



THE PRIORY ACADEMY

LSST

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National News

Gregor Wallace

TBM digs longest HS2 tunnel

A tunnel boring machine nicknamed 'Florence', after Florence Nightingale, has dug through to the other side of its ten mile endeavour for construction of HS2 (High Speed Two). It was launched three years ago, and has finally broken through the other side of the tunnel, moving at ten metres a day. In total, ten of these TBMs will be used to drill the network for HS2. It is supposed to be completed between 2029 and 2033, but I expect due to possible budget cuts it will get delayed for a long time. The largest TBM heads are about 10 meters in radius and the whole TBMs are about a hundred and seventy metres long. The tunnels will be lined with massive concrete blocks. Each TBM weighs roughly two kilotons.

HS2 is a high speed rail network that has been reduced from the moment it was planned. Its original plan was to extend to Leeds all the way down to London, but due to scrapping the Northern part it will only go up to Birmingham.

Environmental News

Rachel Ballantyne

Desert greening in Saudi Arabia

Recent downpours of rain in the Middle East have caused chaos for many, with Dubai airport in the UAE having a well documented temporary closure due to flooding, as the typical rainfall is so much lighter that there was insufficient drainage. But another impact, with results much less predictable, is the greening occurring in Saudi Arabian deserts. Deserts are often unassociated with plants, as sand is the worst type of soil for biodiversity to flourish with its low nutrient content and water absorbency. However, due to recent flooding, the deserts in some areas have started to flourish; this isn't inherently a problem for present species within the desert, largely comprising of mammals such as reptiles, as animals hardy enough to thrive in deserts can typically also cope with savannahs and forests, which is what a greener landscape would mimic. Whether or not such developments in the desert will be permanent is unclear, as though reverse-desertification is not a new concept (often done purposefully, as deserts can spread easily due to the lightweight nature of sand, taking over other ecosystems that may be important for biodiversity or farming) the idea of unplanned greening is fairly new, and difficult to predict. Regardless, whether this new landscape is a fleeting occurrence or permanent fixture, it is very interesting to understand.

Technology News

Freddie Kingham

Controversial new AI gadget

A new AI gadget has been designed by two former Apple executives which shipped in March after months of promotion. This gadget is a small device mounted on the head, or clothing on your head, and then projects onto your hand. These devices can take pictures and videos, send messages and answer questions. It has a separate phone number and does not sync with any other devices. There is a notable lack of clarity in the demonstrations the company has made public so far. This paired with general uncertainty around AI has led to the device facing heavy public scrutiny.

Some of the reviews state that it does not work. "After many days of testing this gadget, the only real thing it can do is tell the time." Another states, "A very interesting device." But also they say it "makes no sense."

Environmental News

Elliot Richardson Bushell

WWF endangered species

Up to 150 species are said to become extinct each day. While some of these may be due to natural causes, the majority of extinctions are due to humanity's effect on the natural world. At December 2023, almost 10,000 species were listed as critically endangered and over 1000 possibly extinct. Scientists now believe that we are living in the sixth mass extinction, with the last one being when the dinosaurs were wiped out.

The Javan Rhinos are number one on WWF's list of endangered species with only 75 individuals, all of which live on the island of Java, Indonesia. They face constant threats to their species, with not only human actions posing problems, but also the large amount of natural disasters that occur in the area. Some of the animals that are at risk have been for years and years; the Amur leopard is a prime example of this, being a critically endangered species since 1996. However, others like the African Forest elephant, have a dense population that has rapidly declined in more recent years. These continuous decreases in population will lead to thousands of species dying out in the next few years. Human activities like logging, pollution and exploitation of natural resources all work together to cause the extinction of hundreds of animals every day. Many sites have places where you can adopt an animal, with proceeds helping companies support these animals to avoid death and recover from near extinctions; there are many things that can be done to limit extinction which can be found online and will really help many animals across the world.

Historical News

Isaac Eccles

80 years since The Great Escape

Do you think you could dig a tunnel to save your life? Well, these people certainly did. On 24th March 1944, the “Great Escape” took place. This refers to an organized escape from a prison camp in Germany, involving a tunnel that was built over three months with bowls and forged passports. This allowed 76 people to escape, however over fifty were recaptured and killed; only three people managed to flee back to England. This event became even more famous after the release of a film made in 1963, which is still well-known today. Named *‘The Great Escape’*, this depiction is relatively accurate, though some elements are altered to create a better film, such as the use of a pump for air in the tunnel (instead they just poked holes in the roof) or the way that they disposed of the dirt. However, the tunnel dug by Canadian soldiers (they all had backgrounds in mining) was actually too short and too close to a guard tower. Today, the tunnel has been rediscovered and is really quite incredible. The sides and roof are made of the planks from beds (correctly depicted by the film) and it was nine meters deep underground. Interestingly, the tunnels were only two by two feet wide (or 0.6 metres). Today, Guy Martin is recreating the great escape in honor of the prisoners of war in order to prove just how remarkable this feat is.

