

# The State of Earth:

From  
Big Bang

to Woeful  
Whimper



Jan 2026

Legacy Gazette



# The Architecture of Noise

**Sophia Zhang**



## I. White-Crowned Sparrow

Before the highways awoke, mornings for me began quietly. Mist clung to the leaves, making the cool air dense. Tiny droplets slid along the branches and made small spattering sounds as they hit the soil below. Insects stirred slowly; their first tentative chirps punctuated the stillness. I lifted my beak and began my song—a series of sharp, clean notes that arched through the underbrush. My neighbors responded immediately, each voice distinct but weaving into a seamless dawn chorus. The forest felt alive, each sound placed with purpose. Shadows shifted as light grew, and dew on the ferns reflected gold as the sun climbed higher into the sky.

Then the hum began.

It rolled through the trees like an unbroken thread, low and steady. The air seemed perceptibly thicker where it passed. When I sang, some of my beloved notes vanished into the hum. I lifted my pitch, forced more air through my lungs, and began earlier, hoping to catch the brief moments before traffic filled the forest. The effort worked temporarily, but my body felt it. Energy drained faster. My wings itched to stretch and forage, but I stayed perched longer, singing through fatigue. My vocal cords buzzed in protest, but my song was part of me, and it needed to be heard.

Some females paused at the edges of my territory, unsure. Rivals misjudged distances and intent; crashes and falls were heard frequently in the beginning, joining the cacophony of sound. Predators moved with greater advantage. By the second season, the hum never left. The forest still sang, but the chorus was thinner, simpler, and harder to maintain. Singing required concentration, muscles tense, throat raw. The forest had changed, and I had changed with it.

## II. Sperm Whale

I rely on sound to navigate. Underwater, sunlight fades quicker, seemingly as fast as a tide crashing against shore, replaced by green-gray gloom. The ocean is a dense, moving wall, darkened even more by plankton and shifting currents. I send clicks into the depths, and each returning echo paints the seafloor, locates prey, and traces ripples. I cannot see, but I can. Every pulse carries life-saving information. I glide silently, feeling the cold press against my body, scales and skin brushing past particles suspended in water.

Then the hum began.

Air guns fired pulses that slashed through the water. Each click I sent back returned mangled, distorted, flattened. I could hear, but I could not. The ocean felt wrong—suddenly too vast, too opaque, too uncertain. I dove deeper, currents brushing my sides, then shot to the surface too quickly, bubbles streaking past me, trying to reorient.

My heart pounded. Hormones surged. I altered my dives, surfacing more often, searching for prey that had moved or vanished. Others nearby shifted too, circling where the noise was weakest. Some panicked and rose too quickly, risking decompression injuries. Others followed echoes that no longer made sense, stranded on distant shores and left vulnerable to humans. For weeks, the hum never stopped. Instead, it took over, and became the invisible architecture of the ocean. Hunting took more energy, returns were smaller, and the world I once read with precision had narrowed into a confused corridor.



### III. Katydid

I do not hear; I feel. The ground beneath me vibrates with life—the crawling and skittering of predators, the movement of soil, the footsteps of insects like me. Every gush of air above carries subtle changes in pressure, every signal I emit is carefully timed; every pulse conveys information about location, readiness, intent. The night is my map, and I am the cartographer.

Then the hum began.

It vibrated through soil and air, constant and unyielding. My pulses no longer stood out. I called more often, shortened intervals, shifted timing, all while sensing predators creeping closer, dangerously close. The energy I spent signaling left me slower, hungrier. The leaves trembled under the hum; the soil felt heavier, less responsive. Some nights, nobody answered at all.

We adapted as best we could. Shorter calls, repeated bursts, timing shifts—these helped us survive, but energy drained faster. The nights onwards remained alive with sound, but our interactions lost their clarity. The noise threaded through the environment like a second rhythm, unavoidable and shaping every movement. Each pulse I emitted carried the weight of its interference.

### IV. Plant

I cannot hear, but I feel motion in every part of me. The soil presses gently against my roots, signaling where moisture pools, where nutrients cluster. Microbes hum in quiet communication. When the earth is still, I can grow efficiently, extending roots deeper, branching with intention.

Then the hum began.

It vibrated constantly, a low, unseen pressure shifting soil particles, rearranging the microbes around me in an unwelcome way. My roots grew denser, shallower, prioritizing stability over the exploration that I truly crave. The energy I would have put into tall shoots or flowers went instead into resilience. Leaves shivered with subtle movement; small branches bent slightly with every pulse. Pollinators arrived at unpredictable times, their visits mismatched with my flowers. Seeds formed unevenly. Green as the field remained, but the hidden networks that sustain life—the connections, timing, and flow—weakened.

I remained rooted. I endured. But endurance is no longer the same as thriving.



## V. Quiet

Noise had arrived gradually, threading itself into the world. Each organism adjusted just enough to survive. Birds sang higher, louder. Whales shortened their range. Insects repeated signals. Plants changed growth patterns. Survival continued, but the centuries of evolutionary perfection had declined.

And yet, when the hum fades, changes are reversed. Thanks to the climate activists of today's era, we are given the potential to be able to revert to normal.

Birdsong dropped in pitch, softened, carrying across the understory again. Whale calls traveled farther in clear water. Soil vibration slowed, and roots branched deeper and more freely. Mechanical and acoustic spaces reopened.

Quiet was not absence; it was space. Space for signals to travel clearly, for timing to synchronize, for life to operate fully. The hum had left its mark, but its retreat revealed how fragile and interconnected these worlds truly are.

The world had grown louder. Life endured. Whether balance would remain, or whether the hum would return, remained unknown.



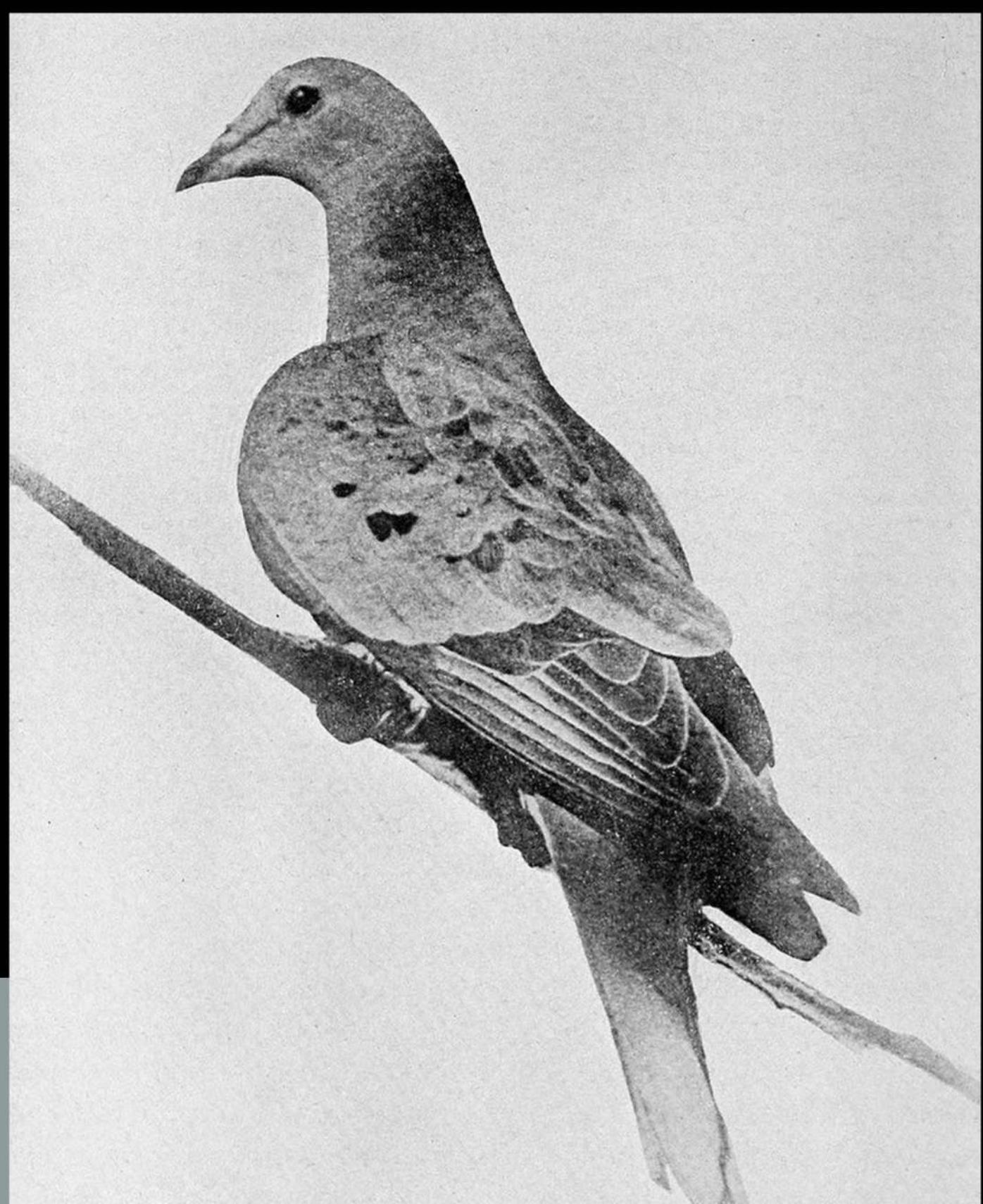
# Which animals have gone extinct since the Industrial Age began?

