island Causeway removal

Habitat 101 Shallow Coral Reef Habitat Coral reefs are the most diverse habitats on the planet. Reefs occur in less than 1 percent of the ocean, yet are home to nearly one-quarter of all ocean species. They also provide jobs, tourism and recreation opportunities, seafood, wave protection, and more. Learn more about shallow coral reefs

Estuary Habitat Estuaries are bodies of water where rivers meet the sea. They provide homes for diverse wildlife, including popular fish species. They also support recreation, jobs, tourism, shipping, and more. Learn more about estuaries

Coastal Wetland Habitat Wetlands are a pivotal part of the natural system, providing tremendous benefits for coastal ecosystems and communities. They

provide us with clean water, flood protection, abundant fisheries, and more. Learn more about coastal wetlands Oyster Reef Habitat Oysters are a crucial component of global ocean health. These animals filter and clean the surrounding water and provide habitat, food, and jobs. Today, however, oyster populations are at historic lows. NOAA works with partners to restore oysters and regain the critical ecosystem functions they provide. Learn about the importance of oyster reef habitat

In Brazil, initiatives in peripheral communities seek to expand environmental education

In São Paulo, areas previously used for trash disposal have become community gardens. Originally published on Global Voices, Young people, along with Priscila, collect harvest in the course's community garden. Photo: Marcus Vinicius, used with permission. This text, written by Felipe Barbosa, Gabrielly Souza, Thauane Blanche, and Thila Moura, was originally published on April 22, 2026, on Agência Mural's website. It is part of the project “Planeta Território — Tecnologias De Letramento Climático” (“Technologies for Climate Literacy”), carried out by Território Da Notícia in partnership with the Society and Climate Institute (ICS). The article is republished here under a partnership agreement with Global Voices, with edits. Collectives and organizations from the outskirts of the São Paulo region in Brazil are transforming local realities by uniting environmental education, community mobilization, and practical solutions to face the climate crisis. Areas previously used for trash disposal have become community gardens that today provide food for families. There are also projects to combat deforestation and irregular construction. Agência Mural spoke with four collectives that work with local people to mitigate the impacts of climate change and promote environmental education in their communities. Planting and harvesting In Jardim Lapena, in eastern São Paulo, what was previously an irregular rubbish dump has become a

community garden that feeds dozens of families. It was there that Maria Edilene, 39, founded the Coletivo das Marias . “I have the greatest pleasure in telling people that it was not the government that did away with the rubbish,” she said. The change began about 14 years ago, when Edilene came across a pile of trash bags in front of her house. Annoyed by the exposure of her children and others to toxic materials, bad smells, rats, and insects, she decided to take action. “I refused to raise my children with that rubbish,” she said. Alone, she began cleaning up the space and mobilized other residents. Initially, seven neighbours joined the effort. Edilene began growing tea on the site, a nod to her northeastern origins. What began organically has, over time, consolidated into an environmental education initiative. “At the time, I didn't even know it was called that, but people were becoming aware of it,” she said. Maria Edilene with a lettuce from the community garden. Photo: Coletivo das Marias, used with permission As the work progressed over the years, the area became a community garden, with the cultivation of vegetables such as lettuce, carrots, beetroot, and radishes, as well as medicinal plants, known as “living pharmacy.” All production is agroecological, with no pesticides used, respecting nature's rhythms, and pollination carried out by bees, birds, and butterflies. The area directly supplies food to 72 families, who participate in a community composting system that uses a biological process to transform organic waste (food scraps, husks, and leaves) into natural fertilizer. After registering, residents contribute organic waste, which is weighed and checked, and, in return, they have access to food

from the garden. For Nathalia Souza, a 30-year-old local farmer, the job represents a change in perspective. “I never imagined that I would leave the Northeast to work with the land [in São Paulo]. Today, I can see the world differently,” she added. Proximity to family, reduced travel, and contact with the land are among the main positive points. “I learned to connect with nature. It changed my routine, my eating, and the way I see myself.” Natalia delivers vegetables by bike. Photo: Coletivo das Marias, used with permission

