

Save The World From Your Couch With These Global Earth Day Programs



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Travel

I cover travel with a focus on undiscovered gems and eco-adventures

On Earth Day's 50th anniversary, enjoy gorgeous scenery and make a difference from the comfort of your home with these programs from around the world.



Mt. St Helens surrounded by red wildflowers SARAH ALVAREZ, THE NATURE CONSERVANCY PHOTO CONTEST 2019

Since humans went into isolation, skies have been smog-free, water more pristine and animals free to roam empty streets. As we hit the pause button to ride out the coronavirus pandemic, nature is rebounding like never before. However, Mother Earth still needs our help. Earth Day, founded in 1970, to raise awareness about environmental issues, is celebrated annually as a reminder to preserve and cherish our planet's natural beauty and resources.

On this historic [Earth Day](#), April 22, 2020, let us come together at home to find calm and joy in the magnificence of our forests, oceans, mountains, lakes, deserts and animals and help protect our only home.

Here are eight ways you can make a difference right from your couch, from adopt-an-animal programs and virtual lessons to escapes from notable environmental organizations.

Adopt A Manta Ray, Fiji



Manta Ray KOKOMO PRIVATE ISLAND RESORT

With their majestic wingspan, manta rays glide with ease underwater. Getting a glimpse of these in the wild is sure to take your breath away. These highly intelligent marine animals, the largest of their kind, are vulnerable according to the [IUCN \(International Union for Conservation of Nature\)](#) global environmental organization. Found in tropical, subtropical and temperate ocean waters, manta rays face threats from commercial fishing and the destruction of their natural habitat.

Eco-friendly [Kokomo Private Island](#) in Fiji has started the [Adopt a Manta Ray](#) program, offering sea-loving individuals a chance to “adopt” a manta ray for a donation. The funds go directly to the resort’s [Manta Conservation Project](#), which works with the [Manta Trust](#) and the [Manta Project Fiji](#) to acoustically tag these sea creatures to study the health of the population in the waters surrounding the private island. The island has the largest sub-population of reef manta rays in the Fiji Islands.

Each tag costs \$450 and donors are encouraged to make the minimum of a tag price when adopting a ray. Other necessary research equipment includes receivers and satellite tags. Guests (and non-guests) who donate will receive bi-monthly updates on the progress of the research efforts and their manta rays.

Adopt A Coral, Tahiti



Greg Gyselinck of Coral Gardeners CORAL GARDENERS

Also in the South Pacific, French Polynesia's [Coral Gardeners](#), a non-governmental organization run by 19-32 year olds, is helping regenerate the coral reef system surrounding the Islands of Tahiti. Earth Day's theme this year is climate action; what better way to celebrate than to aid our coral reefs affected by rising water temperatures?

Individuals from Mo'orea are working to educate the world about threats to coral reefs and implementing ways to restore the island's reef. The group transplants healthy coral fragments onto the reef to rebuild habitats and encourage growth in vulnerable areas. Through the organization's [Adopt A Coral](#) program, individuals near and far can help the conservation efforts by making a donation. Donors get to name their coral(s), receive updates and an adoption card, which they can proudly share on social media.

Nature Conservancy's Nature Lab



Northrup Falls, TN D.J. KIRK, TNC PHOTO CONTEST 2019

[The Nature Conservancy](#) (TNC), a global conservation organization dedicated to preserving lands and waters, recently launched an [Earth Month landing page](#) featuring uplifting conservation stories. TNC's new online learning platform, called [Nature Lab](#), offers a youth curriculum with virtual field trip videos and educator guides for K-12 students. Fascinating 45-minute videos including, "The Secret Life of Corals," "Borneo: The Symphony of the Rainforest," Wild Biomes: America's Rainforests and Deserts" and "Powering the Planet: Renewable Energy" among others, will educate and instill a love for nature and a desire to help.

In addition, TNC is launching a 24/7 [live stream of Dunn Ranch Prairie](#), a 3,258-acre tallgrass prairie in Hatfield, Missouri, where visitors can tune in to see the unique mating rituals of the endangered prairie-chickens. In May, the stream will focus on the bison herd and arriving spring babies, fondly known as red dogs. Future viewing opportunities include migratory birds, flowering native blooms and Monarch migration.

Protect Rare Seabirds, Bermuda



Dr. Jeremy Madeiros with cahow chick, Nonsuch Island Nature Preserve, Bermuda LAVANYA SUNKARA

Bermuda is no stranger to sustainability and conservation. From its electric cars to rainwater collection system, the Atlantic island known for its world-famous pink sand beaches and ship-wrecked dive sites, is truly one of a kind. To add to its eco-charm is the fact that conservation efforts have brought back a rare seabird from the brink. The cahow bird, with its onomatopoeic name, is a small pelagic bird, once deemed extinct. The discovery in the 1950s of a few pairs on the islands surrounding the main island started a concerted effort to bring these special birds back.

Today, Bermuda's [Nonsuch Island Nature Preserve](#) is home to 130 pairs that visit the island to breed and raise their young after feeding in the open sea. Through the Cahow Recovery Project, local scientists and conservationists are helping build nesting burrows and monitor the well-being of the chicks. While trips to the island are limited, people anywhere in the world can tune in and check out mama and papa birds caring for their fledglings on these [live cameras](#) and help the conservation efforts by [making a donation](#).

Save Sea Turtles, Costa Rica



Baby sea turtle, LAST (Latin American Sea Turtles Association) LAST (LATIN AMERICAN SEA TURTLES ASSOCIATION)

Six of the seven species of sea turtles are endangered. Tourism, specifically voluntourism, is a key component in ensuring that turtles and their eggs are safeguarded from poachers and predators. With many conservation organizations left without volunteers/visitors due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, there are concerns of turtle populations taking a hit this nesting season. Tourism also brings in much needed income to remote areas to help residents find other means of income instead of resorting to poaching.

Nicki Wheeler, International Coordinator for [LAST](#) (Latin American Sea Turtles Association), who runs conservation programs in Costa Rica's Pacuare and Osa Peninsula regions says, "There is a real chance that we will only be able to save a small percentage of the nests this year, potentially losing over 9,000 baby turtles". To help save turtles this year, consider making a donation to [LAST's Go Fund Me page](#).

And while your mind is on the incredible beauty of Costa Rica, head to Visit Costa Rica's "[We Will Be Here](#)" website on Earth Day for a look at the Central-American country's lush rainforests, volcanoes, breathtaking beaches and the *Pura Vida* spirit.

Learn About The Environment, Palmetto Bluff Conservancy



Palmetto Bluff PALMETTO BLUFF

The [Palmetto Bluff Conservancy](#) is part of [Palmetto Bluff](#), protecting an integral part of South Carolina's coast, with lush maritime forests, snaking tidal creeks and myriad outdoor activities in the heart of the Lowcountry.

Under normal circumstances, the conservancy hosts more than 300 events a year along with educational courses. It has now brought its courses online, offering events and lunch lectures in the coming weeks including, [Turkey Talk with Jay Walea](#), guides to [bird feeding](#) (it's more than just throwing some seed in the yard) and [pollination](#) and Q&A with Conservancy Research and Education Coordinator, [Lydia Moore](#).

View Earth in 2070 via Augmented Reality



Earth in 2070 Augmented Reality climate predictions for Los Angeles NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

In keeping with this year's theme of Climate Action, National Geographic's April 2020 issue will have an integrated AR (Augmented Reality) experience focused on the big day. Nat Geo teamed up with [Signal Theory's](#) Digital Immersion Director, Luke Hurd and his team, to create the magazine's first ever AR filter that gives a cautionary look at the effects of climate change 50 years from now.

This [augmented reality-enabled cover](#), using Instagram's Spark AR, is available on the social media platform, and gives users projections of 12 global cities and what climate conditions will feel like in 2070, with temperature data and comparisons. The countries included are India, Turkey, Indonesia, Kuwait, Democratic Republic of Congo, Peru, England, United States, Russia and Chile. Users can stand and walk around while the 3D model rotates.

Help Koalas, Victoria, Australia



Koala with baby, Victoria, Australia VISIT VICTORIA

Wild Koala Day is celebrated on May 3 this year, but you don't need an excuse to find joy in these cuddly animals from the Land Down Under. The koala population has been drastically reduced by recent, unprecedented fires, and their survival depends on our assistance. Victoria, which has been one of the hardest hit states, is home to 30% of Australia's wildlife population. Now, you can celebrate this adorable animal and help save its population with a series of programs on [#WildKoalaDay](#).

Animal lovers can "adopt" a koala with a donation to World Wildlife Fund, take a virtual 360° tour of the Moonlit Sanctuary Wildlife Conservation Park, change your social media profile picture to a wild koala and share where it was spotted with the tag, #wildkoaladay.

Have a wonderful Earth Week!

Link: <https://www.forbes.com/SaveTheWorldFromYourCouch>