



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH LAKE SIMCOE NATURALISTS

SLSN is an incorporated not-for-profit Member of Ontario Nature.

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(www.slsnc.ca)

Research Partner with The Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe (www.zephyrsociety.ca)

Member: Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition

Member: Ontario Greenbelt Alliance

Note: Please renew your membership to receive future Newsletters

Meetings and Outings

Meetings: All Meetings start at 7:30 p.m. at the York Region Police Building Meeting Room (Baseline Road between McCowan and Civic Centre Road) unless noted otherwise. No July or August Meetings. Members events (insurance compliance). Visitors welcome.

York Regional Police, 3 District Community Meeting Room
3527 Baseline Road, Georgina.



Tuesday, Sept. 12 **The Shocking Decline of Birds in North America.** Since the seventies, millions of North American birds have disappeared and a third of species are now of high regional conservation concern. Experts agree that their long-term conservation will only be achieved by building transnational partnerships and involving local communities in citizen science projects. Club members research, presentation and conversation meeting on this concerning situation.

Tuesday Oct. 10 **Annual Event-Egypt Hall: Ontario Farmland Trust.** Presentation by Kathryn Enders of the Ontario Farmland Trust. The Ontario Farmland Trust actively protects farmland by working with landowners who have a desire to see their farms permanently protected for agriculture. There will be a small silent auction and baked goods for sale as in past years. Club members are asked to please donate a few, but unique auction items AND home-baking. *Paid up Club members reserve seats with \$2.00 donation. Non-members \$5.00. The event is at the Egypt Hall at 7:30 p.m.* Phone Paul 905-722-8021 or Norma 905-476-4747 for further information. Don't miss this must-see conservation biology presentation! Everyone welcome.

Phone Paul 905-722-8021 or Norma 905-476-4747 for further information about meetings.

NOTICE about Meeting hours – 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. only.

Outings: All regular outings – Note: **Paid-up members may participate (for insurance compliance).**

2017 AUGUST

Saturday October 7 **Lake Simcoe Birding:** Annual Autumn waterfowl roundup, and lake area forests migrants surveying. We will also search for lingering shorebirds. Meet at Tim Horton's Sutton at 8:30 a.m. Dress for the weather.

Conservation Issues:

The proposed Ainslie Hill Development in Sutton is coming to Georgina Council again, months after it was pulled from a spring Council agenda after SLSN submitted a comprehensive Letter/Report to the Town of Georgina in early May. Concerns raised about planning, design, and natural

habitat/environmental shortcomings of the Draft Plan of Subdivision still remain. SLSN presented the Report “South Lake Simcoe Naturalists (SLSN), Submission to Georgina Council May 10, 2017 Meeting. – Ainslie Hill I and II Proposed Development” and was attached to your May 2017 SLSN Newsletter.

Recently, the SLSN Task Force on Ainslie Hill prepared another document and sent it to Town of Georgina staff and Council “Response to Comments Issued by Michael Smith Planning Consultants; Development Coordinators. Regarding Proposed Ainslie Hill Development, Catering Road, Sutton (dated June 12, 2017)”. **A copy is attached with this Newsletter.**

The local community has become very concerned about this development proposal and has released an On-Line Petition at,

Digital petition just released by the community on change.org;
<https://www.change.org/p/council-sensible-environmental-net-zero-development-and-infrastructure-for-ainslie-hill-i-ii>