**Eric Zhou**

Since the beginning of the Industrial Age, humans have reshaped the globe more rapidly than any other time period in history. Urban growth and mechanization placed an immense strain on ecosystems worldwide, leading to many species going extinct and many more being pushed to the brink of extinction. Human activity has caused irreparable damage to these species, such as the passenger pigeon, the Tasmanian tiger, and the Baiji river dolphin.

One of the earliest examples of a species being forced into extinction by human activity is that of the passenger pigeon. In the early 1800s, they were the largest bird species in North America by population. However, their large population made them vulnerable to changes in their environment and industrial expansion. As more and more deforestation occurred to clear places for farmland, these birds' natural habitats and nesting grounds were destroyed. Furthermore, with the expansion of railway networks and telephone lines, hunters could now easily track and hunt down these birds across the country. The last known passenger pigeon, Martha, died in captivity in 1914, marking the end of her species.

Another example was the extinction of the Tasmanian tiger, a carnivorous animal native to Tasmania. As European settlers expanded sheep farming in the 1800s, the Tasmanian tiger was often unfairly blamed for the loss of livestock. This led to the government offering bounties for each of these animals killed, which led to thousands of them being hunted down. Industrial expansion also destroyed its habitat, while disease and competition with newly introduced dog species worsened its decline. By the time people realised the species needed protection, it was too late. The last confirmed Tasmanian tiger died at Hobart Zoo in 1936, leaving behind a stark example of how misunderstanding can wipe out an entire species.



Pollution and industrial development has also had a significant impact on ecosystems and biodiversity around the world. The Baiji river dolphin, once found all throughout the Yangtze River, suffered due to China's rapid industrialization. As China industrialized, the Yangtze became one of the most heavily polluted rivers in the world. The large amounts of boat traffic also lead to increased collisions with the dolphins. By the early 2000s, scientists searching for the dolphin did not find a single one. In 2006, the Baiji river dolphin was officially declared extinct, one of the only marine mammals to be driven to extinction by human activity.

The losses of the passenger pigeon, Tasmanian tiger, and Baiji river dolphin reveal a stark, sobering truth: the Industrial Age brought unprecedented progress, but also unprecedented strain on the natural world. As the world continues to develop today, these stories serve as a stark reminder of the importance of protecting our planet and biodiversity.

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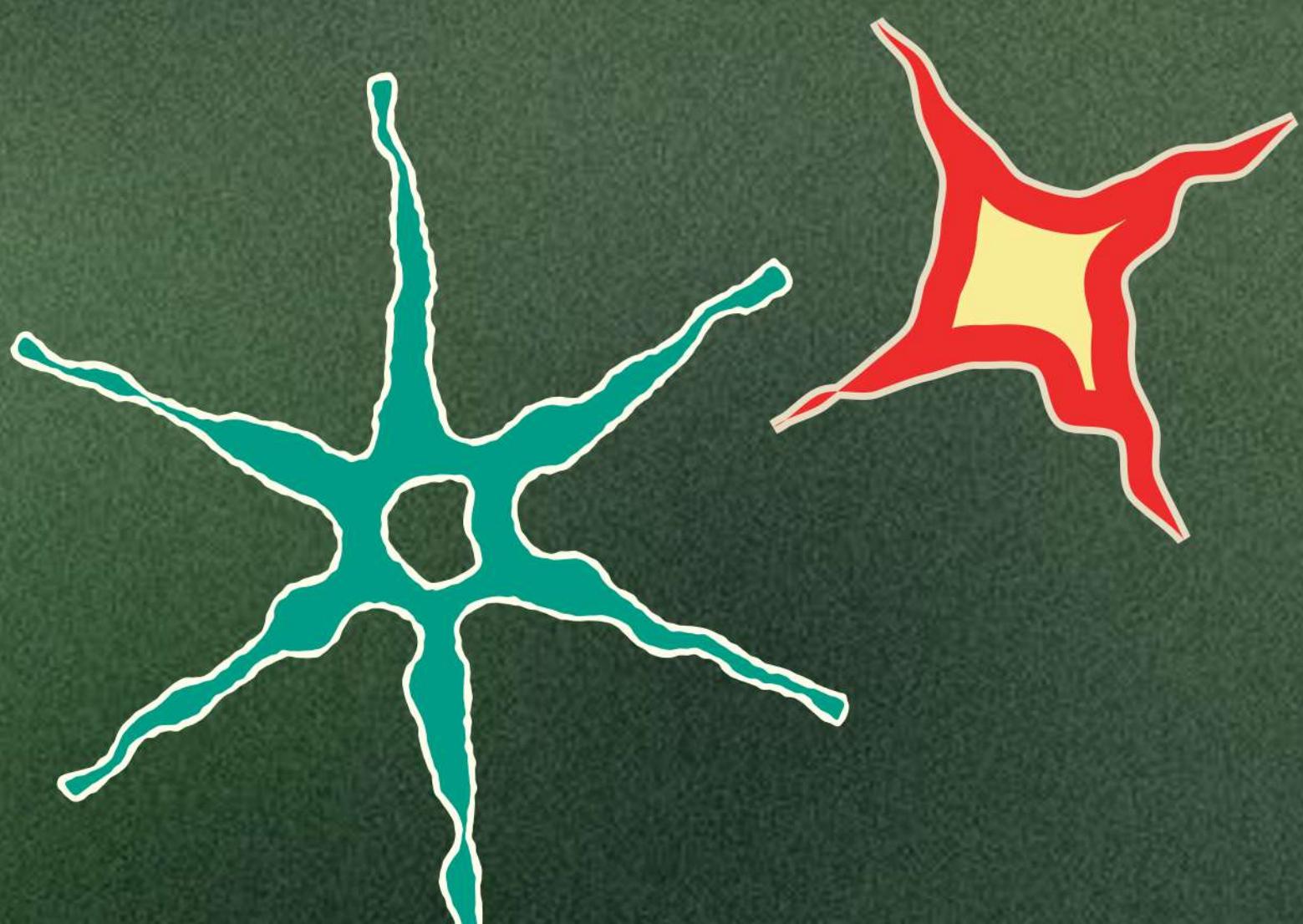
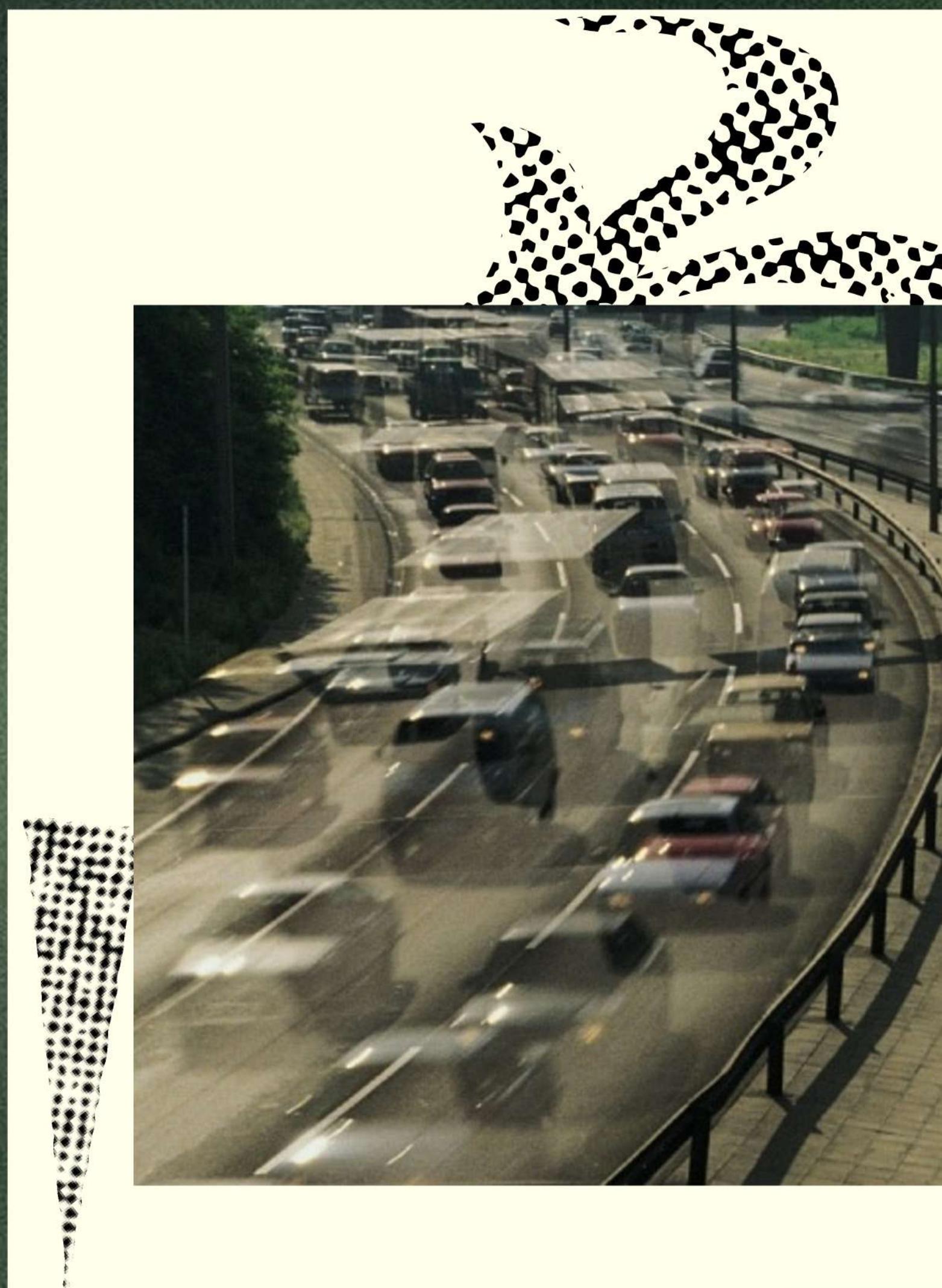
# 5 Daily Habits to Help the Environment

