

TODAY

It's Saturday, April 10, the 100th day of 2021. There are 265 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

In 1947, Brooklyn Dodgers President Branch Rickey purchased the contract of Jackie Robinson from the Montreal Royals.

In 1912, the British liner RMS Titanic set sail from Southampton, England, on its ill-fated maiden voyage.

In 1932, German President Paul Von Hindenburg was reelected in a runoff, with Adolf Hitler coming in second.

In 1971, a table tennis team from the United States arrived in China at the invitation of the communist government for a goodwill visit that came to be known as "ping-pong diplomacy."

In 1972, the United States and the Soviet Union joined some 70 nations in signing an agreement banning biological warfare.

In 1981, imprisoned IRA hunger striker Bobby Sands was declared the winner of a by-election to the British Parliament.

In 1992, comedian Sam Kinison was killed in a car crash outside Needles, California, at 38.

In 1998, the Northern Ireland peace talks concluded as negotiators reached a landmark settlement to end 30 years of bitter rivalries and bloody attacks.

In 2005, Tiger Woods won his fourth Masters with a spectacular finish of birdies and bogeys.

In 2015, the Apple Watch made its debut.

In 2019, scientists released the first image ever made of a black hole, revealing a fiery, doughnut-shaped object in a galaxy 53 million light-years from earth.

Ten years ago: The House Homeland Security Committee examined Muslim extremism in America during a hearing punctuated by tearful testimony and angry recriminations. Chairman Peter King, R-N.Y., accused U.S. Muslims of doing too little to help fight terror in America; Democrats warned of inflaming anti-Muslim sentiment.

Five years ago: Sir Ken Adam, the British film production designer behind the sets for some of the James Bond movies and "Dr. Strangelove," died in London at 95.

One year ago: The worldwide death toll from the coronavirus surged past 100,000. On Good Friday, Pope Francis presided over a torch-lit procession in an otherwise empty St. Peter's Square, with nurses and doctors among those holding a cross.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Liz Sheridan is 92. Football Hall of Famer John Madden is 85. Actor Steven Seagal is 69. Folk-pop singer Terre Roche (The Roches) is 68. Actor Peter MacNicol is 67. Actor Olivia Brown is 64. Rock musician Steven Gustafson (10,000 Maniacs) is 64. Singer-producer Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds is 63. Rock singer-musician Brian Setzer is 62. Olympic gold medal speedskater Cathy Turner is 59. Rock musician Tim "Herb" Alexander is 56. R&B singer Kenny Lattimore is 54. Actor-comedian Orlando Jones is 53. Rapper Q-Tip (AKA Kamaal) is 51. Actor David Harbour is 46. Blues singer Shemekia Copeland is 42. Actor Laura Bell Bundy is 40. Actor Harry Hadden-Paton is 40. Actor Chyler Leigh is 39. Actor Ryan Merriman is 38. Singer Mandy Moore is 37. Actor Shay Mitchell is 34. Actor Haley Joel Osment is 33. Country singer Maren Morris is 31. Actor Daisy Ridley is 29. Actor Audrey Whitby is 25. Actor Ruby Jerins is 23.

— Associated Press

LOCAL, STATE & REGION

OFF THE WEST COAST

Giant sea turtles on a steep decline

BY GILLIAN FLACCUS AND HAVEN DALEY

The Associated Press

MONTEREY, Calif. — Scientists were documenting stranded sea turtles on California's beaches nearly 40 years ago when they noticed that leatherbacks — massive sea turtles that date to the time of the dinosaurs — were among those washing up on shore. It was strange because the nearest known population of the giants was several thousand miles away in the waters of Central and South America.

Their mysterious presence led researchers to a startling discovery. A subset of leatherbacks that hatches on beaches in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands were migrating 7,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean to the cold waters off the U.S. West Coast, where they gorged on jellyfish before swimming back. The epic journey stunned scientists.