The Coletivo das Marias also has partnerships, such as with Ciclog , an environmental mobility and communication organization, responsible for the Bike Horta project. The initiative promotes collecting organic waste on bicycles. Families and schools receive buckets for food waste, which are collected three times a week and taken to the composter. “The partnership with Bike Horta began in 2021, with support for local groups and communication”, said Everton Silva, 35 years old and Ciclog’s organizer. Taking out the rubbish Ionilton Gomes de Aragão, 56, lives five kilometers from the Coletivo das Marias in the Santa Inês community, São Miguel Paulista District . He has been in the neighbourhood for 50 years, following the area change. “Living in a clean, organized, and bright place improves self-esteem,” said the creator of the Varre Vila (Sweep the Town) project. This is an environmental education initiative intended for public participation. They place bins for organic and recyclable waste at various points in the neighbourhoods. About 34 tons of waste are removed per month. Residents do the maintenance themselves. “We have not yet reached 100 percent of the neighbourhood, but a lot of

the people already understand the importance of our actions. So, we continue with this ongoing environmental education, ” said Aragão. Aragão explaining about appropriate trash disposal. Photo: Diego Monteiro, used with permission. “It’s almost a [warning] cry: take care of and help take care of the place where you live and work. If the people are not united, it doesn't work,” he said. The neighbourhood has made some efforts to raise awareness about waste disposal, which is essential in a region that frequently floods. “We have heard from residents that, after the floods, the water drained faster and did not leave rubbish floating in the streets,” Aragão said. “These actions are important because it leads to a change in people's behaviour regarding the irregular disposal of waste,” he added. However, despite having established itself, the initiative still faces funding challenges. Collective solutions Beyond the more urbanized areas, places with more natural environments also face preservation challenges. In southwestern Greater São Paulo, cities such as Embu das Artes, Cotia and Itapeverica da Serra have 60 per cent of their territory in Water Source Protection Areas (APMs) . They are included in the Atlantic Forest natural region . Rodolfo Almeida, 43, said that working in the region is arduous. He is an environmentalist and advisor to SEAE (Ecological Society of Embu) , an NGO that has been active for 54 years in environmental defence across three municipalities. The SEAE works with socio-environmental projects in schools and local communities and has more than 100 permanent members. It runs educational projects to raise public awareness about the importance of preserving water sources. “That river or spring so

close to home needs to be taken care of with the same attention as the water in our homes,” explained Almeida . The project “Watching the Rivers,” an initiative in partnership with the NGO SOS Atlantic Forest , takes local people to riverbanks and teaches them to assess the condition of the waterways. The “ Conecta Cotia-Guarapiranga ” is a technological field guide that maps water sources and forests to inform the monitoring of these natural resources and the development of more effective environmental conservation plans. People participate in the ‘Watching the Rivers’ project. Photo: EEAS, used with permission The Guarapiranga Basin supplies more than 4 million people in the São Paulo Metropolitan Region, but is affected by deforestation, irregular occupations, and pollution from untreated sewage. One of the most recent analyses by “Watching the Rivers” classified the water of the Ribeirão da Ressaca stream, in the Ressaca and Caputera neighbourhoods, on the border between Embu, Cotia, and Itapequerica, as “bad” (high pollution levels and unfit for consumption). “The indicators show the lack of educational initiatives and political action to ensure efficient sanitation,” Almeida said. In schools Environmental education is also one of the goals of 59-year-old environmentalist Adriana Abelhão, vice-president of Preservar Ambiental in Itapequerica da Serra. The NGO, founded in 2009, focuses on fighting deforestation in the Itaquaciara neighbourhood, which has suffered from irregular land use and construction of storage units and landfills. It also seeks ways to bring environmental issues to the community. “More and more residents of nearby cities come to us for guidance on environmental

