

Endangered earth

SPECIAL ISSUE YEAR IN REVIEW

Species showcased on new Center site

Each plant and animal we work to protect inspires us in its endurance, fascinates us in its uniqueness, and moves us with its own distinct—albeit sometimes unorthodox—beauty.

So when we set out to create a new Web site, we knew we wanted the plants and animals that drive the Center's mission to take center stage. And we knew that besides cultivating a sense of responsibility to protect endangered species, we wanted to share the sense of wonder that informs our work.

Our new site, launched in January, features more than 100 new descriptions, natural histories, status reports, and stunning photographs of some of our “clients,” from those that are no stranger to the limelight—like the polar bear—to others you've probably never heard of—like one of our staff favorites, the giant Palouse earthworm.

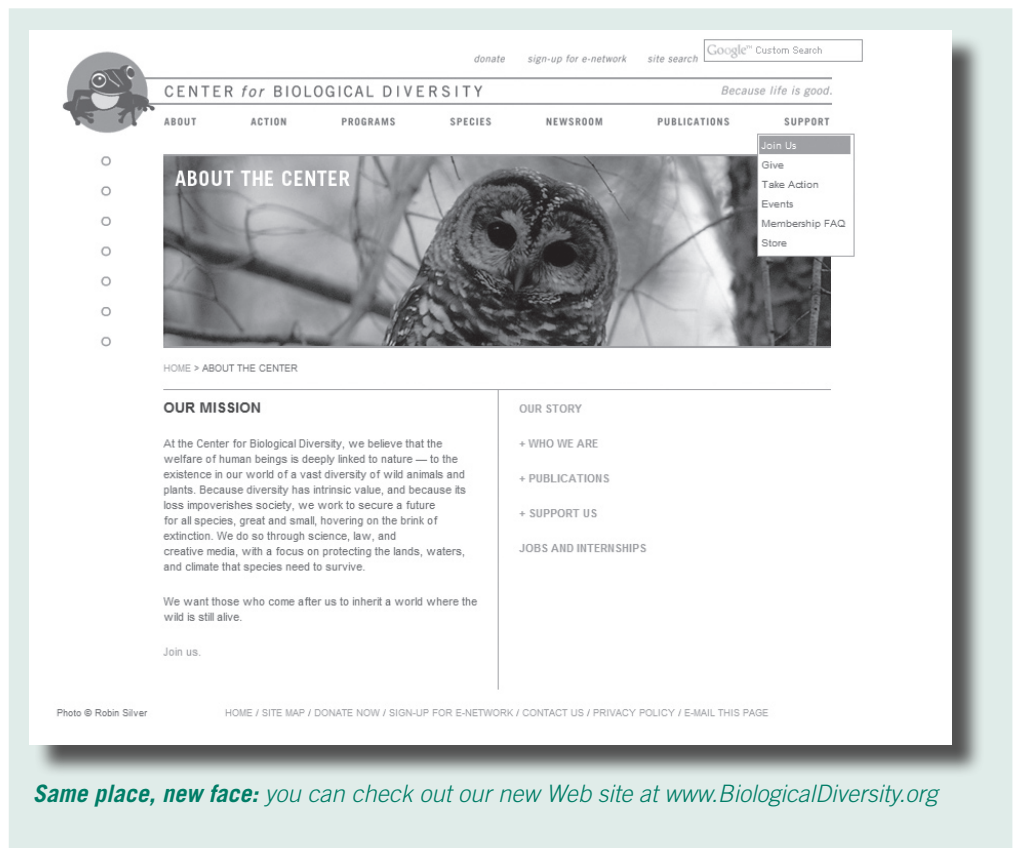
The first set of pages is just the beginning: the Center represents hundreds of species, great and small, and you can look for many more of them to make their debut on the site.

If you haven't browsed by yet, we think you'll find our redesigned dot-org a more welcoming way to get to know the people and programs behind the scenes, as well. And it's easier than ever to get involved yourself by making an online donation, checking for events in your area, or signing up for our action alert network.

A new feature, the take-action toolbox, pulls together a series of actions—personal and political—you can take to make a difference. While toolboxes are in the works for some of our biggest campaigns, the site's inaugural box is full of the hardware to fight global warming. Need to know how to contact your representatives in Congress? The toolbox can help you. Want to reduce your carbon footprint? You'll find the steps we took and those you can follow.

News junkie? Our newsroom won't disappoint. We generate more stories about the plight of endangered species than even we can keep track of. But with a current news feed and archives of our news releases, print articles, and audio and video clips, our new site is one of the best ways we can think of—in cyberspace, anyway—to stay informed about decisions that widely affect the health of our planet and the plants and animals with whom we share the earth.

