

Climate Action Committee – Newsletter Update – October 2024

As more evidence comes out about the harmful effects of night lighting, perhaps we can all limit the amount of lighting we use. All animals need the natural cycle of light and dark for reproduction, nourishment, sleep, and protection from predators.

Research shows that insects, amphibians and reptiles, birds and mammals—including humans—are negatively affected by lighting up the nighttime skies.

Some creatures, such as insects, are drawn to the artificial light and end up being trapped and exhausted or become prey. Fewer insects results in less plant pollination and less food for people and other animals.

Migrating birds that rely on star and moonlight become disoriented and wander off-course; they also may migrate too early and miss ideal conditions for nesting and foraging. Some animals are repelled by the light, resulting in loss of usable habitat.

Humans may be at increased risk for sleep disorders, fatigue, obesity, diabetes, some cancers, cardiovascular disease, depression, anxiety, and headaches as a result of too much artificial light.

Some of us may think keeping lights on at night makes us safer, but studies suggest that isn't necessarily true, and in fact it may be the opposite: what is more suspicious, someone moving around a lighted house or property, or a flashlight moving around in a dark house or property?

Turning off or using fewer outside lights also saves electricity, which helps both the environment and your pocketbook.

In order to protect the physical and mental health and wellbeing of ourselves and the animals we share this space with, consider the following: limit when and where you use lights; consider dimmer switches, timers, sensors; close curtains or blinds at night to keep the light in; have outside lights point downward; use warm color outside lights and limit “blue” lights, which can be more harmful for animals and people.

And don't forget, when we reduce night lighting, it allows us to better see the incredible beauty of the night sky here on the Outer Cape. If you aren't moved by the stars, moon, and planets, think of your neighbors—all the neighborly beings—who are!

Georgia Neill

Climate Action Committee Volunteer

The Climate Action Committee is looking for new members and volunteers—full- or part-timers welcome! Contact liliflanders@gmail.com for more information.