complaints and environmental education projects,” said Abelhão. “From the resident who loves the tree on their street and wants to protect it, or animal rights activists, to groups of residents who organize themselves to deal with large-scale damage to the environment.” Adriana Abelhão talks to students about the importance of environmental education in their areas. Photo: Preservar Ambiental, used with permission The group operates in four state schools through the Conexão Natureza project, which aims to provide environmental education to students and teachers. “ We deal with issues such as climate change, water sources, basic sanitation, solid waste, and nature-based solutions. It’s two years of work and four months in each of the four partner schools,” she said. Teaching about growing plants At the Pimentas Community Course, a significant portion of the food students and volunteers eat is grown onsite. Located in Guarulhos , in Greater São Paulo, the space brings together 130 young people and 20 volunteers aged 18 to 23. There is a green area, with an orchard, vegetable and medicinal gardens. The course also maintains a meliponary of bee hives native to the Atlantic Forest, and promotes recycling of materials used by the community. These items are marketed by volunteers, and the income earned contributes to supporting students at universities in rural areas or in other states. Former student and now volunteer, biologist Marcus Vinícius, 27, points out that the course has become a source of opportunities in a region with few environmental facilities. “It is collective work, done by many hands. We see the results every day,” he said. Course students taking care of the trees and plants in pots. Photo: Marcus Vinícius, used with

permission Environmental manager and volunteer teacher Priscila Narcizio, 35, explained that students arrive curious, get involved with the activities, and come with materials to apply what they have learned. “ They replicate the techniques at home, such as simple composting and rainwater harvesting, and also bond with family. We see this result on a day-to-day basis,” Narcizio said. Written (Português) by Agência Mural Translated (English) by Liam Anderson View original post (Português)

Positive experiences affect young people more than crises

A new study shows that adolescents and young adults describe positive, everyday experiences as shaping their lives most significantly, while psychological stress can change how they view major life events. Which major life events matter to young people? The recent study by the University of Zurich (UZH) shows that adolescents and young adults primarily cite positive, everyday developmental steps as formative events, for example school and apprenticeships, friendships, first relationships, travel, and moving out of their parents' home. The researchers evaluated open-ended written responses from 1,442 participants in a long-term study. Each participant was surveyed at the ages of 15, 17, 20 and 24. The results paint a different picture than many classic studies on life events, which tend to focus on stressful experiences. Overall, 83% of the events mentioned were positive. The participants talked about school, training, and apprenticeships particularly often, with these topics accounting for almost half of all mentions. Friendships and romantic relationships came in second place, at around 12%. Personal development and mental well-being accounted for about 8%, while travel and stays abroad stood at approximately 7%. "Our results show that youth is not primarily composed of crises. Many young people primarily mention positive developmental steps such as education, relationships, and personal achievements," says David Bürkin, clinical developmental psychologist and first

author of the study. Lilly Shanahan, co-leader of the study, adds: “Support services should therefore not only focus on how to cope with stress. Stable relationships, positive experiences, and opportunities to experience self-efficacy are just as important.” Nevertheless, the researchers found that psychological stress was still part of the equation. Adolescents and young adults with more severe symptoms of anxiety and depression mentioned stressful relationship experiences, conflicts, loss, and personal failures significantly more often. Correspondingly, they referred to positive events such as travel, educational achievements, and sports activities less frequently. The study also revealed that clear changes occur between adolescence and early adulthood. While school, friendships, and leisure time were paramount in middle adolescence, education, work, relationships, and independence grew in significance later on. Topics such as sport and going out were mentioned less frequently as the participants became older, while work, housing, and having children became more important over time. The researchers also found differences based on gender, social background, and experiences of migration. However, broadly speaking, the most important topics were very similar across social groups. The research team used automated language processing methods to evaluate thousands of open-ended written responses according to topic. “Our analyses show how freely formulated responses from large longitudinal studies can be processed in such a way that they provide a structured picture of young people’s experiences. This allows their perspectives remain visible in their own words,” says first author Christina Haag, who

is now at the University of Cambridge. The study is one of the first large-scale, long-term studies in the world to use such methods to analyze open-ended responses from young people. The research appears in *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* . The study is a collaboration between the Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development and the Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Prevention Institute at the University of Zurich. The project was supported by the UZH Population Research Center as part of its Seed Grants Program. Source: University of Zurich The post Positive experiences affect young people more than crises appeared first on Futurity .