We're sure Thoreau would remind us that for inspiring awe and wonder, nothing beats a day in the woods. But as the World Wide Web goes, we're working on making biologicaldiversity.org an excellent starting place to connect up to the web of life. •



BUILDING A WEB OF LIFE

CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

WINTER 2007-2008

TAKING THE HELM

WELCOMING NEW LEADERSHIP

It's not every organization that bids farewell to one leader but still finds a wealth of leadership within its own ranks. January marked the end of Michael Finkelstein's three-year term as the Center's executive director, but the year has also seen the Center assemble its strongest team ever.

An avid runner and hiker, Michael stepped down for some well-deserved rest and recharge before returning to the campaign-based conservation work that helped land him at the Center. After a tenure in which he oversaw tremendous growth in the Center's membership and staff, what's one of the Arizona native's first priorities? Running the Grand Canyon, a favorite pastime he's been aching to repeat.

A long-time friend and supporter of the Center, he plans to stay close even as he pursues new challenges. We all wish Michael well and express our deep thanks for his contributions these past three years.

We also welcome back Kierán Suckling to the executive director role after four years serving as the Center's policy director and heading up the Biodiversity Program. A Center founder, Kierán served as executive director for the organization's first 14 years. He counts continuing to ramp up the Center's campaign to fight global warming, saving polar bears in the Arctic, and continuing to expand the Center's membership as top priorities.

Noah Greenwald, a conservation biologist in his eleventh year with the Center, steps in as science director for the organization, while Senior Counsel Michael Senatore takes the helm of the Biodiversity Program. Michael joined the Center in September to focus on endangered species litigation, lobbying, and policy analysis from Washington, DC, where he previously worked as litigation director with Defenders of Wildlife. He joins forces in DC with fellow Defenders alumnus Bill Snape, formerly chief counsel for that organization, who came on board as Center senior counsel near the end of 2006.

Another DC-area addition comes with the Center's new partnership with the Global Owl Project (GLOW) and its Alexandria, Virginia-based director, David Johnson. GLOW unites hundreds of scientists, geneticists, and students in 56 countries around the world working on foundational science and conservation strategies for owls.

In further exciting expansion of our East Coast work, in January the Center officially absorbed Forest Watch, whose successful grassroots conservation work in Vermont and northern New England over the past decade will now be carried on under the aegis of the Center. The merger will allow us to build on Forest Watch campaigns to protect public lands, with a focus on preserving and restoring wild forests and curbing destructive off-road vehicle use in protected areas and sensitive wildlife habitat. The group's former deputy director, wildlife biologist Mollie Matteson, joins the Center's Public Lands program from our new Northeast office in Richmond, Vermont.

Our Public Lands program also hired its first director in September. Paul Spitler is a recent graduate of Stanford Law School



Staff photos, from top left: Executive Director Kierán Suckling, Biodiversity Program Director Michael Senatore, wildlife biologist and Vermont office head Mollie Matteson, Public Lands Program Director Paul Spitler

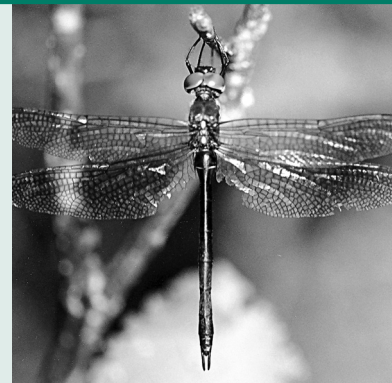
Leadership continued on back page

THE YEAR

BIODIVERSITY

Over the past year, our Biodiversity Program:

- Exposed political interference in the scientific process within the Department of Interior—particularly by department deputy Julie MacDonald, who subsequently resigned—and helped bring about a federal investigation into endangered species decisions in which MacDonald played a part.
- Went to court on behalf of 55 species and 8 million acres denied protection due to political corruption, including the Montana fluvial arctic grayling, Mexican garter snake, and California red-legged frog.
- Inaugurated a Global Warming and Endangered Species Initiative aimed at minimizing harm done by climate change to at-risk plants and animals.
- Secured 1.1 million acres of protected critical habitat areas for 27 species, including the Hine's emerald dragonfly in the Midwest, the oval pigtoe mussel in the Southeast, and the loach minnow in the Southwest.
- Compelled the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to revamp the Mexican gray wolf recovery program with an eye toward allowing wolves to roam more widely, reducing the number of wolves punished for preying on livestock, and requiring better management of cattle on public lands.
- Helped effect passage of a bill banning use of deadly lead ammunition in the California condor's range. •



