

New Study Claims Global Warming Is Producing Massive Swarms Of Killer Mosquitos

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The Atlantic is worried the caribou won't survive massive mosquito swarms that are allegedly spawning earlier every year, harassing malnourished mothers and killing their young.

Arctic mosquito swarms are huge, sometimes containing millions of insects that can easily kill baby caribou and even harm mature adults as well. But environmentalists and liberals are claiming that a warming Arctic will only increase the frequency and severity of these death swarms.

“Mosquitoes responded to this early melt by hatching ahead of schedule,” writes The Atlantic's Ross Andersen. “They also grew faster, meaning they spent less time in the vulnerable, developmental state that makes them easy prey for birds. More of them survived to adulthood, and that's bad news for caribou.”

“Arctic mosquito swarms are the stuff of legend,” writes Andersen. “Some of them contain hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of insects. That's enough to harass a pregnant caribou until she stops worrying about food. And it's enough to kill caribou calves outright.”

Andersen's article is based on a new study by Lauren Culler of the Dickey Center's Institute for Arctic Studies at Dartmouth, who spent two summers studying mosquitos in Greenland. She found that in 2012, a very warm year in the Arctic, mosquitoes were breeding earlier.

“Caribou have no defense against mosquitoes,” Culler told Andersen, “except to run.”

“If the Arctic continues to warm, and there is every indication that it will, the summer tundra may soon be abuzz with larger and larger clouds of biting, blood-sucking insects,” Andersen warns in his article.

It's a reasonable concern, but one that doesn't ask an important question — how did caribou herds survive past warm periods? It's a question that was asked by Cato Institute climate scientist Chip Knappenberger asked over Twitter.

The Earth's climate has not been static in the last 15,000 years (there are cave paintings of caribou in Europe that are at least this old), as the world has warmed and cooled since that time.

The Middle Ages, for example, saw a warming spell that lasted until the late 1300s when a period known as the "Little Ice Age" came about and caused temperatures in Europe and other parts of the Northern Hemisphere to plunge.