



# NEWSLETTER **COVID-19 edition #7**

## SOUTH LAKE SIMCOE NATURALISTS

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

Telephone 905-722-8021

([www.slsnc.ca](http://www.slsnc.ca))

*Research Partner with The Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe ([www.zephyrsociety.ca](http://www.zephyrsociety.ca))*

*Member: Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition*

*Member: Ontario Greenbelt Alliance*

Well, here we are back into lockdown and Stay at Home Orders! I had been watching developments in Ontario in the pandemic following our soft lockdown on Boxing Day and through the Christmas Holidays into the New Year (the Second Wave). We decided early organizing the **Annual Sutton Christmas Bird Count** that we could not in all conscious coordinate the count formally with a **Stay-at-Home Emergency Order** starting on the very day of the planned count. Ontarians were directed not to leave their regional health unit areas, and our count does have several annual birders from other parts of the province, from Toronto to Barrie and beyond. Local birders and feeder watchers were encouraged to social distance and practice other guidelines and observe and count birds in our local area. So, we included data from local birders who felt safe to bird in the local area, and Feeder Watchers/Property participants who contributed. As it turned out our count numbers were good, though with land and shoreline area coverage significantly less than other years.

It has become apparent in the first quarter of the year that we would not be able to have any in-person meetings. Our Treasurer, Norma, unfortunately broke her ankle in late December and was out of action recuperating at her daughter's place for a number of weeks. As time moved on the executive decided that we could not have our usual annual meeting, **so we all agreed to just carry-on this year under these unprecedented pandemic restrictions**. Thank-you Gord and Norma for our phone conversations.

With the second wave winding down and some restrictions relaxed in the province and York region into March it looked like we might be able to have some winter outings, but as the month ended the infections of COVID-19 started to take off again in Toronto, Peel and later

here in York Region. March school break was postponed until April and as that month progressed infections across the province surged up to almost 4,000 cases a day. Provincial and federal modelling was showing a potential for up to 10,000 cases a day! **Current Emergency Orders have been extended into June.** So, staying at home is where we are now still.

**It is great to see the extent and depth of member naturalists' safe activity and photographic documentation in this newsletter again, definitely a silver lining of the pandemic.**

As the race between vaccines and the COVID variants continues, in the interest of positive and hopeful results ahead at least in Ontario, we are tentatively planning an **outdoor meeting/nature outing for the end of June, Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at the Brown Hill Park**, where we met last September. We will be monitoring public health notices and will confirm as we approach the date.

As was advised in our previous winter newsletter there were many conservation related issues on the go of interest to members ranging from **M.Z.O.'s** to **new Highway projects** through to **Greenbelt review and consultation**. Many members contributed input and action alerts response and other contributions to these causes. The Greenbelt process of **"Growing the Greenbelt"** prompted many to contribute. SLSN supported Ontario Nature's comprehensive response which Norma and I have been following. Research partner **The Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe** submitted consultation expertise to a number of Greenbelt improvements, particularly our organizations original initiative of **"Shrinking the Pefferlaw Secondary Plan to Grow the Greenbelt"** and the **Urban River Valley designation for the three major rivers in Georgina**, both initiatives we have initiated and advanced for many years.

Paul Harpley

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## **SLSN Membership Renewals**

NORMA KNOWLTON  
418 BOUCHIER STREET  
KESWICK, ONTARIO  
L4P 3C8

Phone 905-476-4747

Membership year starts on October 1. Dues have not changed since last year:  
Single \$25.00, Family \$30.00

Norma

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## Media Programs – Zoom Meetings, Webinars etc.

Some members have been interested in spending some screen time on their computer. Various high-quality programming is now readily available after the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic and continuing of much better quality and technical merit than we in our organization could produce. These programs include You-Tube, Zoom meetings, Webinars and related digital platforms programming. Below are some recommended Links, of many that members could search themselves, to partake in below. Enjoy!