Hine's emerald dragonfly

Photo © Paul Burton

INTERNATIONAL

Our International Program saw some resounding victories this year. Among them, we:

- Secured the first endangered species listings the Bush administration has made in almost two years, protecting six birds that live in New Zealand, Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, Burma, Thailand, Fiji, and Mexico—the black stilt, caerulean paradise-flycatcher, giant ibis, Gurney's pitta, long-legged thicketbird, and Socorro mockingbird.
- Secured Endangered Species Act protection for the Queen Charlotte goshawk in the Canadian portion of its range.
- Ramped up our campaign to secure World Heritage site status for La Amistad International Park in Panama, to protect the spectacular region from large dam developments that would flood native villages and could drive species like the Central American tapir, resplendent quetzal, and harpy eagle further toward extinction.
- Filed suit to compel the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a recovery plan and designate critical habitat for endangered American jaguars.
- Won a court ruling stopping the U.S. Department of Defense from charging ahead with a plan to build an airbase in the gentle, manatee-like Okinawa dugong's seagrass habitat. •



Resplendent quetzal

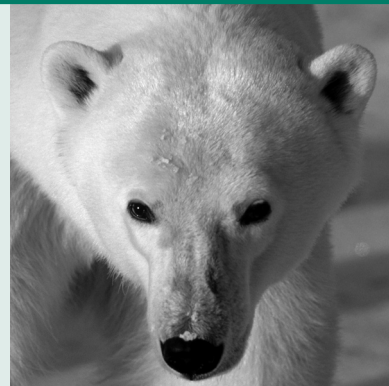
Photo © Greg and Mary Beth Dimijian

R IN REVI

CLIMATE, AIR, AND ENERGY

Our Climate Program made innovative strides over the past year. The Center:

- Won a federal judge's decision rebuking the Bush administration for suppressing scientific reports on the impacts of global warming on the United States, and ordering prompt completion of those reports.
- Blocked Shell Oil from drilling in the Beaufort Sea, preventing harm to bowhead whales and polar bears.
- Won a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling in our favor, concluding that the administration acted illegally in setting national gas-mileage standards for SUVs and pickup trucks and calling for the federal government's full environmental review.
- Secured a court settlement with the Bush administration to address air pollutants that pose risks to human health and contribute to global warming.
- Led the way in enforcing the California Environmental Quality Act to require land-use planners to address greenhouse gas emissions; won a settlement that will compel San Bernardino to address greenhouse emissions in its 20-year growth blueprint.
- Kept pressure on the administration to protect penguins and polar bears at the melting poles and petitioned for protection of the American pika, Pacific walrus, and ribbon seal. •



Polar bear

Photo © Thomas D. Mangelsen/Imagesofnaturestock.com

OCEANS

Among its major accomplishments this year, our program to protect our planet's oceans and marine life:

- Launched an ambitious campaign to address the rising acid content of the world's oceans, petitioning 10 states—California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Hawaii, Florida, New York, New Jersey, Maine, and Delaware—to declare their waters “impaired” by CO₂ under the Clean Water Act, and petitioning the Environmental Protection Agency to confront the threat of ocean acidification.
- Secured legal deadlines for the designation of critical habitat for the elkhorn and staghorn corals, smalltooth sawfish, and green sturgeon, as well as a proposed endangered listing for the Cook Inlet beluga whale; met with success early in the process to protect the yellow-billed loon and black-footed albatross.
- Petitioned to protect endangered leatherback and loggerhead sea turtles in both the Atlantic and the Pacific, a rare California seabird called the ash storm-petrel, and blue whales that were being hit and killed by ships in the Santa Barbara Channel.
- Challenged the administration's decision to open North Pacific right whale and beluga whale habitat to oil development; also brought legal actions to stop the administration from allowing oil companies to harass polar bears and Pacific walruses, as well as to compel it to factor in the impacts of global warming when making management decisions affecting polar bears, walruses, sea otters, and manatees. •



Pacific walrus

Photo by Bill Hickey, FWS

NEW PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

URBAN WILDLANDS

Southern California victories topped the charts for our Urban Wildlands Program this year. The Center:

- On behalf of a broad coalition, stopped construction of a Hilton Garden Inn planned near the shore of Big Bear Lake. The hotel complex would have destroyed wetlands and endangered plants, like the rare bird-footed checkerbloom.
- Helped defeat a proposal to build a high-end luxury mega-resort and golf course on lands at the heart of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, in a sensitive ecological area that's home to protected and rare species including bighorn sheep, burrowing owls, the Palm Springs pocket mouse, Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel, Le Conte's thrasher, and loggerhead shrike.
- Stepped up our fight for the preservation of spectacular Tejon Ranch, a rare biodiversity hotspot at high risk of being subsumed by urban sprawl, as a new state or national park. More than 40 eminent scientists signed onto a Declaration on the Conservation Significance of Tejon, citing its biodiversity and biogeographic importance, its importance to the recovery of rare and endangered species, and the critical linkages it provides between northern and southern California. Tejon provides crucial habitat for California condors, San Joaquin kit foxes, blunt-nosed leopard lizards, and dozens of other plants and animals found nowhere else in the world. •



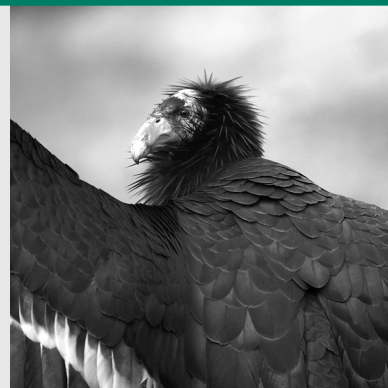
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard

Photo © Gary Nafis

PUBLIC LANDS

To fulfill our goal of watchdogging activities that have harmful impacts on America's public lands and their plants, fish, and wildlife, this year the Center:

- Defended national forests from old-growth logging, leading a broad coalition in legal action to block the U.S. Forest Service from implementing management rules a federal court had previously deemed unlawful.
- Successfully challenged an 8,000-acre timber sale in Arizona's Coconino National Forest that would have cut ancient trees and potentially harmed the northern goshawk.
- On the heels of a major oil spill in California's Los Padres National Forest, filed suit with our partners over the Bush administration's plans to expand oil and gas drilling across 52,075 acres of the forest, a move that would harm California condors.
- Filed suit against the Department of Energy over its October 2007 fast-track designation of the Southwest National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor—a sweeping, 45-million-acre area in Arizona and California utilized by at least 95 endangered and threatened species, including the southwestern willow flycatcher, arroyo toad, desert tortoise, desert pupfish, and California gnatcatcher.
- Rallied opposition and helped deliver setbacks to the Sunrise Powerlink, a controversial, 150-mile-long proposed transmission line that would run from California's Imperial Valley desert to San Diego and cut through the heart of many parks and preserves. •



California condor

Photo by Scott Frier, USFWS



CENTER *for* BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

P.O. Box 710 • Tucson, AZ 85702-0710

Nonprofit Org
US POSTAGE
PAID
TUCSON AZ
Permit No 1308

Leadership *continued from inside flap*

and previously served as executive director of the California Wilderness Coalition. Paul heads up our growing public-lands staff to watchdog activities that have the greatest impacts on biodiversity and wilderness on taxpayer-owned lands.

A long-time key player in our public-lands work—particularly our campaigns to preserve Arizona’s San Pedro River and Fossil Creek—Center founder and wildlife photographer Robin Silver has retired from his long career as an emergency room physician to join the Center’s staff full-time. In so doing, he steps down as the Center’s board chair—a position to which we’re pleased to welcome long-time supporter and board member Marcey Olajos.

We hope all our long-time supporters will be getting to know two more not-so-new faces: Jennifer Shepherd and Kevin Dahl. Jennifer, who has headed up the Center’s grants program for three years, is stepping up as our development director to integrate our fundraising campaigns. Kevin joined the Center’s staff as major gifts officer in summer 2007 but is no stranger to Tucson’s conservation community, where he previously served as executive director for Native Seeds/SEARCH and Tucson Audubon Society.


Join us in extending a warm welcome to all our new leaders, as well as many more new staff who have brought their talent and enthusiasm for endangered species and wild lands protection to our programs over the past year. •

What looks different?

Turns out, there’s a lot that’s new around here. For one, we’re welcoming a number of new faces to the Center—and familiar faces to new roles. We’ve even welcomed aboard a new East Coast office. Inside, we’ll introduce you to some of our newest endangered species advocates and reintroduce you to others. Like Center founder Kierán Suckling, who steps back into the role of executive director after four years heading up our Biodiversity Program and serving as policy director.

We’ve also been hard at work this winter building our all-new Web site, which we launched in January and feature in this issue. While we catch our breath, we’re giving *Endangered Earth* a season’s hiatus from its full-length format and taking a look back at some of the year’s highlights from our work to protect imperiled plants and animals around the globe—the work that you, our supporters, make possible. With spring nearly upon us, we’ll be back with a full issue soon, as well as an all-new look for our newsletter later this year.

For the *wild*—thanks for your support.

 printed on recycled paper