Sarah dos Santos

Celebrity gossip, stock market updates, and expected shootings stretch across the headers of the news every day, snubbing a crisis that the whole planet will have to face: climate change. In a world where humanity's last concern is the environment, time is running out. We have the ability to reverse the repercussions of our actions right at our fingertips, yet we choose to let the seconds tick away without acting. While we cannot alter the past, we *can* and *should* care about the health of our families, children, and wildlife. Here are five practical changes you can make to your life to help our world.

## Reusable Products

Buying a reusable water bottle is the most simple and convenient change that can be made. Plastic water bottles are not only damaging to produce but are horrible for the environment as well. Think about every time you have disposed of a plastic water bottle. Every one of those bottles takes *lifetimes* to decompose. To be more specific, it takes about 450 years for a single bottle to completely break down. All of the buildup of waste from this consumer product itself in landfills will lead to the overaccumulation of plastic and slowly deteriorate the available space on Earth. If that isn't convincing enough, plastic water bottles have a detrimental effect on human health from the toxic chemicals the plastic possesses leaching into the water and making their way into the bloodstream.





## Eat Green

Not only does eating well save the planet, it saves money and one's health. The common misconception people might have about eating organic are its expenses. It is important to realize that growing your own produce is free, and buying groceries from local farmers actually saves money. Furthermore, making your food from scratch costs much less than ordering food or eating at a restaurant. The food production industry utilizes pesticides, fertilizers, and all types of chemicals in its crops, leading the runoff and soil to become polluted. If we are able to transition into a more sustainable agriculture method, we would be able to nurture the Earth's soil back into health, so much so it could serve as a carbon sink.

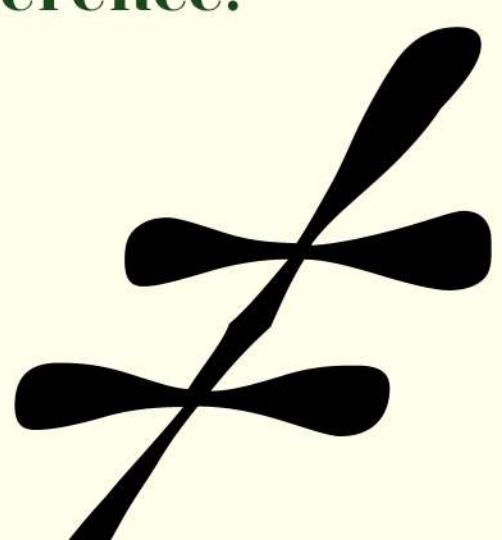
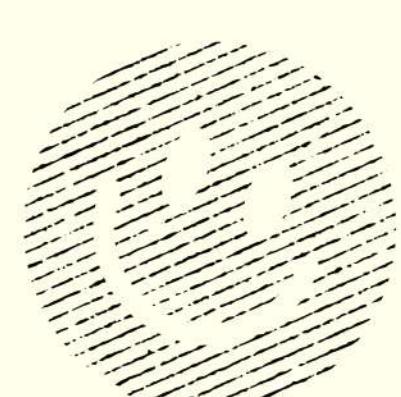
## Unplug Any Chargers

Energy consumption is extremely overlooked, as it is difficult to even realize at times. A lot of the time, it is unnecessary and can easily be taken care of. Forgetting to turn off the TV, leaving the lights on, and keeping chargers plugged into outlets while not using them are all examples of wasted energy. Keeping a reminder in the back of your head to remember to turn off and unplug these electronics and accessories before you leave a room will contribute greatly to reducing energy consumption.

## “Hand-Me-Downs”

Instead of buying new outfits, wear some *hand-me-downs* or share clothing pieces with your family. Maintaining your clothes in good condition after you buy them is critical, as it prevents you from buying a surplus of clothes and having an overflowing closet. Fashion production has very negative effects on our planet. It emits carbon, pollutes the air and water sources, and even exudes microplastics into the ocean. By reusing and sharing clothing, you can reduce the overproduction and immorality that goes into the industry.

**These are only a few out of the many habits you can implement into your life to save the environment. All it takes is a few reminders and a little effort to start off with something small and turn it into a big difference.**



# The Billion Oyster Project

Caitlin Liao

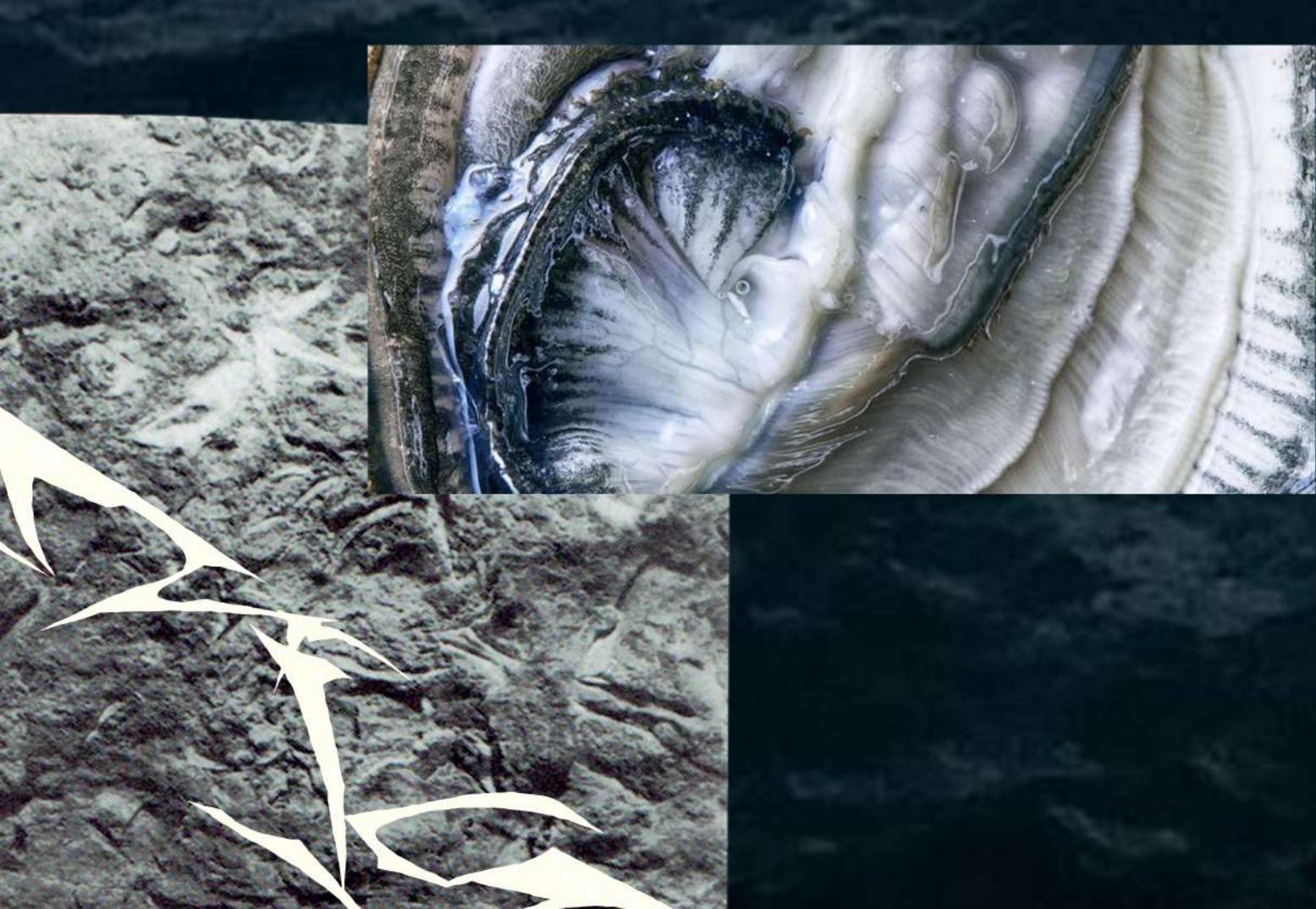
Once upon a time, New York was surrounded by 220,000 acres of oysters. In the 18th century, immigrants were referring to the Ellis and Liberty Islands as “Little Oyster Island” and “Great Oyster Island” respectively. In the 19th century, New Yorkers were consuming roughly one million oysters each day. But they didn’t do so sustainably. Overharvesting, combined with the pollution of industrialization, led to the depletion of the oyster beds. Oysters became fewer in number and too polluted to eat, and by 1927, all of New York City’s oyster beds had closed (Atlas Obscura, 2018).