### *Upcoming webinar series: Love Muskoka - Sustain Muskoka*

**More information:** <http://realmuskoka.com/sustainability/>

**Thursdays @ 5:00pm from April 22 to May 27** (virtual) - The Muskoka Steamships & Discovery Centre and regional partner organizations are hosting a digital webinar series on sustainability with a roster of great speakers and important topics of interest to viewers in Muskoka, and beyond:

**May 13** - Climate change impacts for Muskoka with Dr. Peter Sale & Dr. Richard Lammers

**May 20** - Indigenous Perspective: reconnecting with the natural world

**May 27** - The future of our lakes despite climate change with Dr. Norman Yan



Click the image at the side to download the series poster (PDF, 1 page). Register for one session, or all six, here: <http://realmuskoka.com/sustainability/>

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## Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas Launch: Introduction to the Bird Atlas

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryWYHaVtm54&list=PLzDy2aLeCD3jKYKGjuEO-SQAYa47S4vIO&index=6>

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## Turtles are on the move!

Our member groups have started reporting seeing turtles on the move already, which means it's time for a refresher on what to do if you encounter a turtle crossing the road or digging in gravel at the road's edge.

Here's some help:

- [click to watch a video about how to move a turtle safely](#), and
  - [download an infographic](#) from the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre with lots of important tips for turtle encounters.
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# explore

## May Birding & Bison

It's been a fun week to travel the world with you! We watched an eaglet banding, met new kittens, saw the return of some old friends, and watched the season unfold in anticipation of summer views.

Click through the individual snapshots to visit each gallery, and if you are the photographer, make sure to email us at [feedback@explore.org](mailto:feedback@explore.org) to claim your Fan Cam Friday prize! Be sure to mention which was your winning snapshot.

Never Stop Learning,

Your extended family at [explore.org](http://explore.org)

Institute for Wildlife Studies paid a visit to the [Sauces Bald Eagle Nest](#) this week to band Jak and Audacity's sole offspring of the season!



A balancing act. The Chesapeake Osprey nest is looking solid. Read the latest news about this nesting pair on the [Chesapeake Conservancy blog](#).

In other exciting news, [Gorilla Cam](#) is back online. If you missed your friends, head over to capture some new snaps of this must-favorite cam.



Molting bison make for an entertaining view on the [Bison Watering Hole Cam](#). If you missed last week's live talk on bison conservation, watch the recap on our [YouTube channel](#).

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## The Explorers Club: The Blue Planet, World Water Day Special U.N.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5oRG8YV6RA&ab\\_channel=TheExplorersClub](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5oRG8YV6RA&ab_channel=TheExplorersClub)

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## Facebook Zoom etc. Meetings Advisory

### The Conversation

### Zoom fatigue and distracted driving share a common problem: Multitasking

April 19, 2021 3.05pm EDT

Author

1. [Francesco Biondi](#)

Assistant Professor, Human Kinetics, University of Windsor

Feeling exhausted at the end of a long day of video-conferencing? Do your back, shoulders and mind ache after a Zoom meeting marathon? Do you miss the morning chit chat at the office's water fountain and the face-to-face interaction with your favourite colleague?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, believe me, you're one of millions suffering from [Zoom fatigue](#), named after the popular video-conferencing app.

Recent figures in fact indicate that four in 10 remote workers report suffering from a sense of physical and mental exhaustion that accompanies the prolonged screen engagement and the lack of face-to-face interaction during the workday.

More Information: [https://theconversation.com/zoom-fatigue-and-distracted-driving-share-a-common-problem-multitasking-158701?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20Canada%20for%20April%202020%202021&utm\\_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20Canada%20for%20April%2020202021+CID\\_b7472e6cfcaa2184bc41570bd04ba44b&utm\\_source=campaign\\_monitor\\_ca&utm\\_term=Zoom%20fatigue%20and%20distracted%20driving%20share%20a%20common%20problem%20Multitasking](https://theconversation.com/zoom-fatigue-and-distracted-driving-share-a-common-problem-multitasking-158701?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20Canada%20for%20April%202020%202021&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20Canada%20for%20April%2020202021+CID_b7472e6cfcaa2184bc41570bd04ba44b&utm_source=campaign_monitor_ca&utm_term=Zoom%20fatigue%20and%20distracted%20driving%20share%20a%20common%20problem%20Multitasking)

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## Virtual Zoom Meetings Advisory Information - Newmarket

2021-03-11

**York Media**

### Spammers use Newmarket Facebook town hall meeting on Mulock Farm to ask residents for credit card information

'Spam posts were being sent on three different Facebook accounts at a very fast rate,' mayor says

Lisa Queen

Newmarket Era

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Spammers disrupted an online community town hall meeting held the evening of March 9 for Newmarket residents to learn about ambitious plans for Mulock Farm.

