



EMERALD KEEPERS

EMERALDKEEPERS.ORG

For an Emerald Green, Ocean Blue Coronado

LIGHTS OUT



FOR DARK SKIES

On Dec. 21 the sun will set at 4:46 p.m., marking the end of the shortest day of the year. The extended

darkness should allow for optimal stargazing, but increasing amount of artificial light at night creates light pollution obscuring sky views and harming wildlife.

Outdoor lighting is needed for safety and visibility. With responsible lighting, we can deliver those benefits without as many negative impacts.

THE PROBLEM

Growing cities and increased outdoor lighting have made night skies brighter by 9.6% per year from 2011 to 2022 on average, according to a report in Science magazine.

That is the equivalent to doubling the sky brightness every eight years. This growth in light pollution not

only limits star viewing but also interferes with the daily cycle of light and dark essential for people, plants and animals.

- **Humans.** Exposure to bright light after sunset can slow the production of melatonin, an essential hormone for quality sleep and immune systems.

- **Birds.** Eighty percent of all bird species migrate at night and can be disoriented by artificial light. Confused birds, especially fledglings, can collide with structures and become so lost and exhausted that they are unable to complete their journey. Coronado's threatened snowy plover is especially susceptible to the harms of light pollution.

- **Mammals.** Nocturnal animals can become disoriented from night light, reducing their ability to find food

For more information on light pollution, check out the DarkSky International website at darksky.org.

and mates and making them more exposed to prey.

- **Insects.** Increased brightness affects the navigation, hunting, and circadian rhythms of insects, which are crucial food source for many species.

REDUCING LIGHT POLLUTION

Simple changes can ensure the right amount of light is used in the right place and at the right time to cut down on light pollution:

- **Fixtures:** Select shielded outdoor light fixtures with a narrow light stream to minimize peripheral light.

- **Direction:** Direct outdoor light fixtures to shine downward.

- **Color:** Warm-colored instead of white light is less harmful. Avoid blue lights.

- **Sensors:** Minimize the time a light is on with motion sensors that temporarily activate with movement.

- **Timer:** Schedule lights to turn on only when needed. Reduce the length of time solar-powered lights stay illuminated by covering part of the solar charging panel.

- **Speak up:** City, commercial, and residential lights all contribute to light pollution. Let light owners know about unnecessary or over lighting and suggest responsible lighting changes.

Responsible outdoor lighting will ensure darker skies and a brighter future for people, animals and our planet.

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