

Wildfires and Specialists: A Deadly Connection



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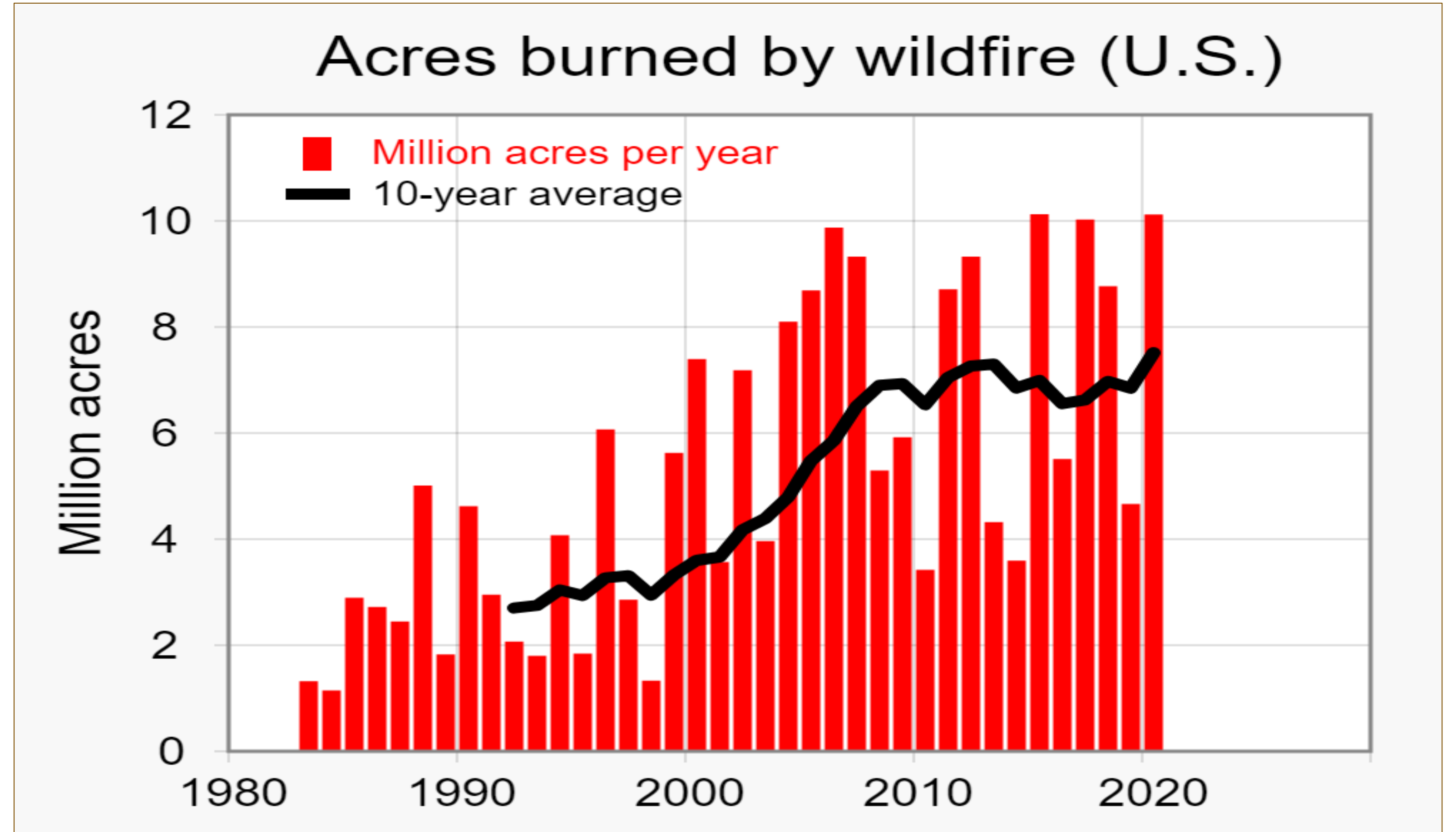
Problem: Wildfires have created a population loss for species (especially specialists which rely on specific conditions to survive) in South Wales, Australia and the West Coast of the USA.

Project Goal: Prevent human activities that spread and increase the severity of wildfires

Methods: We analyzed population data from Koalas from Australia along with Pygmy Rabbits from California, prior to the massive wildfires of 2020 and after the wildfires

Research Questions:

- How have human-related activities created and aided the spread and severity of wildfires?
- How has the increase in large scale wildfires effected endangered and threatened species such as koalas and pygmy rabbits?



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Pygmy Rabbit:

Also, a specialist species, pygmy rabbits rely on sagebrush for habitat which is one of the first things to burn in fires.



"Juvenile Pygmy Rabbit" by Jim Witham is in the Public Domain

Why Them?

California & Australia: Media pays most attention to these locations (Anglocentric News)
Pygmy Rabbits & Koalas: Specialists and k-selected species

Koala:

This specialist species solely relies on the Eucalyptus Tree for food making it more vulnerable to wildfires in areas where those trees exist.



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CAN THIS BE SOLVED ?

Prescribed Burns:

An Indigenous people practice of intentionally setting fire in a small controlled area to prevent fires

Fire Watch:

Having a set committee of volunteers who watch for fires in at risk locations/regions

Fire Safety/Precautions Advertising: informative mass media about fire safety, prevention, and common knowledge.

Camera Traps:

To analyze species populations changes at risk in these areas.

References:

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