



Protecting Wildlife for our children's future



Feel the rash of terror!

Hear the buzz of dread!

See the creatures of despair!

THEY CAME FROM CLIMATE CHANGE

Will Congress act in time to stop...the Climate Invaders??

Washington, DC (April 1, 2010) – This is no April Fool’s joke. A host of harmful and destructive species are creeping up from lower elevations, attacking from foreign countries, and settling into areas where once they were unable to survive as a result of climate change.

“Some very nasty and potentially dangerous species are poised to benefit from climate change,” said Doug Inkley, senior scientist at the National Wildlife Federation. “In the not too distant future we could see ticks that spread Lyme disease expanding their range, cheatgrass fueling more wildfires, and poison ivy causing more rashes.”

According to a new report from the National Wildlife Federation, these climate invaders will continue to spread disease, destroy valuable natural resources and push out the native plants and wildlife Americans cherish if global warming continues unabated.

“A common chant from climate deniers is that climate change will be good for life on earth,” said Inkley. “The truth is that some species will indeed benefit. It just so happens that many of them are the ones we’d like to prevent from spreading.”

[*They Came from Climate Change*](#) profiles seven species that are primed to expand in range, increase in toxicity, or grow in number due to warmer winters and a shift in seasons caused by global warming. According to the report:

- Milder winters are projected to increase the range of **deer tick** populations by 68 percent in North America by later this century.
- **Poison ivy** is expected to become more “toxic” as a result of increased levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere.
- Within the lifespan of a child born today, the range of the **red imported fire ant** in the United States could expand northward by about 80 miles and expand in total area by 21 percent as climate change makes new areas suitable for their survival.
- Climate change is likely to aid further range expansion northward in the United States of the **Asian tiger mosquito**, increasing disease transmission potential.

- If summer precipitation declines significantly, this could expand the amount of suitable land for **cheatgrass** by up to 45 percent, bringing increased wildfire risks with it.
- Several species of the water-hogging **salt cedar** shrub are poised to take full advantage of a changing climate in the western United States, where water is already scarce.
- Absent the severe winter cold which kills over-wintering beetle larvae, **pine bark beetle** populations have exploded to unprecedented levels across the Western United States, killing billions of trees.

“People often think of climate change as some far away problem having to do only with polar bears and ice caps,” said Patty Glick, global warming specialist at the National Wildlife Federation. “The reality is that climate change impacts are being seen and felt in backyards around the country. Without action to curb carbon pollution, no place will be safe from these and other climate invaders.”

According to the report, repelling the advance of these exotic invasives and destructive native species will require a combination of curbing the global warming pollution that is fueling their advance, restoring the habitats they are destroying, and preventing new invaders from reaching America’s shores. In the coming weeks, the Senate is expected take up tri-partisan climate legislation sponsored by Senators Kerry (D-MA), Graham (R-SC) and Lieberman (I-CT).

“We need an army of American workers working on American lands to fend off the attack of these invaders and keep our communities safe and resilient in the face of climate change,” said Derek Brockbank, conservation funding manager at the National Wildlife Federation. “To meet the challenge before us, climate legislation must include a significant dedicated investment to protect and restore the rivers, coasts, forests and wild lands threatened by climate change.”

Learn more and watch our “They Came from Climate Change” video at www.nwf.org/invasion

The [National Wildlife Federation](http://www.nwf.org) is America's conservation organization inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future.

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