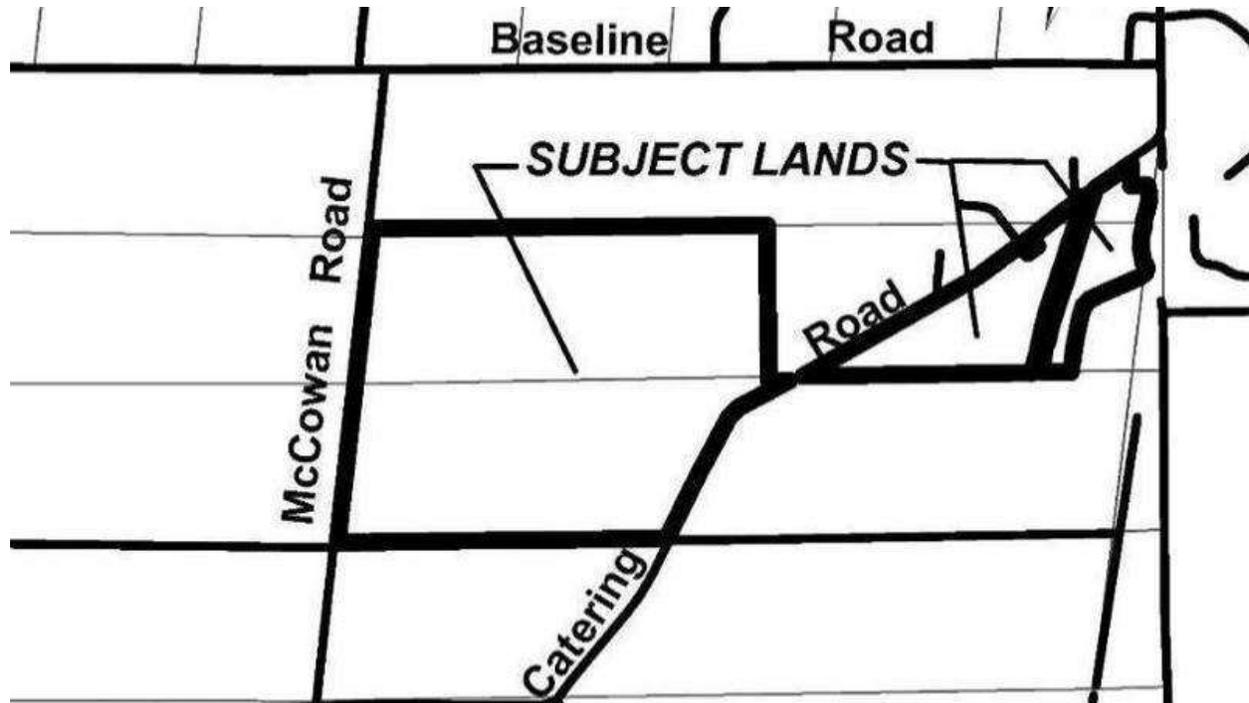
Please copy this Petition site, and enter it into Google and sign the Petition to support the local Catering Road community in Sutton. It is also on the SLSN Facebook Page at, <https://www.facebook.com/slsnaturalists/>

The Petition:

2017-08-19

Petitioning Ward 1 Town of Georgina Councilor Ward 1 Town of Georgina Councillor Charlene Biggerstaff and 9 others

**Sensible, Environmental, Net Zero,
Development and Infrastructure for Ainslie
Hill I & II!**



This petition is a call to organize and inform about the Ainslie Hill impending development on Catering road in Sutton West, Ontario. Now is the time for the public to act on our concerns. We deserve and demand that decision-makers treat the public's concerns, comments, and questions as having merit, and that stakeholders' input is given fair weight throughout the planning and decision-making process. We, the signed of this petition, want to halt all planning and future council decisions on Ainslie Hill I & II, until some or all of the residents' questions, problems, concerns, comments, and proposed solutions are formally recognized and addressed.

Most residents have serious concerns about the collusional, cookie-cutter, 1950's style suburban developments being proposed in the Georgina area. In addition to the negative impacts these developments may have on long-term residents, they threaten biodiversity, wildlife, and several protected species that inhabit the Black River area and its naturally forested corridors. The current fast-tracked pace of this and other developments in this town are case and point. The lack of transparency, foreknowledge, understanding of historical context (e.g., the developer was unaware of the historic trail), long-term environmental and social planning, scientific and environmental studies from the Town, developers, planning consultants and others, is of serious concern.

There are significant details in the 'meat' of some of these required studies that have been neglected in the summaries, planning, and in decision-making. Examples are in a few of the archaeological assessments which state that there were '2 pre-contact lithic findspots' of 3500 year old artifacts, found where the old barn on Catering Rd was located. Other serious concerns are the lack of regional housing, 'gifting' land on the river's edge, 'Net-Zero' buildings, traffic, wildlife impacts, solar roofing and other initiatives that should make this development acceptable to 2017 and future building standards.

Developments similar to the one being planned and proposed for Catering Road and elsewhere seek only a quick return on investments instead of net-zero impacts & thoughtful planning far into the future of our communities and towns. The people of Georgina have been experiencing a gentrification of the area for decades, and the increasing housing costs are putting this beautiful area out of reach for most people to enjoy. Signing this petition is a step towards organizing residents and stakeholders to gain a more meaningful role in the planning and decision-making of this and future developments in the area, so that we can ensure that development is socially and environmentally beneficial and sustainable for our communities.