"There are birds that go farther, but they fly. There's a whale shark that might swim a little further, but it doesn't have to come up for air. This animal is actually pushing water all the way across the Pacific Ocean," said Scott Benson, an ecologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's fisheries service in Monterey, who has studied the turtles for decades. "It's just a majestic animal."

But now, just as scientists are beginning to fully understand the amazing odyssey, the turtles are disappearing — and fast.

In less than 30 years, the number of western Pacific leatherbacks in the foraging population off of California



Heather Harris/via AP

In the waters off Central California in 2007, scientists including Scott Benson, at far left, can be seen posing with a giant western Pacific leatherback sea turtle as they take measurements and attach a satellite tracking device to its shell.

plummeted 80% and a recent study co-authored by Benson shows a 5.6% annual decline — almost identical to the decline documented thousands of miles away on nesting beaches. About 1,400 adult females were counted on western Pacific nesting beaches, down from tens of thousands of turtles a few decades ago, and there are as few as 50 foraging off California, Benson said.

If nothing changes, scientists say, the leatherbacks — creatures that can weigh half as much as a compact car and have 4-foot-long flippers — could be gone from the U.S. West Coast within three decades, a demise brought on by indiscriminate international fishing, the decimation of nesting grounds and climate



Kate Cummings/via AP

A leatherback turtle swims in 2017 in the Pacific Ocean near Moss Landing, California.

change.

"The turtles were there, and we finally started paying attention," said Jim Harvey, director

of San Jose State University's Moss Landing Marine Laboratories at San Jose State University and the study's co-au-

thor. "We got into looking at the story just as the story was ending."

The study provides critical, but devastating, new population information that doesn't bode well for the leatherbacks, said Daniel Pauly, a fisheries professor at the University of British Columbia and an international expert on reducing commercial fishing's impact on marine ecosystems.

"If you find the decline in one place, that might have a number of causes, but if you find the same estimate of decline in two places that indicates something much more serious," said Pauly, who was not involved in the study. "They are really in big trouble."

NOAA launched an aggressive initiative to save them in 2015 and will now release an updated action plan this month to inspire greater international cooperation in reducing the number of eggs pillaged on beaches and the number of Pacific leatherbacks entangled in commercial fishing gear.

"There is an opportunity right now to stop the decline, but we must seize that opportunity immediately and that will require an international effort by all the nations this animal interacts with," said Benson.

"If nothing is done to reverse this course, this population will become, essentially, extinct in the Pacific Ocean."

The leatherbacks have likely been foraging off the U.S. West Coast for millennia. As many as 60% of the leatherback turtles that hatch in the western Pacific Ocean make the trip to California. Some go farther north, to waters off Oregon and even Washington state.

Lawmakers can submit proposals on how to spend 'rescue' funds

BY CHRIS LEHMAN

The Oregonian

Oregon House Speaker Tina Kotek and Senate President Peter Courtney each sent all members in their respective chambers a two-question survey recently.

The questions: What would you like to spend money on? And how much?

The source of the cash is the American Rescue Plan Act signed into law last month by President Joe Biden.

Oregon's share of the money is \$2.6 billion. Legislative budget writers said they will need roughly \$1.3 billion of that to fund existing programs and services, and they also plan to set aside \$520 million in a reserve fund for future budget cycles.

That leaves a hefty \$780 million unallocated. No one expects

the 90 lawmakers to struggle to suggest ways to spend it.

"There are a number of needs out there, whether it's wildfire or infrastructure or housing," said Kotek, a Portland Democrat.

The survey asks lawmakers to define a problem and propose a solution. The follow-up question asks them to estimate the cost.

Officials in Kotek and Courtney's offices said Thursday they were not able to provide examples of lawmakers' responses.

Legislative budget writers acknowledged last month that using rescue plan act funds to create new programs could create a budget crunch in 2023-25, as Oregonians are likely to expect those programs to continue. Using the cash for one-time investments would prevent that problem.

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