More Information: [https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/10348525-spammers-use-newmarket-facebook-town-hall-meeting-on-mulock-farm-to-ask-residents-for-credit-card-information/?s=n1?source=newsletter&utm\\_content=a04&utm\\_source=ml\\_nl&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm\\_campaign=yrha\\_94749](https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/10348525-spammers-use-newmarket-facebook-town-hall-meeting-on-mulock-farm-to-ask-residents-for-credit-card-information/?s=n1?source=newsletter&utm_content=a04&utm_source=ml_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=yrha_94749)

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## Environmental Issues

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## ***We stopped Highway 413. Let's protect Algonquin next***

You did it!

Last month we sounded the alarm on the unsavoury Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass proposals. Over 2,400 of you sent in letters asking for an environmental assessment.

On Monday, the federal government said yes. The federal minister has designated Highway 413 for a federal environmental assessment review.

This monumental achievement would not have been possible without all of **YOU. Thank you.**

Now, we need you to do it again.

This time, we are stopping logging in Algonquin.

Scientists around the world are calling for 50% of ecosystems to be protected. The ecoregion for Algonquin is currently at only 11-17% protected. Algonquin stores large amounts of carbon and is home to more than 16 species at risk.

But logging still continues in Algonquin. We know that a further 100,000 ha of Algonquin could be protected with the stroke of a pen-without impacting wood supply. And of immediate concern is 24,000 hectares of old growth in the park.

COVID-19 and the overwhelming demand for outdoor recreation space makes protecting Algonquin more important than ever.

Ask Premier Ford to #stoplogginmypark. [Send a letter.](#)



More Information - Take Action: <https://wildlandsleague.org/project/algonquin-park/>

Thank you,

**Dave Pearce**  
Forest Conservation Manager

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## CPAWS

### Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society

The pandemic has taken a toll on all Canadians, with many of us relying on time spent in nature to get us through. Tweet at the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance to ask that they invest in the natural spaces and wildlife that Canadians depend on in the 2021 federal budget.

**Speak up for nature!**

**More Information - Take Action:** <https://action.cpaws.org/page/78189/tweet/1>

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## Ontario Nature – Grow the Greenbelt Stop Sprawl and Grow the Greenbelt Campaign

Across the Greater Golden Horseshoe developers and land speculators are lobbying local governments to allow sprawl-style development on precious natural areas and farmland. They're using COVID-19 as a smoke screen saying these developments are necessary to get us through the crisis. And they're convincing the provincial and some local governments to use an emergency-only tool, Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs), to sidestep public input and environmental protection. They've also persuaded the Province to strip Conservation Authorities of the power to stand up for nature and oppose irresponsible development projects.

**We need to stop this assault on our natural heritage.**

Local governments must focus on protecting the natural spaces, farmland and precious water sources that we all depend on. They need to hear from you, and thousands of others across the Greater Golden Horseshoe, that you want a **COVID-19 Recovery Plan that stops sprawl and grows the Greenbelt.**

Tell your Councillors and Mayor to:

- Resist the use of MZOs, which bypass environmental protections, silence community input and pave the way for sprawling development.
- Support proposals to grow the Greenbelt and protect more farmland, natural areas and freshwater sources.

This campaign is a collaborative effort of over 100 groups across Ontario working together through the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance (OGA). This action page is hosted by Ontario Nature, a member of the OGA. To learn more, please visit [greenbeltalliance.ca](http://greenbeltalliance.ca)

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## European Gypsy Moth Infestation

### Paul Harpley SLSN, article and photographs

The European gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar dispar*) is an invasive insect that has become naturalized throughout southern Ontario, including South Lake Simcoe. It comes from Europe and was first confirmed in the province in the late 1960's.