Unfortunately the Town of Georgina as of **yet** will not accept digital petitions to Council unlike every other level of government, this should change. Thank you very much for your time in reading and signing this petition and I hope to potentially organize and address some of these concerns with you and the Town soon.

The Plan is being brought forward at the Wednesday September 13 Council Meeting at the Georgina Civic Centre starting at 7:30 p.m. Please plan to attend.

SLSN continues recent field and research work we have done since 2015 surrounding the proposed development area and have confirmed and documented some threatened and/or endangered species. Our continuing 2017 field work on Snapping turtle, breeding birds and specifically the endangered Chimney Swift continues.

The Jackson's Point Planning Project organized by the Town of Georgina with The Planning Partnership consultants has proceeded to a preferred Option. A SLSN Working Group has been organized of club executive members and member residents in Jackson's Point. Group members have attended every meeting and reviewed information in detail and made comment in the process. Our first SLSN Report submission was comprehensive and included formal documentation and recommendation for

conservation of important natural and cultural heritage features,

- *new naturalization/restoration initiative for the existing Park (Bonnie Boats Site) area at the beach.*
- *Natural area conservation of the Lorne Street Parkette/Boulevard for low impact passive recreation and natural heritage restoration meadow and forest related tree features.*
- *SLSN has proposed a modest feature “Birding” Node be designed and developed to take advantage of this opportunity.*
- *Snorkelling and Diving enthusiasts need a facility to allow orderly and planned opportunities to use the Malone Wharf water access safely for recreation and study.*

The full second SLSN Report submission is attached “SLSN Jackson’s Point Harbour Re-development Study and Jackson's Point Harbourfront Redevelopment Plan” Report (2017-08-24).

The Planning Partnership and the Town of Georgina have not formally shown any of the improvements recommended by SLSN on their Options Plans, and have therefore as far as we are informed, not planned them into their Capital or Operating budgets for this initiative. The local community have made many critiques of the process, budgeting and of the obvious grandiose concessions to local private development interests, that have been reported by the local Georgina media. The Town of Georgina is recommending a preferred Option Plan which can be viewed on the Town web site.

The Plan is being brought forward at the Tuesday September 19 Council Meeting at the Georgina Civic Centre starting at 7:30 p.m. Please plan to attend.

Mount Albert Forest under Threat of Destruction: As related in our August SLSN Newsletter a natural Tamarack and mixed species wet forest and meadows area is under threat of destruction in East Gwillimbury.

Mount Albert SLSN members and an SLSN executive working Group has been formed to undertake fieldwork and reporting, in support of the forest. The local community is preparing to appear at the OMB as a Party, and we hope to provide some support to their efforts. More information will be available as this emerging issue develops.

SLSN: Members, Please consider submitting an article for the next Talon Newsletter.

York Region Forest News

York Regional Forest Management Plan Review

The Region of York has initiated a process of review of the York Regional Forest Management Plan. The Region is receiving additional input into the York Regional Forest Management Plan including comment and information on community experience within the Forest. Public input will focus on Key Problems/Concerns/Challenges with Management of the Forest and Public use, acceptable/unacceptable recreational/public uses, solutions to problems/concerns/challenges, service enhancement, etc.

The York Regional Forest - National Forest Week Festival: The Festival is on Saturday, September 23rd, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the York Regional Forest | Hollidge Tract 16389 Highway 48, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Further information can be obtained at york.ca/, or by phoning 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75241.

Good News for Cerulean Warblers and their Forest Homes

By Becky Stewart, Ontario Program Manager, Bird Studies Canada – August 2017



Cerulean Warbler Photo: Ron Ridout

On July 17, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) fund will, once again, support Bird Studies Canada's efforts to conserve the Endangered Cerulean Warbler in Ontario.

Since the 1960s, the Cerulean Warbler has undergone serious continent-wide declines. In Ontario, declines have been most severe in the province's southwest, where, between the first and second breeding bird atlases (carried out from 1981-85 and from 2001-05), the chances of encountering a Cerulean Warbler were reduced by half.

