

NOVEMBER 1 – 14, 2018 NATURAL HISTORY NOTES

By Dick Harlow

VERMONT CLIMATE CHANGE



© March 27, 2017 by Dennis Thompson,
Healthday Reporter

The above image refers to: (HealthDay) "America's exit from the Paris climate change agreement will lead to more punishing summer heat waves and thousands of additional heat-related deaths each year in major U.S. cities, a new report claims."

It being the first two weeks of November, do I write about the end of Fall and the beginning of Winter, or do I write about what concerns me and might concern all of us at this point in our lives? No, not about the election, not politics, but what interests me most, as many of you know, is Natural History and Climate Change.

I'm sure many of you have looked at futuristic maps of how Vermont would look when climate change shows Vermont surrounded by water. Or, the various assumptions of how Vermont would fare if Yellowstone's caldera erupts. Or, for that matter, our increasing temperatures and the probable end to four seasons in a year.

I think most of us try to cope with life from day to day, coping with what is immediately affecting us. Looking toward the future as 70 or 80 year olds with minimal concern about ourselves, we have a fair amount of worry for our children and grandchildren.

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I would like to be optimistic, but natural events that have occurred in the past with repeated occurrences from time to time tend to ring true to what eventually can happen to this planet. This knowledge causes me concern. However, my purpose is NOT to scare, but to inform!

We will look at some of the things that we could experience here in Vermont as the climate warms up. Some are common sense, but all should be informative.



© Climate Change editorial.JPG CA fires.

Lets' look at it colloquially from the standpoint of what we remember growing up. What were the winters like in the 1940's and 1950's? Did you have extended days when the temperature reached 90 or better for an extended period, known as a heat wave?

Did you experience more insects then compared to now? If you pay attention to birds, have you noticed a decrease in bird life, or particular species of birds today, compared to your youth? Do we have more storms with shorter lengths of time between storms, or periods when we have a

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storm and then a longer period with no rain? Do we seem to have more hurricanes or hurricane like storms than we did in the '40s and '50s?



© Government of Vermont (climate-flooding)

These are some of the tell-tale signs around us that would suggest that change in the climate is happening. From 1940 to 1960 is 20 years, not a long time, but time enough.

My kids are in their 50s, and my grandchildren range from 10-26 years. Add 50 years, half a century to their lives and the grandchildren will be almost as old as we are now. My wife and I will be gone, but not necessarily our grandchildren. What will they face for climate when they get to be our age?

Real Possibilities include:

Higher temperatures

Shorter winters

Less snow

More severe droughts

More severe storms

A variable growing season: decrease in the length of winter, spring, summer, fall with summer being the longest as a hot dry period.

More widespread floods

Decrease in pollinators

Decrease in some bird species

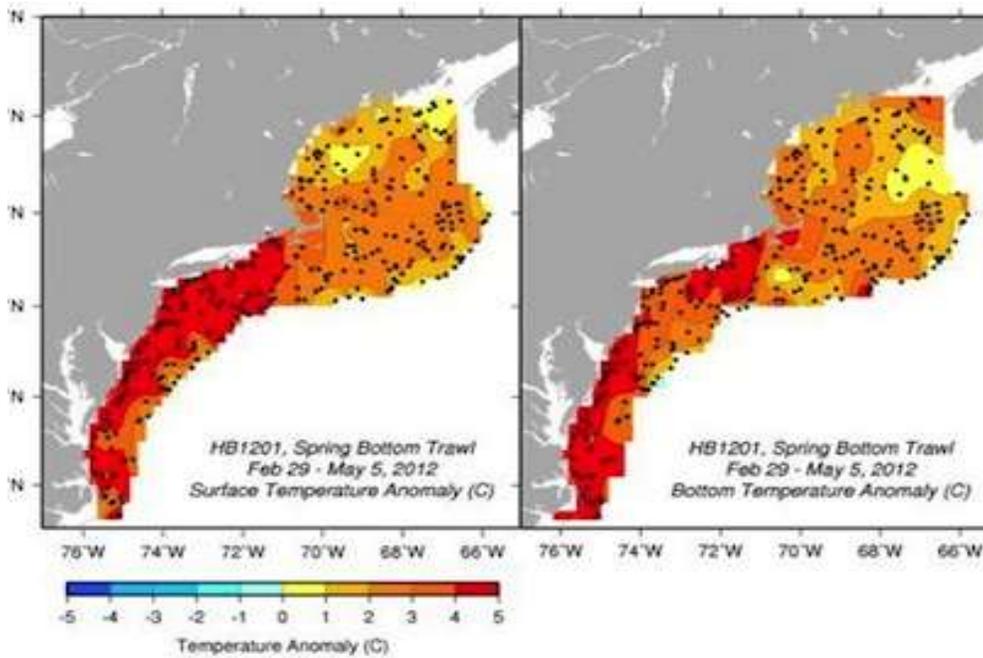
Extinction of some animals

Not good information for the way we, Yes, we, the older folks, are leaving our planet for our grandchildren. Is it even possible to minimize the damage that already has been done?

That is just the current information we have as to what might happen to a warming climate here in the United States. This doesn't even consider the rest of the world, Europe, Asia, the warming Oceans and its effect on fishing or other activities. Then, of course we will always have the Yellowstone caldera as a disastrous backdrop to what could happen to two thirds of our country not to mention North America and the World.

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This map is the warming of the Gulf of Maine. For example, the lobsters that are caught off of the shore of Maine will not do well in warm water; therefore that will cut into the supply of lobsters in New England.



Average annual temperatures have been rising in every state since 1970. This map shows how fast each state has been warming each decade over the past 42 years.

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From 1970 to 2018 is 48 years. This map shows a growing prediction that is sad, but a scientific fact just the same. None of us should be ignorant of what is happening to our weather and climate.

Sorry for the worrisome notes, but I felt that it needed to be talked about. I will try and provide a more pleasant note by December.

OBSERVATIONS

MAMMALS

Gray Squirrel

Striped Skunk - odor

Coywolf - heard

Weasel - First sighting for EastView - quickly carrying a Meadow Vole under raised beds.

Weather Tidbits

Month of November 1-14, 2018

All Measurements taken at solar noon (1230 EST).

PRECIPITATION

Total Precipitation: 98.8 mm or 3.9 inches. We have already reached our monthly total in less than 2 weeks.

Overcast Days: 8