The moth larvae feed on hardwood trees like maple, oak, birch and elm. Egg sacks are the first evidence of them on your property, being easy to see on tree trunks in the winter. On our property we (Debra and I) found the egg sacks on most all tree species, even commonly on Eastern White cedar trees, as in two of the photographs accompanying this article.

Over the winter we scrapped off the egg sacks from trees using a hunting knife or stick. It is recommended wearing gloves and having a bag to collect them, then soaking them in soapy water later for a few days, to destroy them before putting in the garbage. We visually found over 200 egg masses in roughly 5 areas of forest. We were casually finding them while skiing/walking. Even now egg masses are still apparent in May. So, if you look on the trees on your property you still have time to collect the eggs before they hatch into the destructive caterpillars.



Gypsy moth egg sack on cedar tree. P/H

The caterpillars eat the leaves from a range of tree species such as oak, birch and maple, causing the trees to lose some of their leaves. The canopy of forest areas can be broken depending on the severity of the infestation. Sometimes foliage can recover in the season, sometimes not, from our past experience. Last year we had egg masses on Butternut trees that we purged of egg masses/caterpillars in May and June. About 15% of the foliage was affected. All signs and reports by others University researchers, conservation authorities and others that suggest this year will have a much higher infestation in our area.



The eggs in the egg masses are able to survive in our winter forest habitats through cold, windy and harsh weather. P/H

Pupae from caterpillars to the emerging moths last year on a maple tree, photographed this spring. P/H



Broken egg mass and eggs in spring in lab

P/H

The moth caterpillars are dark and hairy in appearance and not very large. They are distinguished by having a row of blue and red spots along their back. The caterpillars on the trunks and branches of trees can be trapped by wrapping cloth or burlap around the tree trunk. Think of it as giving the tree a skirt. If the fabric is 3' wide, tie with string at the 1.5' mark and let the fabric fold in half, opening towards the ground. As the caterpillars come down the trees in hot summer days to cooler shaded forest, they pass the cloth or burlap but later in the day get trapped as they climb, and that is when you can collect them.

It should be noted that **it is important for everyone to find and purge trees of this invasive species wherever possible, especially on private lands if we are to protect our forests.** Municipalities, Regions and the province are undertaking various control measures on public lands.

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## York Region Forest News

This email is to advise you that the Region's Hazard Tree Removal contractor will be undertaking work in the Bendor and Graves, Clarke, Dainty, Drysdale Woods, Eldred King, Hall, Happy Valley, Mitchell, Nobleton, Patterson, Peggy's Woods, Porritt, Scout and Zephyr Tracts ; as well as the Hollidge and North Tracts parking lots; beginning on Monday March 15, 2021. Work will take place in only one or two tracts at a time, with signage placed at the main entrance. The operation is expected to last up to eight weeks.

This email is to advise you that the Region's will be completing some site work at the Hollidge Tract next week. The operation should be completed by Friday depending on Weather. The work will consist of installing a bench on the accessible trail overlooking the stream, patch the accessible trail and washouts, and a small amount of landscaping around the building.

For the safety of the public and workers please keep clear of the operation. Please feel free to forward this email to other forest users. If you have any questions regarding this operation please contact Matthew Currie at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75249.

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From May to June, some trails in the Hall Tract, located at 15681 McCowan Road in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, may experience intermittent water flow or be temporarily closed because of water overflow from a nearby groundwater pump test. This pump test is a part of construction on a new groundwater test well in Ballantrae. Test water is being discharged to a Storm Water Management Pond at the end of Ballantrae Road. Outflow from the pond will follow a water discharge course that crosses through the south end of Hall Tract. Water flow may make short trail sections that cross the discharge course impassable or unsafe to use. Signage will be placed at the entrance to Hall Tract and at any affected trails and/or forest areas. Trail conditions will be monitored. Forest visitors are advised to exercise caution, follow trail signage and not to enter trails or forest areas marked as closed. Please feel free to forward this email to other forest users.

If you have any questions, please view the [Notice of Construction – Ballantrae Groundwater Wells](#) or contact myself or Erin Wilson, Program Manager at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 76052.

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The Region's trail mowing contractor will be undertaking work in all forest tracts beginning on Monday May 17, 2021. The operation is expected to last up to five weeks. The contractor will be in one forest tract at a time with signage placed at the parking lot / main entrance.