Today, almost all of Canada's Cerulean Warbler population (about 500 pairs) breeds in two areas: the Frontenac Arch in eastern Ontario, which supports the bulk of the species' population (300 pairs), and the Carolinian Region in southwestern Ontario. The species' persistence in the Frontenac Arch is perhaps not surprising. This is the only area in Ontario where extensive tracts of mature deciduous forest – upon which the Cerulean Warbler depends – remain. A large part of the area is protected by two landowners: Ontario Parks and Queen's University. However, in the Carolinian Region, which supports a smaller but significant population (roughly 80 pairs), there is little mature forest left, and what remains is highly fragmented and threatened. Fortunately, there are many private and public landowners in the area who are interested in conserving habitat for species at risk.

With funding from the NMBCA over the next two years, Bird Studies Canada will work directly with local landowners to identify and reduce threats to the Cerulean Warbler, and to conserve or enhance habitat for this species and other mature forest-dependent species at risk. Bird Studies Canada will also work with partners, including local land trusts, to identify additional ways to maintain and enhance mature forest throughout the area.

The Cerulean Warbler project is part of Bird Studies Canada's **Forest Birds at Risk program**. Other program supporters include the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

Tag: **Ontario Species at Risk**

Monarch Butterflies at Heightened Risk

December 2016

At its recent fall meeting, COSEWIC also reassessed the status of the Monarch Butterfly in Canada. The risk category of this species was elevated from Special Concern to Endangered. Jon McCracken, Bird Studies Canada's National Director and the co-chair of COSEWIC's Birds Subcommittee, notes: "Numbers of this migratory species have been counted daily every fall at Bird Studies Canada's Long Point Bird Observatory field stations since 1995, providing one of the world's longest-running databases. Results from the Long Point analyses were used in the latest status assessment." McCracken said, "It's hard to think of a more iconic migratory species than the Monarch Butterfly, and even harder to think that its situation in Canada is growing more dire."

Bird Studies Canada

Giving Shorebirds More "Space to Roost" in Nova Scotia's Minas Basin

By Jaya Fahey, Shorebird Stewardship Biologist, Bird Studies Canada



Photo: Jaya Fahey

In late summer, hundreds of thousands of shorebirds stop-over in the Bay of Fundy's Minas Basin, in Nova Scotia, during their remarkable migration to South America. They require access to beaches and other coastal sites where they can rest when mudflat foraging habitat is covered during high tide. The Minas Basin is such a critical area for migratory shorebirds, it has been designated an **Important Bird and Biodiversity Area** and a **Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network site**.

The Space to Roost project is led by Bird Studies Canada in collaboration with Dalhousie University, Blomidon Naturalists Society, and provincial and federal partners. The project aims to reduce human pressures on shorebirds in the Minas Basin by assessing human-use patterns at roost sites, and working with coastal users to develop and test effective disturbance reduction strategies.

In 2016, we conducted 41 audits at four known shorebird resting sites in the Minas Basin: Evangeline Beach, Avonport Beach, Blue Beach, and 'The Guzzle' (the channel between Boot Island and the mainland). We noted numbers and types of coastal users, numbers and locations of shorebirds, and all disturbance events. Overall, the majority of disturbances to shorebird flocks were caused by recreational activities, particularly walkers. Concurrently, we conducted 60 interviews with recreational users, including striped bass anglers,

swimmers, walkers, photographers, and dog walkers, to get a sense of the type of user at each site and their knowledge of shorebirds. Of the 60 interviewed, 48 indicated they were interested in learning more, and 17 said they would be interested in helping with the project.

With input from our partners, we decided to focus on The Guzzle and Avonport Beach in year two, as both sites had large flock sizes, a high number of disturbances, beach area that was under-used by humans and could be set aside for roosting flocks, and engaged local recreational users.

In the spring of 2017, we reached out to the interviewees from 2016 who had indicated an interest in the project, and also conducted an online survey of striped bass anglers who fish at The Guzzle. We wanted to know whether these users would be open to setting aside a stretch of beach at each site, from two hours before to two hours after high tide, in August. The majority agreed that this would not be a problem.