In 2014, a citizen-science non-profit group that called themselves the Billion Oyster Project declared that they would add one-billion living oysters back into the NYC bay by 2035. According to their website, they are 15% there, with 150 million live oysters restored as of now (Billion Oyster Project, n.d.). The Billion Oyster Project works with hundreds of thousands of people to make their work happen.



## Why Oysters?

Oysters are not just a food source or a species that humans are feeling randomly inclined to restore; they are a legitimate solution to a lot of the most pressing problems raised by climate change. A single oyster can filter around 50 gallons of water a day, processing and consuming unwanted substances in the water, such as nitrogen, and expelling clean water. Oyster reefs are therefore a living process of water filtration, which in turn lead to the health of the bodies of water they live in. Healthy, clear water provides a stable habitat for many marine species, as well as improves the cleanliness of any sea life that is caught for consumption (NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office, 2021).



Oysters can also help with rising sea levels and shoreline erosion. New oysters simply group on older ones, creating reefs that can just get taller and taller. The largest reefs act as natural sea barriers, diffusing large waves before they hit land, slowing the speed and severity of shoreline erosion.

### Shell Recycling

Baby oysters, called spat, grow by absorbing nutrients like calcium carbonate from older oyster shells. In order to grow massive numbers of oysters at a time, the Billion Oyster Project runs a Shell Recycling Program where they collect the used shells from restaurants and food stands. These shells are collected in buckets and ultimately dumped at curing sites, like Governors Island, where they bear wind and rain for around a year so that they can be clean enough to return to the harbor (Billion Oyster Project, n.d.). Once clean, the Billion Oyster Project's volunteers place spat on the shells and set the shells in cages that they lower into the ocean. These cages are checked on periodically, but generally provide a safe environment for spat to grow into full oysters.



**BILLION  
OYSTER  
PROJECT.**

### The Team

The Billion Oyster Project is joined by volunteers and students across the city. They work in frequent contact with the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School located on governors island that provides a place for high-school students to specialize and work hands-on in the field of marine biology. The Billion Oyster Project also partners with over a hundred other schools across the city, giving students a chance to grow oysters in tanks of their own that they can monitor over time.

The Billion Oyster Project themselves list 36 members of their crew apart from their eight directors that specialize in different areas, like education, restoration, research, and finance.

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**Fiona Wang**

# Climate change

## and the Moral Responsibilities We Have:

As more and more scientific evidence shows that humanity has passed several important climate tipping points, the question of what nations owe to future generations has become more important than ever. Whether through ice caps melting, permafrost thaw, or the collapse of a large ecosystem, the detrimental effects of human impact are greater than the rate at which it is healing. This is why countries, especially those that are most to blame for past emissions, have very strong moral duties to protect human life and take care of the environment. These obligations go past a political and economical point of view, they constitute an ethical pathway to future generations who need to confront the consequences of the present.

Some changes can't be undone, but what people do now will still have an effect on the future. This is why preventative measures need to be invested in more than ever. Countries need to switch to renewable energy and cut down on greenhouse gas emissions. Not doing anything to stop warming from getting worse when it can still be slowed down is against the ethical rule of non-maleficence, which means "do no harm." In fact, global warming can be slowed down, as seen by the time spent in quarantine where there were record lows of CO<sub>2</sub>. However, the low amount of CO<sub>2</sub> did not change the rate of global warming, which is why more action needs to be taken. The obligation to prevent further harm increases, not decreases, because at some point our world will never be able to recover.



There is no doubt that future generations will be at greater risk because of extreme weather, food and water shortages, and other threats that can't be completely avoided. This is why, as a government, countries and individual democracies need to get ready by doing things such as improving infrastructure and supporting disaster response systems. The idea behind this duty is built in fairness. The people who have the most power and money have the duty to help protect the Earth because they have the means to do so.

Finally, countries need to practice intergenerational justice by understanding that industrialization has helped our generation but will harm the next. Wealthier countries, whose past emissions have had the biggest effect on crossing climate thresholds, have a bigger responsibility to do this. Intergenerational justice shifts climate responsibility from a commendable act to a moral obligation. Countries also need to work together more to deal with climate tipping points. Climate systems are connected, so no country can protect its own future without thinking about how it will affect other countries. Technology needs to be shared and promises should be applied to other countries to be an ethical leader. Universalism is the moral principle that says all human lives, no matter when they lived, are equally valuable. This principle is broken when countries only look out for themselves. The world is a better place when people work together, and it shows that everyone on Earth has the same fate.

Countries have to face a simple truth when they cross climate tipping points. The future isn't just an economic or environmental issue, it's also a moral one. Governments today need to act on behalf of future generations because they can't speak for themselves.

In conclusion, if scientists agree that we have passed certain climate tipping points, countries have more, not less, moral obligations. The future is still not set in stone, and even though some damage may be permanent, people can still choose how much they want future generations to feel the impact of our pollution. Countries can do their duty to future generations and keep some hope alive for the world they will inherit by taking on these moral obligations.

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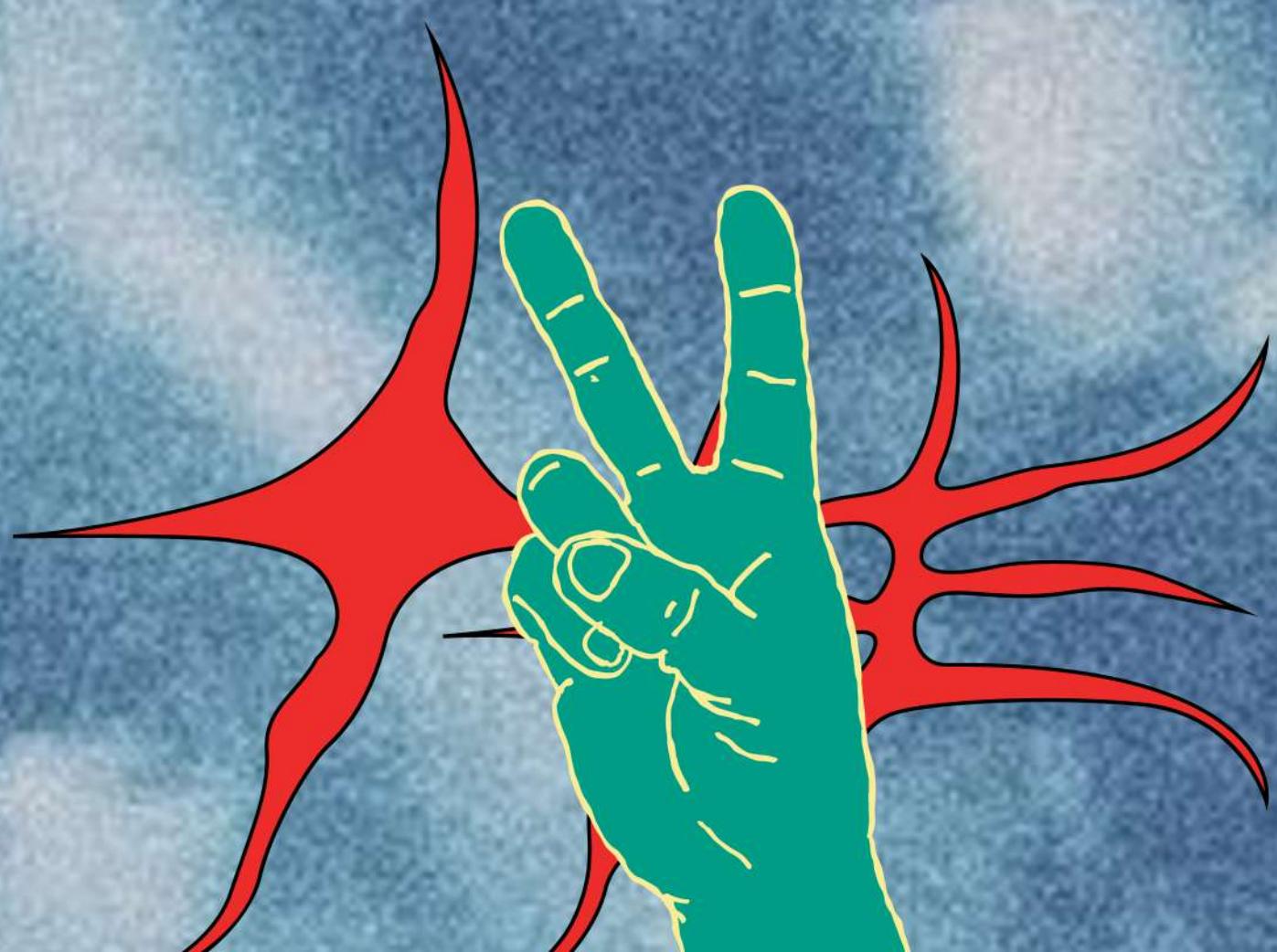
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# Counting Down to Catastrophe: The Climate Clock's Urgent Warning of Doomsday