For the safety of the public and workers please keep clear of the operation. Please feel free to forward this email to other forest users. If you have any questions regarding this operation please contact me at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75249.

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**New Scientific Publication – Veery in South Lake Simcoe.**  
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The CANADIAN  
FIELD-NATURALIST  
A JOURNAL OF FIELD BIOLOGY AND ECOLOGY

**Vol. 134 No. 4 (2020)**

- **Connor Hawey** University of Guelph
- **Paul Harpley** The Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe
- **Rob Milne** Wilfrid Laurier University

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22621/cfn.v134i4.2239>

**Keywords:** *Catharus fuscescens*, nesting habitat, habitat use, Veery

**Abstract**

Veery (*Catharus fuscescens*) is a breeding migrant thrush that nests throughout much of the temperate forests within Canada. Habitat loss and degradation is thought to be responsible for a steady decline in Veery populations since 1970. We studied habitat characteristics of occupied Veery territories versus unoccupied adjacent areas in southern Ontario during the

2016 breeding season. Occupied territories were characterized as riparian deciduous forests dominated by ash (*Fraxinus* spp.), Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) trees with an understorey of Balsam Fir (*Abies balsamea*) and ferns (order Polypodiales); the presence of fruit-producing plants such as Riverbank Grape (*Vitis riparia*) and Bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis*) also was important.

**Connor Hawey, University of Guelph**

Master of Environmental Sciences Student, School of Environmental Sciences

**Paul Harpley, York University**

Bachelor of Science, Honours, Master of Arts, Geography

**Rob Milne, Wilfrid Laurier University**

Associate Professor, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies

### [Habitat use by Veery \( \*Catharus fuscescens\* \) in southern Ontario](#) [| The Canadian Field-Naturalist](#)

Veery (*Catharus fuscescens*) is a breeding migrant thrush that nests throughout much of the temperate forests within Canada. Habitat loss and degradation is thought to be responsible for a steady decline in Veery populations since 1970. We studied habitat characteristics of occupied Veery territories versus unoccupied adjacent areas in southern Ontario during the 2016 breeding season.

[www.canadianfieldnaturalist.ca](http://www.canadianfieldnaturalist.ca)

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## Members Naturalist Experiences and Documentation

Loes and Hans Pape submitted information and photographic documentation a Bald eagle in late December. Hans' sister lives on North street in Sutton and spotted this enormous Bald Eagle in the top of a tall maple tree beside their house, on the morning of December 27th.