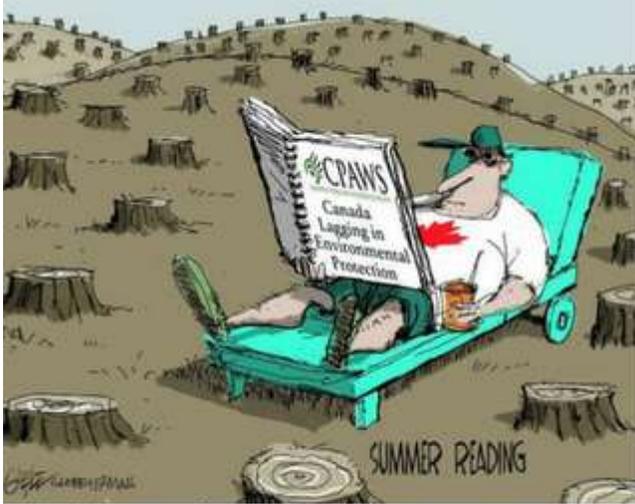
During the last week of July, we distributed handouts to local businesses with details about the project, tips for sharing the beach with roosting shorebirds, and a tide chart to indicate when roosting shorebirds would be present. On August 1, we installed access point signs at both beaches, which describe the project and encourage readers to take an attached handout in French or English. We also installed signs at either end of the beach areas we hope users will avoid from two hours before to two hours after high tide.

Thus far, the signs and handouts have been enthusiastically received, with overwhelmingly positive feedback for the project. We're hoping that this enthusiasm and engagement results in a decrease in disturbance events this year!

Parks News

Why is Canada falling behind the rest of the world?

CPAWS (Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society) is in the news again!



*Editorial cartoon by Brian Gables
of the Globe and Mail*

On Monday, we released our annual parks report, *From Laggard to Leader? Canada's renewed focus on protecting nature could deliver results.* This year's report focuses on how Canada is lagging behind other countries on our commitment to protect at least 17% of our land and freshwater by 2020. At only 10.6% protected, compared to a global average of 15%, Canada has fallen behind all G7 countries, as well as other large countries such as Brazil, China, and Australia.

Beyond 2020, we've got more work to do. There is a growing scientific consensus that we need to protect half of our landscapes in order to safeguard healthy, functioning ecosystems and ensure both nature and people can thrive - forever.

CPAWS chapters across the country are already working on protecting many special areas that could provide Canada with the opportunity to make quick progress on its targets. However, Canada can't reach its goals without your help. **We all need to step up** by working closely with Indigenous peoples on protecting more lands and waters, encouraging governments to legally designate protected areas they have already promised, and encourage them to protect more.

Yours in conservation,



Alison Ronson

National Director, Parks Program

Web Site: <http://cpaws.org/uploads/CPAWS-Parks-Report-2017.pdf>

Help Us Protect More Nature in Ontario

Ontario Nature has partnered with renowned singer-songwriter, Jack Johnson, on his 2017 summer tour to urge the government to create more protected areas in Ontario. He will match every dollar you give for the next 30 days- up to a total of \$3,000! Six years ago our government promised to protect 17% of our land and inland waters by 2020. Today, we're only at 11% of that goal. We hope you'll take advantage of this exciting chance right now to have your gift go twice as far for Protected Areas.



Contact Seann Kim at 1-800-440-2366 ext.233 or seannk@ontarionature.org for more information.

International Wildlife Issues

Single-use, disposable straws: Danger for Wildlife



McDonald's: End the Use of Plastic Straws

By: [Aaron V](#)

The viral video is heartbreaking. Researchers in Costa Rica struggle to remove an obstruction from the nasal passage of a sea turtle. **During the cringe-inducing effort, they realize they are battling a single-use, disposable straw.**

These single-use conveniences are trashing the planet. There's not a beach around the globe that is free of this pollution. Our creeks, rivers, lakes and oceans are all fouled. Wildlife, such as the sea turtle, can confuse straws for food and cause themselves great harm.

A post-mortem just completed on a Cuvier's beaked whale that was found dead on a Scottish beach determined the animal was killed by plastic pollution.

The petroleum-based, polypropylene straw is an environmental nightmare, and it's time we WAKE UP. **The United States alone uses over 500 million straws EVERY DAY. Stretched end to end, they could circle the globe 2 & 1/2 times.**

Let's join together to end the use of plastic straws. Urge McDonald's, and its 14K U.S. locations, to stop using straws and start saving wildlife.