**Caleb Lopata**

In the heart of Union Square lives a giant clock, a device that, rather than keeping the time, is counting down.

Though it may appear as your average New York City spectacle, it is your wake-up call for doomsday. As the clock ticks down towards zero, humanity strives closer to the tipping point of where Mother Earth is too far gone to reverse climate change. It has been more than four years since the launch of the New York Climate Clock in Sept. 2020, but the building, neon, urgent, impossible-to-ignore clock keeps ticking, leaving one question:

**Will we act before time runs out? Or will we, as a planet, hold profit and greed in a higher regard than the life of our planet?**



“Now is the time to get to work,” said Micah W ‘26, a co-leader of the high school’s Green Griffins, “The next five years are going to dictate the future of our planet for the next 500 years.”



The team behind the Climate Clock was not the first to erect a landmark, emphasizing the time we have until it is too late. In 2009, according to [the Climate Clock's own website](#), Deutsche Bank created a “Carbon Counter” billboard above New York’s Times Square, which highlighted the alarming rate of carbon emissions. Years later, in 2015, the musician and activist David Usher, with the help of scientist Damon Matthews, started an online climate clock at Concordia University’s Human Impact Lab.

The idea of a Climate Clock started to pick up at this time, inspiring new web pages and news corporations to create their own clocks to help bring awareness to this unavoidable issue. In 2018, an art project by Andy McWilliams and Amay Katari was uploaded online, which eventually became featured in art galleries around the world. This installation was called The 2° Window, a name spotlighting the true goal behind all of these efforts. Humankind must restructure our global energy and economic infrastructure to avoid raising the global temperature past 2 degrees Celsius.

Then, 2019 came around; a milestone year that excelled climate activism initiatives years further by pushing them into the public spotlight. Someone who led our society to this pivotal year was the renowned Greta Thunberg (when she was 16 years old). So when the newly made Climate Clock startup team got an email reading, “[Greta wants a clock](#),” a clock is what she got. Greta planned that she would hold up this clock in front of the United Nations General Assembly, and she needed the Climate Clock’s team of creative minds to help her with this task. While the UN security barred the clock from being let into the assembly at the end of the day, the snowball had already begun to roll; a monumental change was coming. As the team at Climate Clock writes, “[A monumental challenge requires... a monument](#).”

Even without Greta’s speech at the UN having the first generation of the Climate Clock in the background, her speech was still heralded as one of the most transformative speeches in climate activism. The momentum that Greta had built could not be slowed down in any way, leading to the assembly of the New York City Climate Clock.

To get into more of the logistics behind the clock, it is important to understand the “one deadline” that the clock is counting down to. The Climate Clock deadline shows how long there is left until the carbon budget runs out. The budget was declared in 2018 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It was the first attempt to put into numbers the amount of budget necessary to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius. A temperature agreed upon by 196 parties in the United Nations Paris Agreement. At the rate humanity is going, the Climate Clock will continue to tick down until it reaches zero. At this point, the carbon budget will have fully run out, and humanity will have gone too far to reverse climate change.

This doomsday outcome is highly likely but not inevitable. There is a lot anyone can do to make a significant impact in the fight against climate change. Along with the “one deadline,” the Climate Clock also features many lifelines. The monument displays the percentage of global energy coming from renewable sources. This is the first lifeline of eight listed on the Climate Clocks website. To advise on how to participate in helping the world avoid Armageddon, the co-leader of Green Griffins, Grace’s environmental club, Micah, has his piece to say about this.

Micah recommends websites such as the Library of Congress, which, since the 1960s, has contained decades of documents and research on climate change. He also recommended the United Nations website, which has an array of resources, and which Micah joked as “surprising,” actual human beings. Members of the Grace community, like Kim Chaloner, are also a great resource for understanding more about climate change; “She knows a mind-boggling amount about this stuff,” Micah explained.



When people see the climate clock ticking down, when people see that wildfires are destroying Los Angeles, or when people see that we are hitting record-hot years, most turn their heads in fear. Micah reminds us that contrary to what many would believe, these problems “should not ever give you fear, [they] should give you motivation.”

Micah has been pursuing climate action for years now, campaigning for change and raising thousands of dollars. He has seen that the last decade has been crucial for the future of our planet, but now more than ever, he encourages all people to understand the impact of every single action.

Micah, in cooperation with Green Griffins, has raised over a thousand dollars for the California wildfires. Even making the small decision to buy a cookie at a bake sale can make a positive impact toward a better world.



Today, the question is, will we take action before it is too late, or will we prioritize wealth, the laziness to act, and greed over the survival of our planet? A quote used around the world to inspire action against climate change was spoken by Canadian filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin: “When the last tree is cut down, the last fish eaten, and the last stream poisoned, you will realize that you cannot eat money.”



*Caleb Lopata '26, the author, is a staff writer for The Grace Gazette.*

# How Climate Change Could Upend the American Dream

By: **Abrahm Lustgarten, ProPublica and The New York Times**

*This story was originally published by ProPublica.*

Houses in the Altadena and Pacific Palisades neighborhoods were still ablaze when talk turned to the cost of the Los Angeles firestorms and who would pay for it. Now it appears that the total damage and economic loss could be more than \$250 billion. This, after a year in which hurricanes Milton and Helene and other extreme weather events had already exacted tens of billions of dollars in American disaster losses.

As the compounding impacts of climate-driven disasters take effect, we are seeing home insurance prices spike around the country, pushing up the costs of owning a home. In some cases, insurance companies are pulling out of towns altogether. And in others, people are beginning to move away.

One little-discussed result is that soaring home prices in the United States may have peaked in the places most at risk, leaving the nation on the precipice of a generational decline. That's the finding of a [new analysis](#) by the First Street, a research firm that studies climate threats to housing and provides some of the best climate adaptation data available, both freely and commercially. The analysis predicts an extraordinary reversal in housing fortunes for Americans — nearly \$1.5 trillion in asset losses over the next 30 years.

The implications are staggering: Many Americans could face a paradigm shift in the way they save and how they define their economic security. Climate change is upending the basic assumption that Americans can continue to build wealth and financial security by owning their own home. In a sense, it is upending the American dream.



Homeownership is the bedrock of America's economy. Residential real estate in the United States is worth nearly \$50 trillion — almost double the size of the entire gross domestic product. Almost two-thirds of American adults are homeowners, and the median house here has appreciated more than 58% over the past two decades, even after accounting for inflation. In Pacific Palisades and Altadena, that evolution elevated many residents into the upper middle class. Across the country homes are the largest asset for most families — who hold approximately 67% of their savings in their primary residence.

That is an awful lot to lose: for individuals, and for the nation's economy.

The First Street researchers found that climate pressures are the main factor driving up insurance costs. Average premiums have risen 31% across the country since 2019, and are steeper in high-risk climate zones. Over the next 30 years, if insurance prices are unhindered, they will, on average, leap an additional 29%, according to First Street. Rates in Miami could quadruple. In Sacramento, California, they could double.



And that's where the systemic economic risk comes in. Not long ago, insurance premiums were a modest cost of owning a home, amounting to about 8% of an average mortgage payment. But insurance costs today are about one-fifth the size of a typical payment, outpacing inflation and even the rate of appreciation on the homes themselves. That makes owning property, on paper anyway, a bad investment. First Street forecasts that three decades from now — the term of the classic American mortgage — houses will be worth, on average, 6% less than they are today. They project that decline across the vast majority of the nation, affirming fears that many economists and climate analysts have held for a long time.