NASA Sets Coverage for Astronaut Anil Menon Launch to Space Station

NASA astronaut Anil Menon and Roscosmos cosmonauts Pyotr Dubrov and Anna Kikina, Soyuz MS-29 prime crew members, pose for a portrait at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in Russia. Credit: GCTC

NASA astronaut Anil Menon will launch aboard the Roscosmos Soyuz MS-29 spacecraft to the International Space Station on Tuesday, July 14, accompanied by cosmonauts Pyotr Dubrov and Anna Kikina, where they will join the Expedition 74 crew advancing scientific research. Menon, Dubrov, and Kikina will lift off at 10:47 a.m. EDT (7:47 p.m. Baikonur time) from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. Live launch and docking coverage is available on NASA+ , Amazon Prime , and the agency's YouTube channel. Learn how to watch NASA content through a variety of online platforms, including social media. After a two-orbit, three-hour trip to the station, the spacecraft will automatically dock at 1:56 p.m. to the Prichal module. Shortly afterward, hatches will open between the Soyuz and the orbiting laboratory. Once aboard, the trio will join NASA astronauts Jessica Meir, Jack Hathaway, and Chris Williams, ESA (European Space Agency) astronaut Sophie Adenot, and Roscosmos cosmonauts Sergey Kud-Sverchkov, Sergei Mikaev, and Andrey Fedyaev. NASA's coverage schedule is as follows (all times Eastern and subject to change based on real-time operations): Tuesday, July 14 9:45 a.m. –

Launch coverage begins on NASA+ , Amazon Prime , and YouTube .
10:47 a.m. – Launch 1:10 p.m. – Rendezvous and docking coverage begins on NASA+ , Amazon Prime , and YouTube . 1:56 p.m. – Docking
3:30 p.m. – Hatch opening and welcome coverage begins on NASA+ , Amazon Prime , and YouTube . 3:55 p.m. – Hatch opening Menon, Dubrov, and Kikina will spend about eight months aboard the orbital complex as International Space Station Expedition 74/75 crew members before returning to Earth in April 2027. This will be Menon's first spaceflight and the second for both Dubrov and Kikina. During his stay on the station, Menon will conduct scientific research and technology demonstrations aimed at advancing human space exploration and benefiting life on Earth. He will continue research to refine in-space production of semiconductor crystals to enable the large-scale manufacturing of components needed for high-performance computers, artificial intelligence, and improved medical devices. Menon also will perform ultrasound using augmented reality and artificial intelligence methods that could eliminate the need for medical support from Earth on future space missions. He will be a test subject helping researchers understand how blood flow is affected in space to protect future astronauts. He also will test bioprinting vascular constructs in microgravity to improve understanding of the aging process to advance therapeutic developments. For more than 25 years, people have lived and worked continuously aboard the International Space Station, advancing scientific knowledge and making research breakthroughs not possible on Earth. The space station helps

NASA understand and overcome the challenges of human spaceflight, expand commercial opportunities in low Earth orbit, and build on the foundation for long-duration missions to the Moon, as part of the Artemis program, and to Mars. To learn more about International Space Station research, operations, and its crews, visit: www.nasa.gov/station -end-
Joshua Finch / Jimi Russell Headquarters, Washington 202-358-1100
joshua.a.finch@nasa.gov / james.j.russell@nasa.gov Sandra Jones
Johnson Space Center, Houston 281-483-5111 sandra.p.jones@nasa.gov
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Modeling framework reveals grid battery aging effects

