

Prominent Pesticides Escape Into the Environment

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A silent spring and a summer without honey? Current events have renewed interest in science that informs us about the health of our environment.

Enter neonicotinoids, a family of chemical pesticides that has been in use since the 1990s and became especially prominent starting in the mid-2000s. Neonicotinoids have gained popularity because they are non-toxic to mammals, birds and other vertebrates, and because they can be applied in a variety of ways - most prominently as agricultural seed coatings, which largely circumvents the problem of windblown drift of pesticides offsite and into the environment.

However, research in recent years has raised red flags about these pest killers. In EARTH Magazine's May cover story, read about efforts to track where and how neonicotinoids are making their way offsite, staying in the environment for longer than previously thought, and potentially endangering beneficial species like honey bees and aquatic invertebrates. Now online at <https://www.earthmagazine.org/article/neonicotinoids-prominent-pesticides-escape-environment>.

The May issue of EARTH Magazine is out now. Read about how geoscientists can reframe their thinking when it comes to natural disasters - and their role in mitigating the negative consequences of these events - by considering lessons pulled from economics. Or, see how researchers assessed the global impact of a 13th-century volcanic eruption in Indonesia by studying medieval records of grape harvests in France. For these stories and more, subscribe to EARTH Magazine.

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