

# Longmont artist using calendar to spur environmental action

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Normally, when people go out shopping for a refresh of their wall calendar, they'll usually find some nice scenery or pictures of adorable puppies accompanying the dates of various national holidays like New Year's or Memorial Day.

But when Longmont artist Katherine Homes decided to make her own calendar featuring her vibrant and swirling art depicting wildlands and various species of endangered animals, she wanted to do something entirely different.

Instead of the staid and predictable dates they normally mark, as a consummate environmentalist, she created hers [to denote "days of action"](#) so folks can remind themselves to celebrate wildlife and the environment while staying active in the fight to protect them.

"Those go onto all sorts of products," said Homes of her depictions of nature. "But I really just wanted to kind of merge all those pieces together into two calendars — a wildlands calendar and a wildlife calendar and focus on environmental action days that a lot of organizations put together."

Dates such as World Polar Bear Day, Solar Appreciation Day and World Wetlands Day dot the calendar, all while the art and accompanying words urge people to have a greater appreciation for wildlife and take a bigger role in protecting it.

And though the calendar marks new territory for her, Homes is no stranger to the conservation and environmental activism world.

Before jumping into creating art and selling her wares full-time, she worked with a number of nonprofits, including Health in Harmony, an organization working in rainforests in Borneo, Madagascar, and Brazil to prevent deforestation while addressing its root causes within those countries.

Homes had photographed and wrote about the organization's work to help them raise funds, and now her business contributes funds itself.

Trina Noonan, Health in Harmony's managing director, said Homes has been "a fantastic partner ever since" her visit to Indonesia to help tell their story.

"It's been just a really fantastic partnership that I think has been represented really beautifully in the way that she creates her products and is also really supportive of this important and critical mission of protecting our climate," said Noonan, "which is more critical than ever right now."

Homes also contributes to nonprofit Paradox Sports, which, according to National Program Manager Dom Pascariello, finds "adaptive climbing opportunities" for those with disabilities or physical differences to "give them the opportunity to come out rock climbing for the first time or introduce rock climbing to their communities."

Lori Ann Burd, the environmental health program manager at the Center for Biological Diversity, another nonprofit that Homes contributes to, said the calendar is a "really cool concept," adding occasions like "Meatless Mondays" could get people on the path toward a more sustainable lifestyle.

"That's a really big deal, getting people to start incorporating that awareness into their daily lives," she said. "Once you start thinking — like, recently I've been thinking about my single-use plastic use — and once you start noticing and thinking about it you're like, 'oh, I can avoid doing that by changing this.'"

"All these things, I think, are really useful in helping to bring these (issues) to the forefront of our minds as we go about our day-to-day lives."

Organizations such as Extinction Rebellion and Sunrise Movement have begun staging frequent protests that have taken on a more urgent and disruptive tone, and leaders like Greta Thunberg, which the Center for Biological Diversity has worked with in the past, have brought the issue of climate change to the front pages consistently with frequent climate strikes.

"It's so heartening and it's so cool to see a youth-led movement," said Burd, "and to just witness the creative energy and sort of raw power of children speaking about what we've done to the world they're inheriting."

Homes, with the information she provides with her products and the art she creates, said she tries to let people know there's something they can do instead of feeding the feeling of helplessness the endlessly bleak climate news-cycle creates.

"It's all about, like, how do you convey the realities of something without completely turning people off and shutting them down?" said Homes. "... and that's why if I do a polar bear, I'm not going to do an emaciated polar bear, but I will do a polar bear on ice to convey, like, 'okay, that ice is melting and that polar bear is looking for more ...'

"It's all about empowering people and letting them know you can take tangible actions — and if everybody takes tangible action, then we actually could figure this out."