Part of the problem is that many people were coaxed into living in the very high-risk areas they call home precisely by the availability of insurance that was cheaper than it should have been. For years, as climate-driven floods, hurricanes and wildfires have piled up, so have economic losses. Insurance companies canceled policies, but in response, states redoubled support for homeowners, promising economic stability even if that insurance — required by most mortgage lenders — one day disappeared. It kept costs manageable and quelled anxiety, and economies continued to hum.





But those discounts “muffled the free market price signals,” according to Matthew Kahn, an economist at the University of Southern California who studies markets and climate change. They also “slowed down our adaptation,” making dangerous places like Florida’s coastlines and California’s fire-prone hillsides seem safer than they are. First Street found that today, insurance underprices climate risk for 39 million properties across the continental United States — meaning that for 27% of properties in the country, premiums are too low to cover their climate exposure.

No wonder costs are rising. Insurers are playing catch-up. But it means Americans are playing catch-up, too, in terms of evaluating where they live. And that leads to the potential for large numbers of people to begin to move. First Street, in fact, correlates the rise in insurance rates and dropping property values with widespread climate migration, predicting that more than 55 million Americans will migrate in response to climate risks inside this country within the next three decades, and that more than 5 million Americans will migrate this year. First Street’s analysts posit that climate risk is becoming just as important as schools and waterfront views when people purchase a home, and that while property values are likely to drop in most places, they will rise — by more than 10% by midcentury — in the safer regions.

There are many reasons to be cautious about these projections. Precise estimates for climate migration in the United States have remained elusive in large part because modeling for human behavior in all its diverse motives is nearly impossible. First Street’s economic models also don’t capture the immense equity many Americans have accumulated in those properties as home values have lurched upward over the past two decades, equity that gives many people a cushion larger than the relatively modest projected losses. The models assume that all the past patterns of reckless building and zoning will continue, and they don’t account for the nation’s housing shortage, nor the difference between longtime homeowners and a new generation trying to buy now.

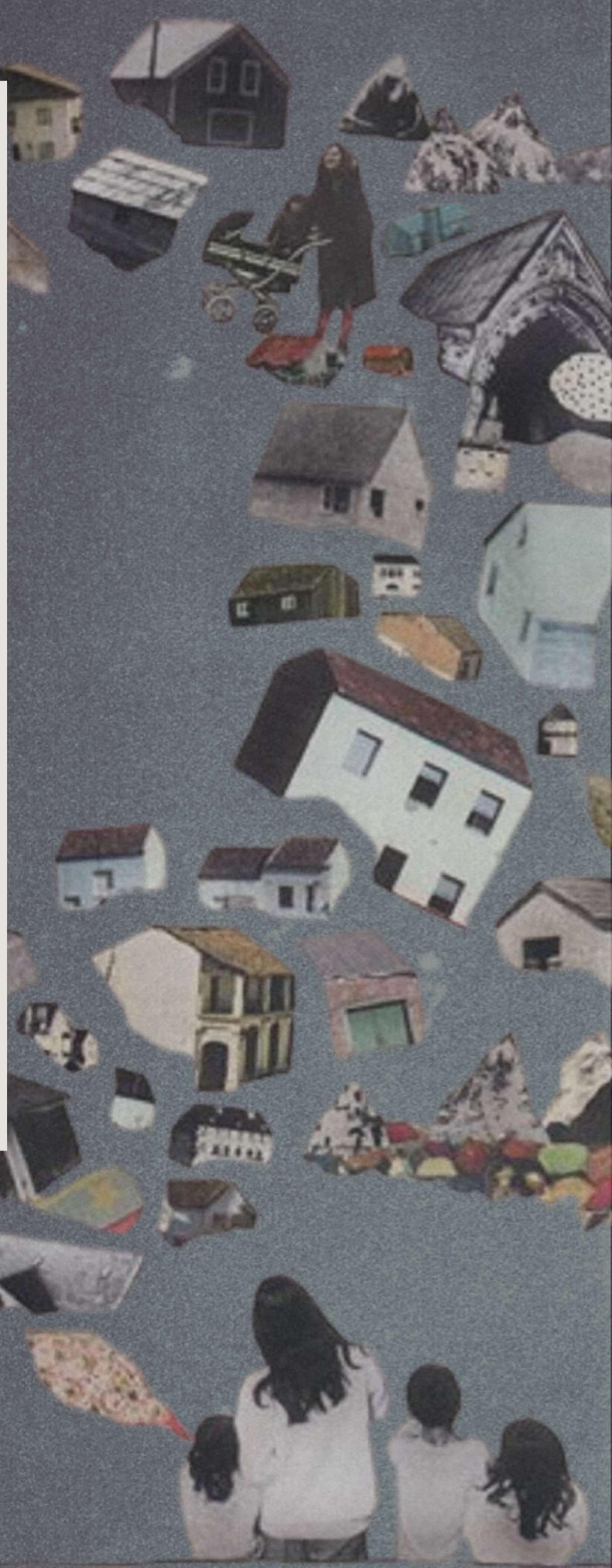
However imprecise, First Street’s work “plays the role of Paul Revere, of the challenge we could face if we fail to adapt,” Kahn said. Climate-driven costs and climate risk may drive sweeping change in both homeownership and migration, at the same time that both of those factors are expected to continue to increase.



It means that homeowners will need to be far wealthier, or renters will have to pay much more. Like many aspects of the climate challenge, this one will also drive climate haves and have-nots further apart, especially as relatively safe regions emerge, and discerning buyers flock to their appreciating real estate markets.

No one is abandoning Los Angeles. Its wealth, density and government support make it far more resilient than places like Paradise, California, the New Jersey shore or Florida. But it will be economically and physically transformed. Pacific Palisades will probably be rebuilt to its past splendor: Its homeowners can afford it. Altadena, a middle-class neighborhood, may face a different fate: Its properties are more likely to be snatched up by investors, gentrified and made unaffordable by both the cost of rebuilding, insurance and upscaling of new homes as they are rebuilt.

In that way, Altadena may prove to be the true harbinger — of a future in which no one but the rich owns their own homes, where insurance is a luxury good and where renters pay a monthly toll to large private equity landowners who may be better suited to manage that risk.