Local News

Grace Bishell

Cathedral light show

Recently (from the 12th to the 16th March) there was a stunning lightshow at Lincoln Cathedral. It was presented by Science by Luxmuralis and was shown to many in the cathedral. This year's theme was the human body and its spectacular discoverers. The lights were shown throughout the cathedrals via projection technology. The walls and ceilings were illuminated as tourists and visitors explored. It was easily kept under control though, due to the fact that a one way system was in place. The experience was spectacular in my opinion. The lights were clear and bright. Every time that you turn the corner, you come face to face with a new view.

The pricing was fairly priced considering the memories and effort gone into it: adults had to pay £8.00 each, children between five and sixteen paid £6.00 while 5 year olds and younger went for free. Ticket costs went towards the upkeep of our cathedral.

School News

Isaac Eccles

Global Young Journalist Awards

From the 13th to the 26th of August, The Day are hosting their annual Global Young Journalism Awards. This is a journalism competition aimed at secondary school aged children that has rewards including trophies, having your own work published, and also it is something unique to add to your CV. There is a panel of eight judges that will decide on the winning articles. This year, these judges are: Labour MP Jess Phillips, Newsreader Cathy Newman, Olympian Heather Fisher, Dr Oriane Chausiaux, Journalist Suyin Haynes, International speaker Meena Wood, 2023 winner Jenin Al Shalabi and Journalist Rose Stokes. Each of the panellists specialise in one of the subjects available, which includes: climate change, equality, health, media, sport, science, technology, politics, mental health and finance. The story can take any form of journalism such as audio, video, interview, written article or even photography. The skills that can be learnt from this event are valuable for education and careers, as it will always be beneficial to practice the skill of writing. There is a limit on how many words each article can include, or how long a video can be, to ensure that the selection will not take too long and that the awards can be given out faster. Those who take part in this event, also receive 5 house points. We have had two previous winners in our school and their articles are linked in the PowerPoint.

Animal News

Grace Bishell

French couple banned from keeping pets

Last year, a French couple were caught with 159 cats and seven dogs in their flat. They had been kept in cruel conditions and were all severely ill. They had been trapped in a dirt covered, eighty square meter flat without enough space to grow and flourish. Due to this and their lack of care and medicine, many of the animals were malnourished or infected with parasites. Sadly, this led to some of the cats and dogs passing away before proper care could be provided. Police officers found the bodies of at least two dogs and two cats in the bathroom. The couple (aged 68 and 52) were banned from caring for animals due to the risks of this horrible event occurring again, and were ordered to pay a fine of £128,000 to animal rights charities and civil partners. The woman later confessed that they were the love of her life but that she had messed up. She had apparently taken ownership of her parents' two dogs and two cats in 2018. Later on, she rescued thirty cats from an abandoned building and brought them to her home. These animals eventually reproduced, leading to an unmanageable amount of animals. The woman said that she would feel awful for letting the animals die; however she ultimately chose to keep them rather than take them to a shelter. She was later diagnosed with Noah's syndrome; this is a syndrome that explains a psychological need to save animals, even when incapable of doing so. The couple were sentenced to an 18 month period in prison.

School News

Grace Bishell

Year 7 Yorkshire Wildlife Park trip.

Recently, the majority of year 7 went on a trip to Yorkshire Wildlife Park.

We saw many exciting animals, including lemurs, giraffes, polar bears, capybaras, tigers, leopards, cheetahs and more.

Some of us even went to some of the various play areas, enjoying the zip lines, swings, slides and climbing. The different areas were each as spectacular as the last, from walking through the Amazon, to trudging through Africa to even wandering through the ancient land mass of Pangea, where the dinosaur models proudly stood.

We were there for 3 and a half hours, leaving the park at half past one. Everyone had a fantastic day and left the park full of joy. Unfortunately, some of the buses returned slightly late, due to the fact that there was a large amount of traffic. Despite this minor inconvenience, the experiences with creatures great and small made the trip one to remember!