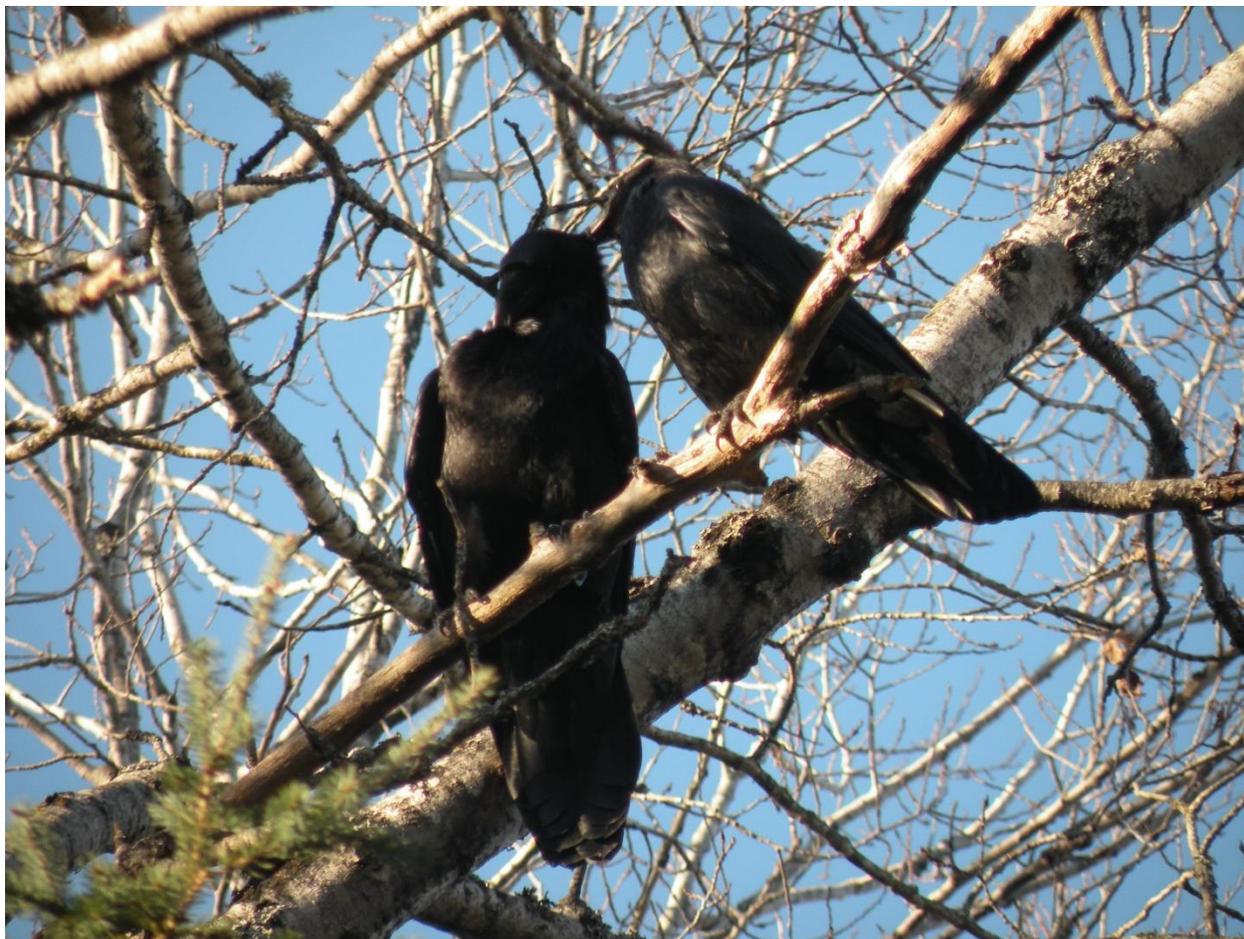
The lake was still open of course and they can be around this time of year, but Loes noted that this is quite a distance from the lake.



Loes and Hans heard several owls last night, possibly Great Gray's and lots of the usual birds at the feeder. It would have made a good count!

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## **Ravens in Georgina, and a photo of two in Algonquin Park**



Ravens we hear as well, but not up close. We did see some close enough for a picture when we were up at Algonquin in the beginning of November. A pair just sitting in a tree, grooming each other.

Loes

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**Jeffrey Boylin, Wild Turkey “Toms” in Georgina this winter.**



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**Jackson's Point Photos, submitted by Heather MacKay, March**



2021-03-09 Heather MacKay and Joe Seara – photos  
Common redpoll



Red-bellied woodpecker



Feeder activity

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## Irving Himel Winter Bird Photos



Black-capped chickadee

**Tree Sparrow**



Irving Himel photo, 2020-12-27, Georgina



Irving Himel, 2020-12-29, Georgina

## Spring Arrivals – Irving Himel notes

**2021-04-14**

This past weekend started as a summer day and moved to 3 days of April drizzle with a damp overhanging pall.

The last of the wintering ducks were still around on the almost empty still waters of Lake Simcoe east.

The laggards were a group of Lesser Scaup near Orchard Beach and flock of Bufflehead at Jackson Pt harbour.

The most populous birds on the lake, stretching from Ravenshoe to Keswick were male & female Common Mergansers far out numbering the Canada Geese.

I welcomed my first Common Loon. On Bruce St. the 2 newly arrived Osprey were building their nests.

### Other newly arrivals

Baltimore oriole

Common Grackle

Red-winged Blackbird

Turkey Vulture

Purple Martin

House Finch ?

Cormorant flying out of a field (black bird with a long red beak) Killdeer still around and seen all winter

Downy Woodpecker

And, an occasional Red-bellied woodpecker, chickadee, Baltimore Oriole, Cardinal, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and fewer White-breasted Nuthatch, Junco, Crow, Blue Jay, Robin.

That's it for now, but missing were the usual Great-blue Heron and Bald eagles.

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# North American Bird and beyond News

## Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas

This is a volunteer bird watching project that has volunteers observing and reporting birds seen in geographic locations across the whole province over the next 5 years. It is organized by the volunteer based N.G.O. Birds Canada, supported by other partners Ontario Nature and O.F.O., including the Province of Ontario M.N.R.F. and Environment & Climate Change Canada.

The goal of the Atlas is to map the distribution and relative abundance of Ontario's approximately 300 species of breeding birds – from as far south as Middle Island in Lake Erie, to Hudson Bay in the north.

The data collected over five years provides essential information for researchers, scientists, government officials and conservation professionals. It will guide environmental policies and conservation strategies for years to come.

Data collection for the two previous Ontario atlases ran from 1981-1985 and 2001-2005, followed by the publication of books summarizing the results. The two previous projects were enormous (and successful!). But we're hoping Atlas-3 will be the best one yet – providing an unprecedented understanding of the status, distribution and abundance of the province's birds and a huge database of information that can be used for bird conservation purposes well into the future.

Although anyone is welcome to participate in the Atlas, higher levels of birding skill will improve your efficiency and the amount you will be able to contribute. You can see further information on the web site for the whole project at [www.birdsontario.org](http://www.birdsontario.org), or by doing a Google search for the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas 2021-2025.

Finding all the species in your square is a lot easier if you can identify birds by their songs, especially because atlassing largely happens in the summer when vegetation is thick, and birds are harder to see. I will be concentrating on locations in our area and am available to provide information and advice to members about this project. And, of course, having that skillset makes you a more efficient birder, allows you to do atlas point counts.

Paul Harpley

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## Cornell Lab of Ornithology – 2021 Great Backyard Bird Count

### Birds Brought the World Together

2021-03-23

#### The 2021 Great Backyard Bird Count - Summary of Data.

#### Congratulations! Look at what we accomplished:

- **6,436** species of birds identified
- **190** participating countries
- **379,726** eBird checklists submitted
- **479,842** Merlin Bird IDs submitted
- **151,393** photo submissions to Macaulay Library
- **+ 300,000** estimated global participants

2021-02-23

### Birds Canada

#### 24<sup>th</sup> Great Backyard Bird Count!

From February 12-15, people around the world counted birds in their area and submitted their observations. More checklists were submitted to the event in Canada than ever before! If you joined in, Thanks for being part of it. We hope you had a great time. Your counts have been added to a database that researchers rely on to help answer important questions about bird populations. Stay tuned for bird highlights in the next edition of our enews. Checklists are still coming in, but you can see early results below

#### Top states or provinces

Updated 70 min ago.

##### Top regions sorted by number of observed species

RANK	REGION	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>CHECKLISTS</u>
1	<u>British Columbia</u>	202	5964
2	<u>Ontario</u>	168	18,714
3	<u>Nova Scotia</u>	156	1804

4 <u>Quebec</u>	140	5314
5 <u>New Brunswick</u>	109	944
6 <u>Alberta</u>	97	2495
<u>Newfoundland and</u>		
7 <u>Labrador</u>	90	316
8 <u>Prince Edward Island</u>	76	252
9 <u>Saskatchewan</u>	66	745
10 <u>Manitoba</u>	65	925
11 <u>Yukon Territory</u>	30	102
12 <u>Northwest Territories</u>	12	9
13 <u>Nunavut</u>	1	

## American Bird Conservancy



### Significant Threats to Birds?

There are many threats to birds, and they are all significant. Birds face a host of threats — habitat loss, predation by outdoor cats, collisions with windows, pesticide poisoning ... the list goes on. Cumulatively, the losses are huge: A recent [study](#) by ABC and others showed that there are 2.9 billion fewer birds in the U.S. and Canada than in 1970 — a nearly 30-percent decline of the total population. Then there's climate change: Another recent [study](#) evaluated the vulnerability of 604 North American bird species to the effects of climate change. Researchers found that 64 percent were vulnerable in some way. To protect birds from the impacts of climate change, we need a rapid, multifaceted approach to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That's where "bird-smart" renewable energy comes in.



