




**Midway Fatalities**

 Thousands of seabirds were killed at Midway when the tsunami generated by the March 11 Japanese offshore quake struck the U.S. Pacific atoll, northwest of Hawaii. Among the fatalities drowned or buried beneath debris were at least 1,000 adult and adolescent Laysan albatrosses. But Wisdom, the 60-year-old Laysan mother highlighted here last week as the oldest known wild bird in the United States, probably survived. Wildlife biologist John Klavitter of the Fish and Wildlife Service tells Earthweek that Wisdom and her mate were aloft when the wave struck, and almost certainly were unaffected. Their nest and chick were also spared from the waves, up to 5 feet high, due to their location on one of the higher elevations of Midway's Sand Island.


**Seal Pup Peril**

 Thinning ice off Canada's Gulf of St. Lawrence will likely lead to the deaths of thousands of seal pups for a second consecutive spring. After touring the gulf by helicopter, Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) biologist Mike Hammill told Canadian Press that the ice pans that the seals give birth on are once again small, making it harder for them to nurse their young. The poor ice conditions are also likely to make the annual seal hunt difficult for those preparing to go out on the ice to club their quota. Canada allocated 330,000 pups for culling last year, but DFO said only about 20 percent of that number were actually slaughtered. Hammill says that if climate change means that the trend toward thinner ice continues, the seals will likely begin breeding toward the northern gulf, and eventually off the Labrador coast. The Canadian government estimates there are about 9 million harp seals living in their Atlantic coastal waters.


**Japanese Blast**

 The strongest activity at southern Japan's Shinmoedake volcano in 52 years shattered windows four miles away, sending hundreds of people fleeing the area. Ash and other volcanic debris soared more than 6,000 feet into the atmosphere above Kyushu Island, about 950 miles from the epicenter of the catastrophic 9.0 magnitude quake off Honshu two days earlier. Officials said it was unclear if the volcanic blast was related to the temblor. Shinmoedake's last blast was on Feb. 1. Its rumblings resumed on Jan. 19 after the peak had remained dormant for two years.

**New Cyclone Belt**


 An area of disturbed weather swirling about 300 miles east of Rio de Janeiro was dubbed Subtropical Storm Ariani by the Brazilian Navy. That branch of the military has jurisdiction for issuing marine warnings in Brazil's coastal waters, and for naming storms. Tropical or subtropical storms are very rare in the region. Only three have formed since 2004, and they were unheard of before that time. All three storms developed at the same point in March, almost to the day, in a possible indication that climate change is creating another tropical cyclone belt during late summer off Brazil's South Atlantic coast.

**Earthquakes**


 Japan's 9.0 magnitude quake on March 11 moved the country's coast about 8 feet and shifted the Earth on its axis by about 4 inches toward 133 degrees east longitude. Strong aftershocks continued to rock the quake/tsunami/nuclear disaster zone.

- Earth movements were also felt along Australia's northern Queensland coast and in southwestern Quebec.

**Leave Us Alone**

 An indigenous Amazon basin tribe has become so fearful that their culture is being eroded by prying eco-tourism visitors that one community has decided to ban anyone from the outside world from entering. Ticuna tribe leaders in the southern Colombian village of Nazareth say they're tired of backpacking tourists flocking to their remote home, trashing the environment and likewise polluting their culture. "We had lots of problems. People came, left their rubbish behind, garbage bags, plastic bottles," Nazareth resident Grimaldo Ramos told Toby Muse of Agence France Presse. Now, guards armed with traditional sticks stand guard on the edge of town to deter any would-be intruders.

**Fish O' Plenty**

 Freak currents believed associated with the March 11 Pacific-wide tsunami caused a huge massing of sardines, mackerel, striped bass and anchovies along the coast of Acapulco. The event provided a bounty for local fishermen in the Mexico resort that literally proved easier than "shooting fish in a barrel." The fish were packed so tightly that observers said the shoals looked like an oil slick from above. Fishermen onshore abandoned their rods and brought barrels and nets out in small boats to scoop up the sudden abundance. "It was so much fun. There were about 20 or 30 fishermen and there were people who came with their kids to take advantage of it," fisherman Carlos Morales told the Associated Press. Swimmers on the beach were also treated to thick masses of the fish that swam within a few feet of them.