High-performance computing helps show how design, operation affect lifespan and savings Published: July 7, 2026 Updated: July 7, 2026 Energy storage is becoming critical to grid resilience and electricity affordability because battery systems can help balance supply and demand and stabilize power. Long battery lifetimes are key to unlocking those benefits. But that requires understanding how project design and operation affect stress on large-scale battery systems over hundreds of cycles — before spending the time and money to deploy them. Researchers at the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory are tackling this problem by coupling high performance computing (HPC) with a physics-based modeling framework to rapidly evaluate how different operating strategies affect battery aging over time. The result is a powerful computational tool for designing megawatt-hour battery storage systems so they will last longer and reduce costs. A full battery pack — what most people think of as a battery — is made up of modules filled with many battery cells. The ORNL modeling framework starts with cell-level aging simulation, then scales up to module- and pack-level performance. This multiscale approach enables optimization of electrical architecture, control strategies and operating schedules. HPC speeds insight into battery wear ORNL's approach relies on high performance computing for detailed analysis of battery degradation after 500-1,000 operating cycles, delivering results in

days instead of weeks, said Srikanth Allu, ORNL computational research scientist. The flexible, reusable framework can simulate more than 10,000 cells at once and accommodate multiple chemistries of lithium-ion batteries, the technology most widely used for grid-scale storage. Previous approaches for predicting degradation in lithium-ion systems often relied on cell-level studies or simplified assumptions. These did not fully reflect how battery aging is influenced by system-level designs and real-world operating conditions driven by different uses of batteries in the grid. The ORNL model simulated two common grid energy storage services: reducing energy costs and stabilizing the frequency of changes in electric current flow. To regulate frequency, batteries receive signals from operators to provide rapid, short bursts of power every few seconds. Momentary swings in supply or demand can destabilize frequency, but batteries quickly provide balancing. This service involves frequent, shallow cycling. In contrast, when used to reduce energy costs during high-demand periods, batteries draw on stored energy with deeper, more energy-intensive cycles. Researchers found that this operating profile wears down the battery faster. Battery systems can be used for a single grid service or a combination. ORNL simulations showed that using them for multiple services can balance near-term savings with long-term battery lifetime and replacement costs. “We found that these two applications drive different degradation pathways within the battery, highlighting how operating conditions influence aging at the material level,” said Allu. “The simulations provide new insight into why batteries may degrade at

different rates and point to opportunities to design battery systems that better balance performance, lifetime, and economic return.” Simulations show what’s outside the battery matters too. The model also showed that aging varies among battery cells and across entire battery packs. Because of both inherent design differences and varied operation for different tasks, low-voltage systems showed more aging variation than high-voltage systems. The results highlight the importance of electrical architecture and interconnections in determining how degradation evolves across large-scale battery systems. Allu said the next step in the research would be to extend the framework to additional battery formulations and more realistic operating conditions, including varied designs, different states of health and a wider range of temperatures. In the future, the approach could also be adapted to study battery performance across a broader range of grid and energy storage applications, such as battery support for AI data centers. “Simulations at this scale can significantly reduce the need for costly, time-intensive, full-system testing to evaluate battery aging,” Allu said. The ORNL team used the data from this research as the basis for a foundational model that further speeds up aging analysis to hours instead of weeks or months. This effort supports the DOE’s Genesis Mission, a national initiative to build the world’s most powerful scientific platform to accelerate discovery science, strengthen national security, and drive energy innovation. Other researchers who contributed to the project include Michael Starke, head of ORNL’s Electrical Systems Integration Section, and former postdoctoral researcher Surya Mitra Ayalasomayajula.

The team received a Best Paper Award at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Electrical Energy Storage Application and Technologies Conference earlier this year for their work describing the project . The research was funded by DOE's Office of Electricity. By combining leadership-class high performance computing with expertise in battery materials and grid systems, ORNL can model battery behavior from individual cells to full systems, at a range of scale and detail not typically achievable elsewhere. UT-Battelle manages ORNL for the Department of Energy's Office of Science, the single largest supporter of basic research in the physical sciences in the United States. The Office of Science is working to address some of the most pressing challenges of our time. For more information, please visit energy.gov/science . — S. Heather Duncan Media Contact Heather Duncan , Science Writer and Communications Specialist , 478.718.9246 | DUNCANSH@ORNL.GOV

Activity Time - Word Search

Find the words below in the puzzle. Words go across or down only.

Words to Find:

