

The Longest Hour



At 8:30 p.m. on March 26, millions of people in 185 countries and territories around the world will be encouraged to switch off their electric lights for an hour in support of nature and the health of the planet. This single hour, known as Earth Hour, has reduced energy consumption by 4% over six years. While that number seems small, even modest reductions in electricity consumption can reduce massive amounts of carbon dioxide emissions into the air. But Earth Hour does not claim massive reductions in energy consumption; it is instead a mass mobilized symbolic action, an hour-long commitment in support of planet Earth.

Earth Hour began in Sydney, Australia in 2007. Over two million people and 2,000 businesses participated in the event. Inspired by Sydney, San Francisco ran its own Earth Hour later that October. In 2008, the event went global when 35 countries and hundreds of cities pledged to join. Even Google's homepage went dark. In America alone, 36 million people switched off the lights. While modest amounts of energy were saved, environmental awareness greatly increased. More people were suddenly caring about where their energy came from and how energy consumption affected the long-term health of planet Earth.

The lion's share of American electricity—60%—is produced by the burning of fossil fuels such as natural gas and coal. Nuclear energy accounts for 20% of the nation's electricity, while renewable sources such as wind, solar, and hydropower account for the other 20%. Luckily, within the United States, the availability and use of renewable energy sources are rapidly increasing. As the cost of the technology required to create renewable energy decreases, demand for the new technology has risen. Over \$300 billion was invested in renewable power in 2020. Of course, old habits die hard. The ease with which we can flip a switch and enjoy light is a modern miracle. But wouldn't it be an even bigger miracle to flip a switch and enjoy light that didn't pollute the environment? That is the hope of Earth Hour.

March Birthdays

In astrology, those born from March 1–20 are Pisces' Fish. Pisces are sympathetic and selfless, making them compassionate friends. Their intuitive natures also make Fish creative and expressive artists. Those born from March 21–31 are Aries' Rams. As the first sign of the zodiac, Rams love to lead the charge of change and progress. Sometimes impulsive, always passionate, Rams are dynamic and fun friends.

Lupita Nyong'o (actress) – March 1, 1983
 Desi Arnaz (actor) – March 2, 1917
 Alexander Graham Bell (inventor) – March 3, 1847
 Shaquille O'Neal (athlete) – March 6, 1972
 Raul Julia (actor) – March 9, 1940
 Liza Minnelli (entertainer) – March 12, 1946
 Simone Biles (gymnast) – March 14, 1997
 Vanessa Williams (singer) – March 18, 1963
 Spike Lee (director) – March 20, 1957
 Steve McQueen (actor) – March 24, 1930
 Aretha Franklin (singer) – March 25, 1942
 Warren Beatty (actor) – March 30, 1937

Night of the Witches



Halloween might be long gone, but Mexico's Night of the Witches is only arriving on the first Friday in March. For centuries, indigenous spiritual beliefs, medieval Spanish traditions of witchcraft, and West African voodoo practices have mingled and persisted in the town of Catemaco. In 1970, a local shaman proposed the idea of hosting a witchcraft convention known as the *Noche de brujas*, Night of the Witches. For the past 50 years, hundreds of witches, shamans, and healers from all over Mexico have converged on a hilltop known as Cerro Mono Blanco to participate in a mass cleansing ritual, ridding the town of negative energies and influences. Of course, 50 years is long enough for the spectacle of the event to become commercialized by the masses, and these days, tourists outnumber the witches. It is easy to buy a protective amulet, sit for a tarot reading, and witness an impressive variety of rituals and spells.

West Anaheim Extended Care

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Celebrating March

Mardi Gras

March 1st

Ash Wednesday

March 2nd

Cheese Doodle Day

March 5th

Plant Power Day

March 7th

International Women's Day

March 8th

Jewel Day

March 13th

About Butterflies Day

March 14th

Purim Begins

March 16th

St. Patrick's Day

March 17th

Chocolate Caramel Day

March 19th

Spring Begins

March 20th

Cocktail Day

March 24th

Something on a Stick Day

March 28th

Facility Events

1:1 Outings

March 4th & 11th

Donut Days

March 4th & 18th

Resident Birthday Bash

March 25th

Resident Council Meeting

March 31st

Life from the Ground Up

With the International Day of Forests on March 21 and World Wildlife Day on March 3, the month of March provides ample opportunities to reflect on the extraordinary diversity of life on our planet. Our planet nurtures and supports so much life, it's no wonder we call her "Mother Earth."

When we hear that Earth "teems with life," our imaginations often conjure vast forests crawling with animals, oceans alive with fish, or blue skies filled with soaring birds. The primary engine of life, however, lies beneath our feet. Soil biodiversity—the vast mix of insects, worms, bacteria, fungi, and other living organisms in the dirt—regulates and balances the nutrients that allow for life aboveground. The longer soil remains undisturbed, the longer its organisms grow and thrive. Healthy soils are fertile, filter and store water, and resist erosion. Soil provides the foundation for all living things.

It is amazing that life must begin so small and unnoticed before growing into towering redwoods and gargantuan blue whales. For life to flourish, Mother Earth does not have to work on her own. We can provide the building blocks that sustain woodlands and their wildlife right in our own backyards.

Compost can be added to nutrient-poor soils to increase soil biodiversity. The root systems of different plants support different organisms underground, so planting a wide variety of native flowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees also improves soil. Best of all, a wide variety of native plants also harbors life aboveground. Insects are attracted to native plants and trees. Birds and other animals are attracted to insects. Before you know it, a simple backyard garden has become a refuge for all sorts of local wildlife. Of course, life doesn't happen overnight. It can take years for a healthy soil community to grow, for native roots to take hold, for trees to mature, and for animals to discover their new sanctuary. Nature requires patience. Mother Earth has always played the long game.

