



BUMBLEBEE'S DECLINE LINKED TO CLIMATE CHANGE

A comprehensive study of bumblebees across two continents over the past century has unequivocally linked their decline to rapidly rising global temperatures resulting from manmade climate change, scientists have said.

A detailed review on reported sightings of 67 different species of bumblebee across Europe and North America between 1901 and 2010 has indicated that these key pollinating insects of crops are being squeezed 'like a vice' by rising temperatures.

Over the past 40 years, when the greatest temperature increases have occurred, the bees have effectively been pushed out of the southern ends of their natural ranges but they have failed to compensate for this loss of territory by migrating further north, the scientists said.

'One of the most striking things is that the trends we have found were often indistinguishable between Europe and North America. Bumblebee species are responding similarly across continents from 1975, a time when climate change really began to accelerate,' said Paul Galpern of the University of Calgary in Canada.

The study found that the home territories of 67 bumblebee species have been compressed on average by up to 300km on each continent, hiking the pressure on the bees, which also suffer from the use of agricultural pesticides, the researchers said.

The results of the study, published in the journal *Science*, have so alarmed scientists that they have proposed an international rescue effort to assist different bumblebee species to migrate further north, to extend their diminishing home territories.

However, Jeremy Kerr, professor of biology at the University of Ottawa, who took part in the analysis, said: 'We should not {relocate the bumblebees} without considering the impact on existing species in those locations.'

CARRIER BAG USE DROPS BY MILLIONS

Carrier bag use in Scotland went down by almost 150 million last year, according to new figures from retailers.

Bag usage dropped by 147 million overall.

The WRAP survey includes figures from seven retailers, including major supermarkets. Scottish shoppers must now pay a minimum of 5p for each new carrier bag after legislation was passed by the Scottish Parliament.

Many retailers have also agreed to give proceeds to good causes.

CONCERN FOR REEF

The United Nations says it is concerned about the state of the Great Barrier Reef and is urging greater efforts to conserve one of the world's most spectacular natural sites.

But Unesco's World Heritage Committee held off designating the 1,430-mile reef off Australia's Queensland coast as endangered, pending further reviews.



SUCCESS FOR PICK UP 3

An Angus anti-litter campaign has delivered spectacular results on a busy stretch of coastline.

In just 3 months, the Prevent Litter and Pick Up 3 campaign at Arbroath's West Links and the path and cycle way to East Haven has seen overall littering cut by a third.

There was a 61% reduction in drinks related rubbish, confectionary waste cut by half and the ever-present problem of dog poo slashed by almost 40%.

The campaign encouraged people to stop littering and pick up any three pieces of litter.

New litter bins were installed and graphic images used on signs throughout the area to highlight the environmental impact and dangers of litter on people and wildlife.

TIME RUNNING OUT FOR OCEANS

Time is rapidly running out for the world's oceans and the creatures that live in them as the Earth's climate continues to warm, say scientists.

Only 'immediate and substantial' reductions in greenhouse gas emissions can hope to prevent 'massive' impacts on marine ecosystems, warn the experts.

Researchers compared the fate of the oceans under two scenarios, one a 'business-as-usual' approach and the other involving drastic cuts in emissions.

Their analysis showed that 'business-as-usual' would have an enormous and 'effectively irreversible' impact on ocean ecosystems and the services they provide, such as fisheries, by 2100.

The findings from the international team led by Dr Jean-Pierre Gattuso, from the Laboratoire d'Océanographie de Villefranche in France, are intended to inform the forthcoming 2015 United Nations Climate Change conference in Paris.

GO ELECTRIC!

Electric cars have been in the news again recently. Why buy an electric car? The electric vehicle market's growing faster than you might realize with more than 7,000 plug in electric cars sold in October 2012. Currently there are thirteen electric models on the market and the number continues to rise.

Electric cars are good for the environment, they produce 90% less pollutants than ordinary fuelled cars, are also incredibly quiet and comfortable to drive.

Even on the motorway these cars are very efficient at higher speeds and if you are stuck in traffic the engine will shut down and run on batteries. Electric cars are more expensive to buy than petrol driven cars but the running costs are much lower.

HIGH COST OF OVERFILLING KETTLE

Scots households are wasting £30million by having electrical appliances switched on all the time.

A survey by the Energy Saving Trust found overfilling kettles is costing bill payers more than £4 million, while washing clothes at high temperatures adds almost £6 million.

While 84 percent of households say they want to change their habits to save energy, they waste more than £30 million a year on energy they don't need to use.

Mike Thornton, director of the Energy Saving Trust in Scotland, said: 'Understanding your bill and how energy is used is vital to reducing overall domestic consumption.'

'By making small changes to their daily routine, Scottish households can save themselves millions of pounds. 'The biggest waste of energy comes from leaving TVs and games consoles on standby when not in use. More than half of respondents to the survey owned at least one games console.'

But 20 percent admitted leaving the devices on standby when not in use, rather than turning them off.

Mr Thornton said: 'Whatever your age, gender or the size of your household, our research has found that millions of us are unintentionally wasting electricity when we leave our gadgets on standby.'

'It's an easy mistake to make, yet it costs us a fortune. I'm urging people to take back control of their appliances and switch off when they aren't using them.'

The Energy Saving Trust, the Department of Energy and Climate Change and Citizens Advice are offering householders free advice on how to keep their home energy costs down.

BEACH CLEAN

The eco group will shortly announce when our next beach clean will take place.

This is an important part of what we do to help clean up our environment.

The date of this event will be advertised on appropriate Sundays in our church in the intimations.

Please, if you can, join us in this very important venture.

"We know that when we protect our oceans we're protecting our future." – Bill Clinton

END TO SUBSIDIES

The UK government is to end wind farm subsidies – a year earlier than expected.

Only the largest developments will be able to access public funding before they end in April next year.

But some of the 3,000 estimated to be in the pipeline in Scotland will still be built if they have planning permission, grid connection and a lease of the land.