Web Site: <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/669/846/505/?z00m=29334841&redirectID=2455675023>

Climate Change News – International

Killer heatwaves set for dramatic rise, researchers warn

[INTEL](#) | Mon Jun 19, 2017 | 11:03am EDT

By [Manipadma Jena](#)

BHUBANESWAR, India (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - Nearly one in three people around the world is already exposed to deadly heatwaves, and that will rise to nearly half of people by 2100 even if the world moves aggressively to cut climate-changing emissions, scientists warned Monday.

If emissions continue to rise at their current pace, however, three in four people in the world will face deadly heat by the turn of the century, a study published in the journal Nature Climate Change said.

“People are talking about the future when it comes to climate change, but what we found from this paper is that this is already happening ... and this is obviously going to get a lot worse,” said Camilo Mora, lead author of the study and a geography professor at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Advertising

By 2100, for instance, New York is likely to experience around 50 days a year with combined temperature and humidity exceeding the threshold in which people have previously died, researchers said.

In already hot southern U.S. cities such as Orlando and Houston, deadly heatwaves could last nearly the entire summer period, the study found.

But the most serious risks will be in tropical areas, where temperatures are already closer to the danger threshold and where heat can last more of the year, rather than just during the summer, researchers said.

“Warming at the poles has been one of the iconic climatic changes. Our study shows, however, that it is warming in the tropics what will pose the greatest risk,” said Iain Caldwell, a co-author of the report and a researcher at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

With temperatures already high, “it takes very little warming for conditions to turn deadly in the tropics,” he said in a statement.

More Heatstroke, Less Work

In steamy Bhubaneswar, for instance, in eastern India’s Odisha state, gardener Basudev Singh is bathed in sweat after two hours of early morning weeding, despite the temperature gauge showing 35 degrees Celsius (95 degrees Fahrenheit) – usually considered a bearable temperature in this part of India.

The problem is that the relative humidity is 82 percent, meaning the “real feel” of conditions is above 44 degrees Celsius (111 degrees Fahrenheit), experts say – and it’s not yet even noon. Monsoon showers, which would normally cool the city, are past due.

The 27-year-old laborer said that over the last two and a half summer months he has lost close to half his average earnings because it has become impossible to work outside in searing heat.

Jitendra Murmu, another daily-wage worker, said efforts to move work to cooler parts of the day were becoming less effective.

“Over summer we even rescheduled our work timing because no work for three months means no food for our children,” he said. “By early April we would rush to work at 5:30 a.m. when day broke, return home at 10:30 a.m. and resume at 3 in the afternoon, until sunset.”

“But work itself is less available. Employers and construction contractors are themselves taking it slow due the heat,” he said.

Mami Patra, the owner of a small medicine shop in central Bhubaneswar, said she has seen demand for heatstroke treatments surging.

“Every single day, all this summer, we get at least seven people who come to us complaining of exhaustion and asking for glucose powder packets,” she said.

City doctors said the number of patients turning up with dizziness, confusion and vomiting – symptoms of heat exhaustion, a precursor to deadly heatstroke – is increasing, with patients 50 to 70 years old seemingly most affected.

Mora, the author of the University of Hawaii study, noted that the impacts of rising heat will extend far beyond simply a higher death toll, to things like “people having to take longer breaks to withstand the heat and compensate for it by working longer hours”.

The already substantial heat death rate “also points out the limitation of many of these governments to afford the cost of adaptation,” he said in an interview with the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Bad or Terrible?

The University of Hawaii study looked at nearly 2,000 deadly heatwave events since 1980, and focused in on more than 780 cases with particularly good data, gathered from 164 cities – from London to Sydney to Sao Paulo – spread across 36 countries.

Those included events such as a European heatwave in 2003 linked to 70,000 deaths, a 2010 Moscow heatwave that killed about 10,000 people and a 1995 Chicago heatwave that claimed 700.

The study identified consistent threshold levels of combined heat and humidity that triggered deaths, and used those to project future deadly heatwaves as world temperatures continue to rise as a result of climate change.

The area of the world where such a thresholds are crossed for 20 or more days a year has been increasing, and is projected to grow, even with dramatic cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, the researchers said.

“The scary thing is how common those deadly conditions are already,” said Farrah Powell, a graduate student and one of the co-authors of the study, in a statement.

When heat and humidity exceed a person’s core body temperature – about 37 degrees Celsius, or 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit – they person cannot dissipate heat into the environment, researchers said.

High humidity makes efforts so sweat out heat less effective, which can lead to a lethal build-up of body heat that can damage major organs, muscles and the brain.

