

Newsletter of OMNI350
400 PPM When?

Volume 6.0 , Number 3.1 & 4.1

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350: THE MOST IMPORTANT NUMBER YOU NEED TO KNOW

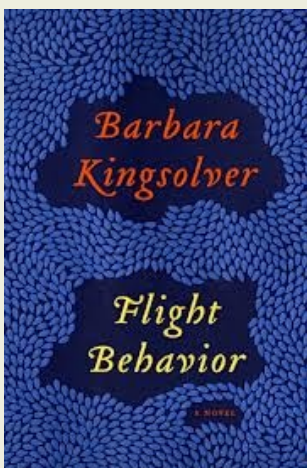
The mission of OMNI 350 (formerly the Climate Change Task Force) is to educate Arkansans about current realities of climate change and to take actions to prevent further harm to the atmosphere. OMNI 350 is committed to actions that lead to the reduction of green house gases to a scientifically safe level of 350 parts per million of Carbon Dioxide(CO₂) in the atmosphere through life-style and legislative change, which includes partnering with like-minded organizations.

In This Issue

FLIGHT BEHAVIOR

Keeling Curve 400PPM

BOOK REVIEW



[Keeling Curve Website Wants You To Know When CO2 Levels Hit 400 Parts Per Million](#)

By [Joe Romm](#) on Apr 24, 2013 at 12:30 pm

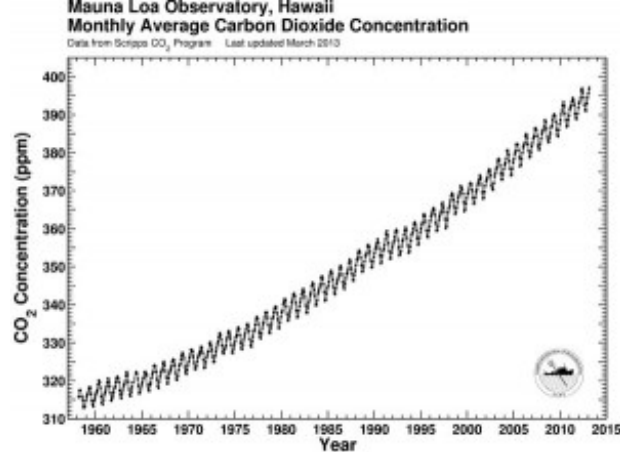
Flight Behavior, Barbara Kingslover

When I first heard the title to Barbara Kingslover's seventh novel, I thought of airplanes. Such is the orientation of the 21st century. Well, prepare to step into the rural, economically depressed farming and shepherding town of Feathertown, Tennessee, where the shepherds flock on Sundays to commune with Pastor Bobby Ogle, their beloved and kind preacher and spiritual leader. This is the kind of repressed, technologically challenged community who believes that weather is determined by God, not by science, and that the past year's flooding was decreed by the heavens and can only be reversed by prayer.

In this story, the survival techniques of the Monarch butterfly, those bright orange, delicate but hardy creatures, and that of a diminutive, flame-haired young woman are inextricably intertwined and analogous. The Monarchs have had an atypical flight behavior this year. Floods and landslides led to felled trees everywhere in their usual roosting place in Mexico. Subsequently, they migrated to Feathertown to overwinter. Why Feathertown? That's the big question that one team of scientists comes to examine. However, they are challenged by the residents, who are skeptical of science-based answers to climate-based questions. In the meantime, residents of Feathertown need to fill their coffers.

Dellarobia Turnbow, 27, has her own kind of flight behaviors, spurred on by too much domestic confinement too soon, and now she is primed to flee, restive-flying from pillar to post, as her mother always said. Unlike the rest of the townspeople, she wasn't as inspired by religion.

"She was a...911 Christian: in the event of an emergency, call the Lord...Jesus was a more reliable backer, less likely to drink himself unconscious or get liver cancer. No wonder people chose Him as their number one friend. But if the

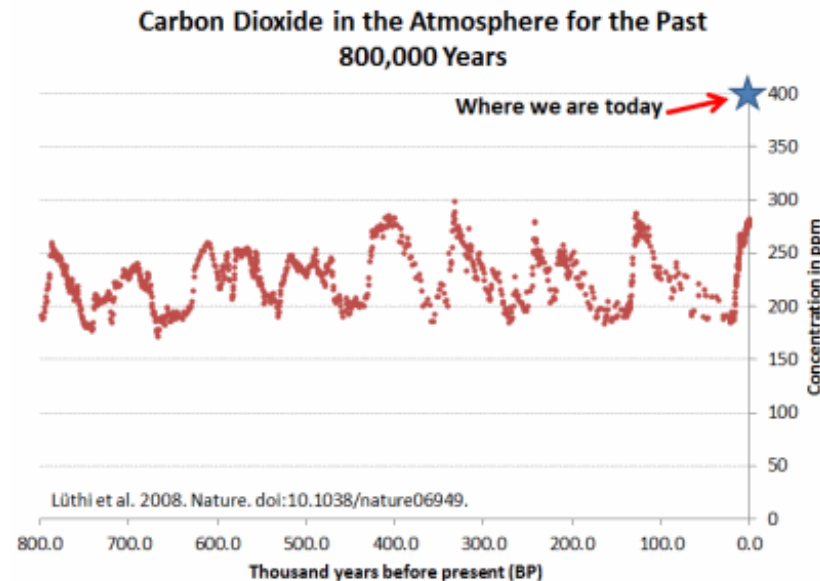


On Monday, Hawaii's Mauna Loa Observatory [measured](#) CO₂ levels in the air of 398.36 parts per million (ppm). And that means carbon dioxide, the main gas driving climate change, will soon hit 400 ppm for the first time in human existence.