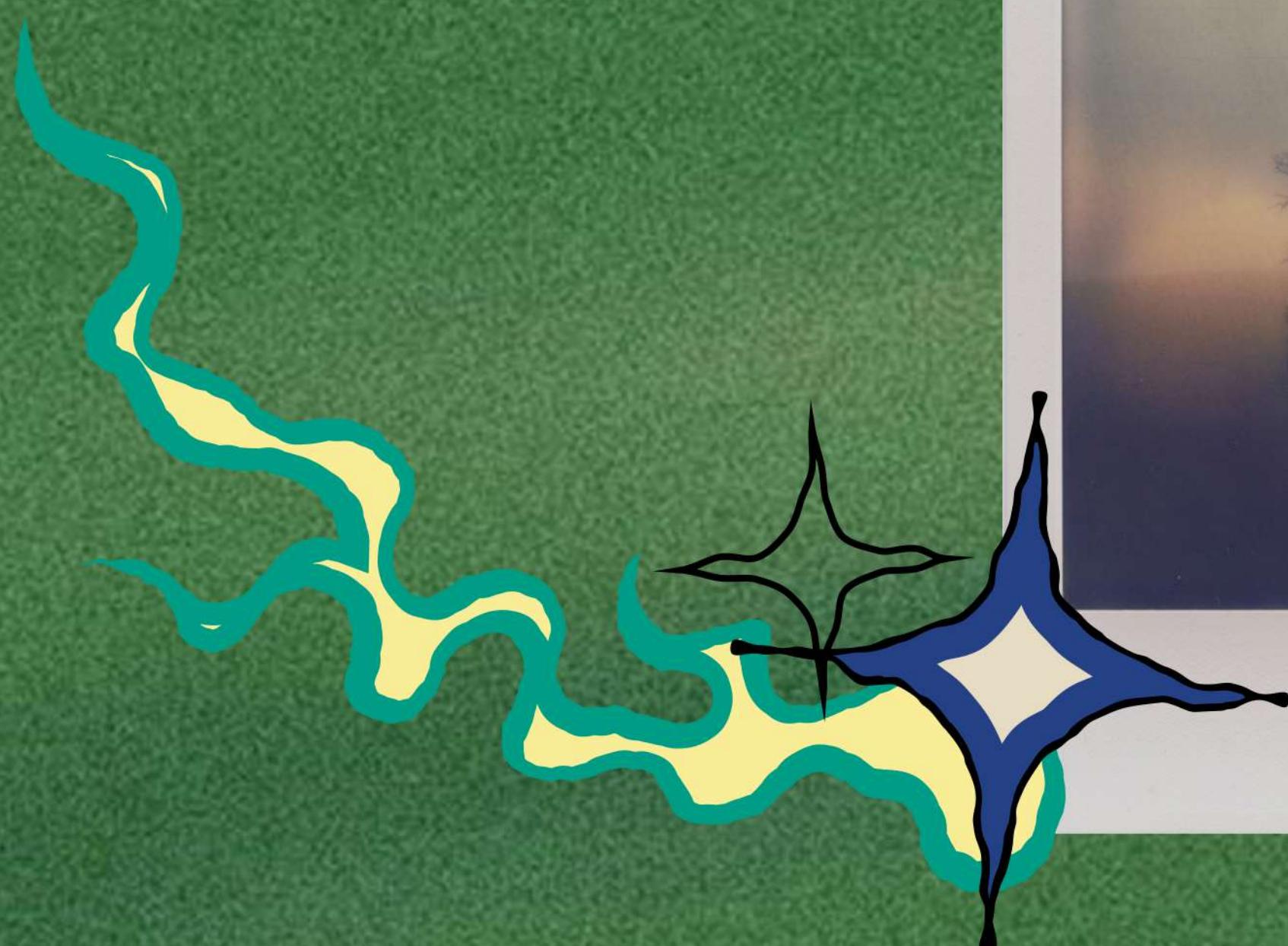
# There Will Come Soft Rains

Sara Teasdale

**There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,  
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;  
And frogs in the pools singing at night,  
And wild plum trees in tremulous white,  
Robins will wear their feathery fire  
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;  
And not one will know of the war, not one  
Will care at last when it is done.  
Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree  
If mankind perished utterly;  
And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn,  
Would scarcely know that we were gone.**



Learn more about poet Sara Teasdale [here](#).





classifieds

Organization: Thrive

Information: Thrive is a nonprofit organization focused on helping youth build confidence through public speaking. The goal is to empower youth to become strong communicators and self-advocates, especially those who struggle with mental illness, physical limitations, or social anxiety.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email Cynthia Ma at [cynthia.ma@ingeniusprep.com](mailto:cynthia.ma@ingeniusprep.com).

Organization: Music Education Project

Information: Music Education Project is looking for Unity/C# developers to further the project. The music education project is focused on developing educational technology to teach basic music theory to children through engaging, game-based learning built with Unity and C#. Students proficient in English, a basic ability to read musical notation, and with a background in Unity and C# programming and game logic experience are encouraged to get involved.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Contact Yinuo Nora Wang at [YinuoWang2008@outlook.com](mailto:YinuoWang2008@outlook.com).

Organization: Everfeed

Information: EverFeed is an organization that provides solutions to helping animals in need. EverFeed's website aims to provide information on different animals housed at under-resourced shelters, encouraging the public to virtually donate food through the platform. The team is currently seeking student collaborators to scale the organization.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Contact Raeka at [raeka\\_ren@outlook.com](mailto:raeka_ren@outlook.com).

Organization: Letters of Solace

Information: Letters of Solace, a student-led mental health organization, that distributes handwritten and digital letters to youth facing loneliness, isolation, or mental health struggles. So far, over 50 volunteers have written more than 400 letters across two countries. They are currently seeking more student volunteers to write letters.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Google Form](#)

Organization: Follis

Information: Follis is an online education initiative that strives to bring philosophical ideas and arguments into our daily lives through bimonthly seminars on urgent societal topics like AI and climate change. Currently, they're looking for several co-organizers to put together online workshops across the world.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Google Form](#) or reply to [maeeee26@outlook.com](mailto:maeeee26@outlook.com) with your resume

Organization: The Body Project

Information: Sponsored by Stanford, The Body Project is an evidence-based, youth-led initiative designed to help young women challenge unrealistic beauty ideals and build body acceptance through writing, discussion, and interactive activities. Implemented by the National Eating Disorders Association as well as hundreds of colleges, The Body Project has been adopted by about 20 high schools thus far. For students interested in public health, psychology, and/or social justice, there are leadership opportunities available.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Contact Selina by email [selinaxi007@gmail.com](mailto:selinaxi007@gmail.com) or DM @selinaaxi on Instagram.

Organization: Vibrant Waves

Information: Vibrant Waves is a non-profit organization with a focus on youth mental health. If you are passionate about youth wellbeing and mental health, please apply to join the team! Looking for online content creators and in-person NJ high school students.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email [vibrantwaves23@gmail.com](mailto:vibrantwaves23@gmail.com) with your resume

Organization: InventoBloom

Information: InventoBloom is a youth-led organization that aims to design and manufacture low-cost engineering toy kits with standardized 3D-printable parts to make STEM education accessible to children worldwide, especially in refugee communities.

Deadline: None

Contact info: DM @inventobloom on IG to ask about joining the team

Organization: The Sunflower Podcast

Information: [The Sunflower Podcast](#) is an initiative of [The Sunflower Project](#), a student-led nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing and spreading awareness on human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and gender-based violence. Currently seeking to grow their podcast.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Please reach out to Ruhi Yue at [ruhiyue09@gmail.com](mailto:ruhiyue09@gmail.com).

Organization: Us and Tomorrow

Information: Us and Tomorrow is a science fiction podcast exploring how emerging technologies impact the human experience. The podcast dives into topics such as AI, society, ethics, and philosophy, to examine what happens when science fiction becomes reality. "Us and Tomorrow" is recruiting student collaborators, all of whom will receive full credit on podcast platforms and social media accounts.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Apply here](#).

### Organization: Seedfems

Information: Seedfems is a youth-led nonprofit on a mission to bring feminism back to its roots—in fairness, empathy, and justice for all—starting with the youngest minds. The organization leads interactive workshops on gender equality in primary schools, a book project involving stories and illustrations about gender equality, and a petition campaign to normalize women keeping their surnames after marriage.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Apply here](#).

### Organization: GUD Medicine

Information: GUD Medicine is a youth initiative tackling complex healthcare issues and fighting for health literacy and justice. GUD Medicine aims to make healthcare more transparent and equitable by breaking down confusing medical insurance systems, comparing drug chemistries (e.g., street, generic, prescription), and investigating global healthcare policies. The organization also interviews real patients and professionals as well as leads campaigns for healthcare justice in the UK and US.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Apply here](#).

### Organization: SquashBuddy

Information: SquashBuddy needs students for three roles. The marketing position involves growing our user base through digital outreach, social media, and strategic content. The tech role is focused on maintaining and updating the website—basic troubleshooting, light dev work, and platform support. SquashBuddy is also actively looking for squash players interested in helping us launch SquashBuddy Centers. These are local hubs built around a concentrated player base, designed to make the app truly useful for finding matches and practice partners in a specific area. In addition to encouraging active app use, center leads help organize events, beginner clinics, and mini-tournaments.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email [albertzhang8148@gmail.com](mailto:albertzhang8148@gmail.com) with your bio or resume.

### Organization: Framework Design Studio

Information: FDS films events in the form of videos and photos for organizations to post on their social media. They also create mini movies for nonprofit events from the footage taken from the day of the event. FDS is looking for new members interested in design and new student organization clients.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email [robert.guo27@ucc.on.ca](mailto:robert.guo27@ucc.on.ca) with your bio or resume.

Organization: STEAM Labs

Information: STEAM Labs is a student-led 501(c)(3) nonprofit that brings hands-on science nights to under-resourced elementary schools. With nearly 100 high school mentors and 500+ students impacted across 11 U.S. cities, the program is now expanding nationwide. STEAM Labs is currently recruiting chapter leaders, national board members, and web designers. All leadership roles are eligible for monthly stipends of up to \$200, and 100% of funds you raise go back to you—STEAM Labs will match any donations or ad revenue you bring in.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email Daniel at [danielzhang427@gmail.com](mailto:danielzhang427@gmail.com).

Organization: Modern Anthologies

Information: Modern Anthologies is looking for motivated people to start a chapter in their own school/region. So far, we have chapters in Seoul Korea, Boston, Virginia, LA, and more. Our organization is Boston-based, youth-led & strives to make writing and publication more accessible to youth from every quarter. If you are interested in creative writing, lit, design, multi-media, communications, or anything really, this is the perfect leadership opportunity to boost your resume!

Deadline: None

Contact info: Check out [the website](#) and fill out [this form](#).

Organization: 2026 Davidson Institute Fellows Scholarship

Information: They award \$100,000, \$50,000 and \$25,000 scholarships to gifted and high-achieving students, 18 years old or under, who have completed a significant piece of work.

