

CREATION CARE GREEN TIPS  December 2022

The Global Extinction Crisis is NOT Inevitable

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**"...widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures..."  Albert Einstein**

1.  According to The Living Planet Report, issued every two years since 1998 by the World Wildlife Fund, the world's populations of **wild mammals, reptiles and fish** have declined by more than two-thirds on average since 1970.  Working in collaboration with the Zoological Society of London, the report warns that "serious drops like this tell us that nature is unraveling."  Monitored populations in Latin America and the Caribbean showed an average drop of **94% since 1970,** while those in Africa and the Asia Pacific region dropped by **66% and 55% respectively.**North American monitored populations dropped by **20%**, followed by an **18%** drop in Europe and Central Asia.  While the destruction and fragmentation of natural habitats for farming or development has been the greatest danger to biodiversity, in the coming decades **rising temperatures and climate change** will become the dominant threat.  One of our most important allies in fighting biodiversity is nature itself, so be a supporter of **forest restoration, healthy grasslands and prairies, and regenerative farming, as well as the rapid implementation of renewable energy.**

2.  The World Wildlife Fund's new *The Living Planet Report* finds dramatic declines **(83%)** in the abundance of species that rely on fresh water, with similar declines in oceans, where warming temperatures introduce new predators, cause species to shift to more northern habitats, or make it harder for them to grow to maturity.  Another recent study by the University of Minnesota shows that the 40,000 lakes across the Upper Midwest are at risk of losing oxygen-rich cold-water habitat due to **climate change and nutrient pollution.**  The study predicts that lakes with suitable cold-water habitat will **decline by 67% by mid-century,** the result of forests or prairies being converted into farms or urban development that increase algae blooms from phosphorus and nitrogen runoff, as well as the effects of climate change.  Yet the study, published in the journal *Ecosphere*, concludes that **protecting or restoring forested lands within the lakes' watersheds, changing farming practices, and practicing shoreline vegetation restoration**could help conserve critical habitat, even amid warming temperatures.

3.  As the global extinction crisis grows as humans continue to tear up the land, overuse certain resources and heat up the planet, new research led by the University of Minnesota and published in the journal *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment,* finds that **30% of species (including plants and insects) face global extinction** or have been driven to extinction since the year 1500.  The majority of species on the planet are plants and insects and other invertebrates, and they are crucial in helping to **purify our air, filter our water, maintain the health of our soils, pollinate plants we need for food, fuel and fiber, and provide medicines,** according to the nonprofit research group NatureServe.  The dramatic drop in total bug numbers and diversity of insect species affects the fish and birds that depend on them for food, and ultimately will affect us unless we rapidly address the twin crises of **habitat loss and warming temperatures due to climate change.**

4.  In her book **"The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times,"** internationally renowned scientist Dr. Jane Goodall warns that "if we don't act wisely now to slow down the heating of the planet and the loss of plant and animal life, it may be too late."  Humans and their livestock and their pets far outnumber all other animal life, and have already wiped out **60 percent of all mammals, birds, fish and reptiles** around the world.  Since approximately **75 percent of all new human diseases** come from our interactions with animals, Dr. Goodall also urges us to listen to the world's scientists who have long warned that a pandemic such as COVID-19 was inevitable as we **destroy habitats, forcing animals into closer contact with people.**The Jane Goodall Institute urges us to resist the "mixture of greed, hate, fear, and desire for power" that has inflicted so much harm, and to instead create change with innovative solutions, including **renewable energy, regenerative agriculture that replaces or mitigates big, single-crop agriculture, restoration of forests, grasslands and wetlands and habitat that supports pollinators.**