“Climate change has put humanity on a dangerous path that will become increasingly dangerous and difficult to reverse if greenhouse gas emissions are not taken much more seriously,” Mora said.

“We are running out of good choices for the future,” he warned. “For heatwaves, our options are now between bad or terrible.”

(Reporting by Manipadma Jena @ManipadmaJena,; editing by Laurie Goering ;; Please credit the Thomson Reuters Foundation, the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers humanitarian news, climate change, resilience, women's rights, trafficking and property rights. Visit news.trust.org/climate)

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Trump disbands federal advisory panel on climate change: report

BY JULIA MANCHESTER - 08/20/17 01:17 PM EDT

The Hill, Washington, U.S.A.



© Getty Images

The Trump administration will push ahead with disbanding a federal advisory panel that reported on climate change, The Washington Post reported Sunday.

The move follows the leak of a draft of a major climate change report warning of rising temperatures.

The panel — the Advisory Committee for the Sustained National Climate Assessment — is a 15-member panel made up of academics, corporate employees and local officials charged with simplifying findings from the National Climate Assessment for those inside and outside of the federal government.

The group worked on the National Climate Assessment, the mandated quadrennial report that was leaked last month as a draft. The report is due to be released in 2018, but The New York Times reported that scientists working on it worried the Trump administration would try to bury some or all of its conclusions and may have leaked it for that reason.

The report concludes that Americans are already feeling the effects of climate change and says it is “extremely likely” that the majority of global temperature increases in the past 60 years are partially due to human influence.

The White House is in the process of reviewing a final version of the assessment.

A spokeswoman for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which announced the panel would not be renewed, told the publication “this action does not impact the completion of the Fourth National Climate Assessment, which remains a key priority.”

The news comes as the Trump administration continues to face backlash for its policies on climate change, which many have labeled as skeptical.

Trump, who has favored nonrenewable energy industries such as coal, announced in June the U.S. would be leaving the Paris climate accord.

- Timothy Cama and Brandon Carter contributed to this report.

Environmental News

Nigel Raine U of Guelph – Neonics research 2017

Why should we care about conserving pollinators? Roughly 1 in 3 mouthfuls of food we eat are dependent on the unmanaged pollination services of bees alone (hence the catchy name of this site). Most fruits, vegetables and nuts require at least some degree of animal pollination, so continued declines in pollinator abundance and diversity might lead to a less varied and nutritionally balanced diet. Economic values of pollination services to global agriculture (currently estimated at US\$235–577 billion) continue to increase as demand for both the quantity and diversity of food continues to rise. Almost 90% of flowering plant species worldwide rely on animal-vector pollination, making pollinators an essential part of natural ecosystem function and wider cultural values. Reports surrounding global pollinator declines raise concerning issues of reduced agricultural productivity (due to pollination deficits) and reduced biodiversity and sustainability in natural ecosystems. In short, pollinators are beautiful, fascinating, diverse and essential creatures that we cannot afford to lose.

Nigel and members of the Raine Lab study the behaviour and ecology of pollinators, and the impacts of environmental stressors (e.g. pesticide exposure) on pollinator health. In their research the team aim to address fundamentally important scientific questions, that also have direct real-world benefits for pollinator conservation and sustainable agriculture. Engaging the relevant stakeholder groups, and communicating and translating research

results in a useful and understandable way to the most appropriate audiences are critical parts of the Raine Lab mission.

University of Guelph Website Post – 2017-08

THE W. GARFIELD WESTON FOUNDATION



Insect Pollinator Decline – Key academic paper Summary

- **First published:** 12 October 2012
- **DOI:** 10.1111/j.1752-4598.2012.00221.x **Cited by (CrossRef):**

*Correspondence: Lynn V. Dicks, Conservation Science Group, Department of Zoology, University of Cambridge, Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3EJ, UK.

The research on insect pollinator decline is a complex multifaceted research engagement. By way of demonstrating the complexity of research methods and the breadth of the kind of information being considered in major studies of this kind Lynn V. Dicks of the Conservation Science Group describes key information sources below.