Deadline: unannounced, likely February 2026

Contact info: [Website](#)

Organization: Susquehanna University's Apprentice Writer

Information: Published by creative writing students at Susquehanna University, Apprentice Writer features high school students' creative writing pieces.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Website](#)

Organization: ECI Americas Spring Fellowship 2026

Information: The ECI fellowship is a free education and action-based course for youth ages 12-18 in North, South or Central America. In weekly sessions on zoom, fellows will learn about intersectional environmentalism and leadership, using this education to develop their own independent initiative.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Website](#)

Organization: The Rube Goldberg Machine Contest

Information: The Rube Goldberg Machine Contest (RGMC) is a challenge of creativity, ingenuity, and teamwork all rolled into one! A STEAM competition for the 21st century that pits student teams against each other to create a fantastical Rube Goldberg Machine built from everyday objects that solves a common, simple task.

Deadline: 14 March 2026

Contact info: [Website](#)

Organization: Resonate

Information: Resonate provides students with resources in mental health research, music therapy and therapeutic games, as well as safe spaces for connection and peer support. AI technology is incorporated to enhance user experience and provide personalized support. Students interested in music, mental health, and/or website development are encouraged to reach out.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email Athena at [athenajiang18@outlook.com](mailto:athenajiang18@outlook.com).

Organization: SideQuest

Information: SideQuest is an iOS app designed to encourage individuals ages 9-20 off their screens and into world-adventures through location-based “quests” with one real-life reward at the end, no mid-game dopamine hits. The goal of SideQuest is to shift away from passive scrolling toward curiosity, social connection, and the joy of being present. SideQuest is looking for a mission-driven backend developer to join its small, collaborative team.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email [dax.bernstein@gmail.com](mailto:dax.bernstein@gmail.com).

Organization: Miauplanet

Information: Miauplanet is a 2D RPG pixel game with charming cat characters that explores heavier themes like addiction and adolescent mental health, taking inspiration from such games as OMORI and Undertale. The student collaborator should be comfortable with programming in Game Maker, which uses GML (similar to C/C++/C#/Java) and have a genuine love for indie games.

Deadline: None

Organization: Elevon EX

Information: Elevon EX is a youth-led nonprofit organization dedicated to making aerospace engineering education accessible, engaging, and experiential. Elevon EX provides students from low-income communities with aerospace-themed STEM kits, offering them the tools they need to explore, build, and learn. The organization is currently scaling and looking to recruit additional team members.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Students hoping to join can fill out this [Google Form](#), directing any questions to [elevonexx@gmail.com](mailto:elevonexx@gmail.com).

Organization: The OpenMind Project

Information: The OpenMind Project is a mental wellness initiative offering resources on mental health to teenagers and young adults, with the goal to break the stigma surrounding mental health and help relieve stress. The OpenMind Project is looking for student volunteers passionate about mental health to assist with their mission.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email [theopenmindproject0@gmail.com](mailto:theopenmindproject0@gmail.com) with inquiries.

Organization: Bright Beats

Information: Bright Beats offers free, inclusive music sessions to children with developmental disabilities and special needs. To scale the project, Bright Beats is welcoming peers to start and lead a Bright Beats chapter at their schools or communities. Bright Beats provides training, flexible hours, and verified service hours.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Online application](#). Direct questions to [brightbeatsorg@gmail.com](mailto:brightbeatsorg@gmail.com).

Organization: The Concord Review History Camp at Stanford

Information: The Concord Review (TCR) History Camps are intensive online and in-person workshops in which secondary-school students learn and practice a toolbox of skills for researching and writing history. With the guidance of experienced instructors, they learn and practice fundamentals of the historian's craft, enabling them to complete a historical research paper of 4,000 to 8,000 words - a long-term project that takes upwards of two to six months.

Deadline: 31 December 2025

Contact info: [Website](#)

Organization: Shad Canada

Information: Shad provides transformational summer programs that equip high school students with the skills, mindset, and confidence to lead in a rapidly changing world. Through immersive, hands-on experiences, students engage with real-world challenges in areas like artificial intelligence, energy, and food security.

Deadline: 5 January 2026

Contact info: [Website](#)

Organization: Night Bloom

Information: Night Bloom envisions a community in which people are informed about light pollution and can combat it in their daily lives, allowing for the preservation of dark skies. They are looking to recruit new members to join the project.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Website](#)

Organization: Chinatown Youth Engagement Society

Information: CYES is a non-profit organization made by students who want to help dispel the misconceptions of Chinatown and revitalize its perception as a vibrant part of Vancouver. They are always looking for students interested in joining the project.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Website](#)

Organization: Feelustrate

Information: Feelustrate aims to create an emotional exploration platform that integrates science, art, and philosophy. Through this interdisciplinary approach, we strive to make abstract emotions tangible and explorable, helping young people find both an outlet for their feelings and a path toward self-awareness.

Deadline: None

Contact info: <https://feelustrate.com/connect/>

Organization: Youth Promise Collective

Information: YPC is a youth-led think tank that aims to gauge the opinions of youth on issues that impact them and magnify their voices. This is done through surveying students at schools across the world on a monthly topic and reporting on their responses and trends observed. Youth Promise Collective is looking for high school students who have an interest in writing and research.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [youthpromisecollective@gmail.com](mailto:youthpromisecollective@gmail.com)

Organization: FoundationMHE

Information: FoundationMHE is a non-profit organization aimed at reducing the stigma around mental health while also providing accessible, pertinent, and innovative resources to educate youth about mental health. FMHE has won the Congressional App Challenge for their app designed to connect users with relevant mental health resources, and they are looking for student authors to write monthly blog posts about topics in mental health (policies, trends, research, etc.) and new FMHE features/resources.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Apply here.](#)

Organization: Digital Art and Game Design Club

Information: Whether you're into anime edits, digital drawing, YouTube-style videos, or dream of making your own game, this club is for you. No experience is needed; just bring your ideas, imagination and curiosity! This club gives you hands-on training in digital creativity, focusing on ways to bring your ideas to life using different multimedia formats. You'll explore creative tools like Alight Motion, CapCut, Procreate, iMovie, Adobe After Effects, Adobe Premiere Pro, Ren'Py, RPG Maker, and other beginner-friendly software.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Sign up](#)

Organization: IYNA Magazine, Hong Kong Chapter

Information: The IYNA HK student-run neuroscience magazine is open for submissions! From synapses to society, dreams to disorders, explain the underlying science, share your perspective, and tell your story. We want to read them all! Any high school or university student can submit.

Be creative! We welcome: writing, poetry, artwork, photography, research papers... and more!

Format your work as a Google Doc or PDF. Include a title and your name.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email your piece to [iynahongkong@gmail.com](mailto:iynahongkong@gmail.com).

Organization: SHEGOLF Blog

Information: SHEGOLF: Spotlighting Female Golfers is a blog that seeks to empower the voices of female golfers and to share their experiences and perspectives which can often be overlooked in a male dominated sport. Currently, this project is looking for female golfers who would be interested in (a) contributing by writing an article, or (b) a Head of Marketing, which would heavily involve advertising/raising awareness for this project via social media.

Deadline: None

Contact info: [Website](#)

Organization: GLOMaterials

Information: Can you imagine how many things in our lives contain biomaterials without even noticing? When we are intending to solve global warming, have we ever thought about switching our focus to invent new materials that are bio friendly? Our mission is to educate the young that are interested in biomaterials and give more info about the product and that are actually biomaterials.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email [alisatzhou@gmail.com](mailto:alisatzhou@gmail.com).

Organization: Harmoshare

Information: Our mission is to spread the beauty of music and encourage beginning players. Our vision is to maintain the presence of music in people's everyday lives through a digital platform.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email [xzxwayne@outlook.com](mailto:xzxwayne@outlook.com).

Organization: My Healthcare Buddy

Information: Imagine a world where everyone was constantly sick, and the streets were lined with trash. It's sad to say that our own world is currently headed that way. Personal hygiene is often neglected, people are unaware of how they impact public health, and healthcare workers can't keep up. To alleviate this issue, My Healthcare Buddy is stepping in. We are a youth organization that, instead of spreading disease, spreads information and education.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email [myhealthcarebuddy@gmail.com](mailto:myhealthcarebuddy@gmail.com).

Organization: Plasticized

Information: Our mission is to raise awareness about the dangers of plastic products to the environment and our health. We envision a world where humans dramatically decrease production and consumption of plastic products. We value sustainability; we minimize waste; we share our resources; we lead with love.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email [ktcliang@gmail.com](mailto:ktcliang@gmail.com).

Organization: The Guidebook for Young Diplomats

Information: Our mission is to create an educational activity book for young readers that introduces international relations topics such as diplomacy, trade, climate change, human rights, humanitarian aid, and cultural exchange. The Guidebook for Young Diplomats seeks to make global issues engaging, and understandable for children through interactive activities, short readings, and visuals. We are focused on education, global awareness, creativity, collaboration, and making complex ideas approachable for children. We are currently seeking an artist/graphic designer to help visually bring this book to life through illustrations, maps, icons, and activity layouts that are clear, engaging, and age-appropriate.

Deadline: None

Contact info: Email [hudaniel1630@gmail.com](mailto:hudaniel1630@gmail.com).