The world's longest unbroken record of atmospheric CO₂ levels is the "Keeling Curve" measured at Mauna Loa since 1958. The curve was initiated by Charles David Keeling and is maintained by his son, Ralph F. Keeling, at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (where I did my Ph.D. research on the physical oceanography of the Greenland Sea). The Scripps folks want you to know precisely when we hit 400 ppm so they have set up [a website](#) and even a twitter feed, [@Keeling_curve](#), that will tweet out the CO₂ level every day.

The 400 ppm level is another major milestone on humanity's accelerating path to destroying a livable climate. As climatologist Chris Field [told the AP](#), "It's an important threshold. It is an indication that we're in a different world."

How different can be seen in this chart:



chemistry wasn't there, what could you do?"

Married in a shotgun wedding ten years ago, she lost a preemie before having two more children. Her husband, Cub, is a large, docile and complacent man, controlled and essentially managed by his mirthless parents. Dellarobia knows that to live in this town is to be under a microscope; she was the untamed child once, and that wildness is rearing its head again, her dormancy coming to an end.

The first chapter, "The Measure of a Man," is the catalyst for both Dellarobia's evolution and the arc of the story. (If you want to experience it fresh and unspoiled, avoid reading the jacket blurb.) Kingsolver's time-honored talent for yoking the struggle and turmoil of man with the flux and beauty of nature is vividly drawn. She builds the final, dramatic scene of the chapter to a man/nature composition that is at once distilled and dynamic, serene and dramatic. Abundant, also, are Biblical allusions that reflect the community's ethos.

Kingsolver is an agent of social change. She established the Bellwether prize in literature in order to award writers who effect change for the good of humanity. She is also a scholar with postgrad degrees in biology and environmental science. You are going to encounter a stout measure of activism in her writing, covering such issues as the degradation of the planet and its natural resources and the contentious class system of society. If her political evocations have bothered you in the past, they are likely to bother you here, too.

Nevertheless, the author weaves in her social issues with finesse, for the most part, and her vivid portrait of Feathertown is sympathetic and informed. Initially, she seems to lampoon the pious, science-fearing populace, but she gradually tenders the reader to an understanding of the religious community. She slowly develops dialogue between urban, rural, and academic minds and concerns. The biblical allusions are

The 400 ppm level was passed in [parts of the Arctic](#) last May because, as [E&E News](#) (subs. req'd) notes, "It typically gets to a peak concentration above that of the rest of the world due to winds blowing CO₂ up north in the spring." A 2009 article in *Science* reported that when CO₂ concentrations were sustained at this level 15 million years ago, [it was 5° to 10° F warmer and seas were 75 to 120 feet higher](#)

.Related Posts:

- [Recent Warming Is 'Amazing And Atypical' And Poised To Destroy Stable Climate That Enabled Civilization](#)

also ripe and fitting, relevant to the inhabitants of Feathertown and the way they see the "miracle" of nature. Dellarobia represents a connection between both worlds.

This is the second book I have read that highlights the migratory patterns and survival modes of the Monarch butterfly, and braids in the journey of self-actualization and coming to terms with loss. SANCTUARY LINE, by Jane Urquhart, is also socially and environmentally conscious, and is an apt companion piece to this book.

The clash of family, science, religion, media, politics, and environment takes Dellarobia on a quest beyond the emotional and intellectual borders she has known all her life, on a journey of discovery and transformation. Like a butterfly out of the chrysalis, she must follow the path of her future.

Quick Links

[350PPM ARCHIVES](#)

[Citizens Climate Lobby](#)

If you want to join the fight to save the planet, to save creation for your grandchildren, there is no more effective step you could take than becoming an active member of this group." - [Dr. James](#)

[Hansen](#), Physicist, member National Academy of Sciences, grandpa, head of Goddard Institute for Space Studies, NASA

OMNI350 is an official member group of the Citizens Climate Lobby which meets the first Saturday of each month at 10:30 at the OMNI Center.

[The Climate Reality Project](#)

[350.org](#)

[OMNI Center](#)



WHY 350? Our Newsletter, 350PPM (parts per million concentration of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere) seeks to educate the public about the impending crisis of global warming and climate change. We must reduce greenhouse gas emissions and return the levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere to no more than 350 parts per million. It is only at these levels or below that the climate and environmental systems of the earth as we know them can be maintained. As a point of reference it was 1988 when the earth's atmosphere contained 350 PPM of CO₂.