Abstract

1. In response to evidence of insect pollinator declines, organisations in many sectors, including the food and farming industry, are investing in pollinator conservation. They are keen to ensure that their efforts use the best available science.
2. We convened a group of 32 ‘conservation practitioners’ with an active interest in pollinators and 16 insect pollinator scientists. The conservation practitioners include representatives from UK industry (including retail), environmental non-government organisations and nature conservation agencies.
3. We collaboratively developed a long list of 246 knowledge needs relating to conservation of wild insect pollinators in the UK. We refined and selected the most important knowledge needs, through a three-stage process of voting and scoring, including discussions of each need at a workshop.
4. We present the top 35 knowledge needs as scored by conservation practitioners or scientists. We find general agreement in priorities identified by these two groups. The priority knowledge needs will structure ongoing work to make science accessible to practitioners, and help to guide future science policy and funding.
5. Understanding the economic benefits of crop pollination, basic pollinator ecology and impacts of pesticides on wild pollinators emerge strongly as priorities, as well as a need to monitor floral resources in the landscape.

Judge orders a hearing of environmental groups' pesticide case

Summer 2017

TORONTO - A Federal Court judge has ruled that a case to protect pollinators from neonicotinoid pesticides must be heard before the courts.

Ecojustice lawyers on behalf of their clients at Ontario Nature, Wilderness Committee, David Suzuki Foundation and Friends of the Earth Canada successfully fended off four motions to dismiss their case about the Pest Management Regulatory Agency's (PMRA) continued registrations of neonicotinoid (neonic) pesticides without the scientific information necessary to determine the pesticides' risks to pollinators.

In her decision, Federal Court Case Management Judge Mandy Aylen, said that the case raises issues that must be heard. In rejecting arguments from the federal government and three pesticide companies she noted that ongoing PMRA science reviews "will not address the lawfulness of the PMRA's conduct" and that "there may be a public interest in the Court's consideration of whether the PMRA has acted in an unlawful manner," regardless of how those reviews play out.

"We're happy that CMJ Aylen so quickly concluded that our clients' challenge to the PMRA's lax practice warrants a full hearing, and that she completely disagreed that there is a fatal flaw in the case," said Julia Croome, Ecojustice lawyer. "We'll be working as quickly as possible to have our arguments heard in full because these are important issues that need to be determined by the court," Croome said.

"Neonicotinoid pesticides have been repeatedly approved for use in Canada without properly considering the science, and the effects neonics have on pollinators, for too long," said Eric Reder, Manitoba Campaign Director of Wilderness Committee.

Ecojustice lawyers Julia Croome and Charles Hatt presented their arguments against nine lawyers representing the Attorney General of Canada and Federal Health Minister, as well as pesticide companies Bayer CropScience, Sumitomo Chemical Company / Valent Canada and Syngenta Canada. They argued that the case could set an important precedent about the regulation of pesticides in Canada and deserves to be heard.

"We've had to fight this move by the federal government and pesticide industry to kill our case but now we've won our day in court. We must ensure that lax regulation of pesticides — as we've seen with neonics over the last decade — never happens again," said Beatrice Olivastri, CEO of Friends of the Earth Canada.

"Neonicotinoids impair bees' resistance to disease as well as their ability to forage and reproduce. With the emerging science, it is concerning that neonics are still approved for widespread use in Canada," said Dr. Anne Bell, Ontario Nature.

Prior to the hearing, two significant scientific studies were released, detailing the effects of neonics on pollinators. The **world's largest study on neonics**, published in Science journal showed widespread evidence of population decline and shortened lifespans in domesticated and wild bees populations exposed to neonics. A separate **study** conducted in Canada discovered that prolonged exposure to neonicotinoids affects honey-bee health in corn-growing regions. In the same week, the science continued to **mount** — a new study cropped up showing that

neonicotinoids might be responsible for a severe decline in B.C. hummingbirds.

“It’s our intention to make sure that the Pest Management Regulatory Agency upholds its legal responsibilities as a regulator. There cannot be a sound decision without sound science,” Croome said.

About:

Neonics are synthetic chemical insecticides that are intended to control crop-destroying pests. They pose threats to non-target organisms like native bees, which are responsible for pollinating one third of the world’s crops and 90 per cent of all wild plants.

The federal *Pest Control Products Act* requires the PMRA to be certain that a pesticide will cause no harm to the environment before permitting its use. More than a decade ago, the PMRA granted “conditional” registrations for two neonicotinoid pesticides, delaying its review of important scientific information on the pesticides’ risks to pollinators.

The PMRA is still waiting on studies that are sufficient to justify “full” registration of the pesticides.

Media inquiries

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