

Environment News Futures

To Impress Females, Costa's Hummingbirds 'Sing' with Their Tail Feathers

Researchers Show How Male Costa's Control the Acoustics of a Tail Song Produced during High Speed Dives

April 12, 2018—University of California - Riverside

Male Costa's hummingbirds perform a high-speed dive during which they 'sing' to potential mates using their tail feathers. Males perform their dives to the side, rather than in front of females. UC Riverside researchers used an acoustic camera to find out why. The results are published in *Current Biology*. They showed that sideways dives allow males to hide the speed of their dives, perhaps enabling them to appear faster than they really are.

In the world of Costa's hummingbirds, it's not size that matters—it's sound. During breeding season, male Costa's perform a high-speed dive during which they "sing" to potential mates using their tail feather.

Animal Images Used in Marketing may Skew Public Perception about Their Survival Risks

April 12, 2018—Oregon State University

Many of the world's most charismatic animal species—those that attract the largest interest and deepest empathy from the public—are at high risk of extinction in part because many people believe their iconic stature guarantees their survival.

Actual Fossil Fuel Emissions Checked with New Technique

April 12, 2018—Imperial College, London

Researchers have measured CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel use in California and compared them to reported emissions. This is the first time fossil fuel emissions have been independently checked for such a large area.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) from fossil fuel combustion is the primary driver of climate change, and many governments, companies and citizens are making efforts to curb their emissions. A key part of this effort is measuring the change in emissions. Countries and regions report their CO₂ emissions

from fossil fuels by counting what they have used, such as the amount of oil, coal or gas they have burned. However, there may be uncertainty in these estimates, for example depending on the composition of the fuel.

One-fifth of Carbon Entering Coastal Waters of Eastern North America is Buried

April 12, 2018—Penn State

Coastal waters play an important role in the carbon cycle by transferring carbon to the open ocean or burying it in wetland soils and ocean sediments, a new study shows.

Deeper Understanding of Species Roles in Ecosystems

April 12, 2018—Linköping University

A species' traits define the role it plays in the ecosystem in which it lives—this is the conclusion of a study carried out by researchers at Linköping University, Sweden. New methods can make it easier to predict the ecological role that a species will play when it is introduced, by accident or design, into a new habitat.

Battle to Save Africa's Elephants is Gaining Some Ground

April 13, 2018—AP

Mikumi National Park: The battle to save Africa's elephants is gaining some momentum. Legal ivory markets are shrinking worldwide, and law enforcement has broken up some international trafficking syndicates.

But it's far too early to declare a turnaround. Poachers are moving to new areas and traffickers are adapting, aided by entrenched corruption. The Associated Press travelled to southern Tanzania, where killings have declined after catastrophic losses.

Northern China Ozone Pollution Getting Worse: Study

April 11, 2018—Reuters

Shanghai: Concentrations of hazardous ground-level ozone have worsened in northern China despite country-wide efforts to tackle air pollution, according to a study published by Peking University on Tuesday.

Stringent winter restrictions on industry, transportation and coal consumption enabled smog-prone northern Chinese regions to meet politically crucial air quality targets for the 2013-2017 period. But concentrations of hazardous airborne particles known as PM2.5 fell.

Over 100 Tiny Plastic Bits Present in Every Meal: Study

April 5, 2018—AFP

London: We could be swallowing over 100 tiny plastic particles with every meal, according to a study which found that polymers from soft furnishings and synthetic fabrics get into household dust and settle on our plates.

Researchers from Heriot-Watt University in the UK made the discovery after putting Petri dishes containing sticky dust traps on the table next to dinner plates in three homes at meal times. Up to 14 pieces of plastic were found in the Petri dishes at the end of ..

The Real Antarctica Melting is Happening Underwater

Josh Gabbatiss

Warm ocean water is melting Antarctica from below, destabilising its ice sheets and contributing to sea level rise.

A new study has used data from satellites to determine how much underwater ice is melting. This has allowed researchers to map the retreat of the “grounding lines”, where large floating ice shelves connect to the layer of bedrock underneath Antarctica. These shelves can be particularly vulnerable to collapse as sea water melts them from beneath.

Delhi Upgrades to BS-VI Fuels at No Extra Cost

March 31, 2018— TNN

New Delhi: State-run fuel retailers will not additionally raise petrol and diesel prices to recover the cost of upgrading to Bharat Stage-VI fuels in Delhi, the country’s first city where 100% petrol pumps will be officially selling the cleaner fuel from Sunday.

Instead, the retailers will, for now, “optimise” processes to make up the higher production cost of BS-VI fuel since Delhi is the only city to get this fuel nearly two years ahead of the April 2020 deadline for covering the