## International Bird News

### Locals and Scientists Rediscover the Black-browed Babbler in Borneo After 172 Years

After more than 170 years, locals in Kalimantan, Borneo, Indonesia, have helped rediscover the lost Black-browed Babbler. The bird has been missing since it was first described and collected by scientists around 1848. Since then, the trail to find the Black-browed Babbler has gone cold, despite several attempts to find it, leaving scientists in the dark about its ecology, population, and behavior. Many feared the species might have been extinct. The rediscovery was published in Oriental Bird Club's journal *Birding ASIA* last month.

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2021-02-23

## Owl Observation Tips for Birders and Photographers

Feb 23, 2021 | **FEATURED NEWS STORIES**

**Birds Canada**

<https://www.birdscanada.org/owl-observation-tips-for-birders-and-photographers/>

For many bird lovers in Canada, seeing our first Snowy Owl or Northern Saw-whet Owl is a cherished memory. These powerful chance encounters can even spark an interest in birds and nature that lasts a lifetime! We benefit from these experiences, but, if we're not mindful, the impact on the owls can be negative one.

In Canada, the late fall and winter seasons are prime time to see many owl species that move south from northern forests and the Arctic, as part of an annual migration or because of a lack of food in their traditional summering range. Locations such as coastal green spaces in cities like Vancouver or forested areas on the edges of the Great Lakes can attract congregations of several species depending on food availability and other factors.



### Snowy Owl Photo: Ted Gough

It is during these times that several owl species are sometimes subjected to harmful or even deadly disturbance by people who come to add to their bird list, take photos, or simply have a look at the owl. Constant disturbance uses up valuable energy during the cold winter months and may prevent birds from hunting properly, both of which can be lethal. And some species that roost communally, like the Long-eared Owl, are very sensitive to any disturbances during the winter months. When the presence of people drives them from their roost, these surprisingly dainty owls are made more vulnerable to predators than they would be otherwise, and they suffer the fatal consequences.



### Northern Saw-whet Owl Photo: Judith Blakeley

So how can we still appreciate these amazing birds without causing harm? Here are some guidelines for observing and photographing owls:

- Watch or photograph quietly and from a distance.
- Do not disturb roosting owls.
- Move on after a few minutes. If the bird looks towards you, or its behaviour otherwise seems to change in response to your presence, then you should move farther away.
- Do not bait owls. The owls can become habituated to being fed by people. This disrupts their natural hunting behaviours and draws them to the roadside, which can lead to collisions with vehicles.
- Audio playback should not be used to attract owls.
- Don't use spotlights or flash photography, and do not trim foliage or cut down trees to get a better view of the bird.
- If the owl flies away, do not follow it and do not go off trail to pursue it.
- To avoid drawing a crowd, use discretion when it comes to sharing information about your observation. If you submit it to eBird, review the [guidelines for sensitive species](#). We recommend that you do not mention the specific location of the owl when telling your story.

We thank all of you who show your appreciation for these beautiful and sensitive birds by giving them space when you encounter them. Preventing disturbance to owls is an important way to help their populations survive and thrive in the wild.

*This article was co-written by a team of Birds Canada staff: Ellen Jakubowski, Jody Allair, Kathy Jones, Ruth Friendship-Keller, and Yousif Attia.*

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## SLSN member Barrie Braiden recommended Article

### City of Toronto

## City of Toronto receives Bird-Friendly City certification from Nature Canada

### News Release

May 7, 2021

Today, the City of Toronto was recognized by Nature Canada for its efforts and leadership in urban bird conservation by being awarded a high-level certification as a bird-friendly city.

Along with several other Canadian cities, Toronto is one of the first to receive this certification under a new program developed by Nature Canada, with the endorsement of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

The awards were announced earlier today, on the eve of World Migratory Bird Day, which is Saturday, May 8.

Toronto has a long history of proactive action with the goal of minimizing the impact of development and light on migratory birds.

In 2006, a staff report was adopted by City Council that directed all City facilities to turn the lights off at night during migratory seasons. It also directed City staff to support the work of the Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP), an organization that advocates for the plight of migratory birds. The City has been working with the organization ever since. ...

Read more at, <https://www.toronto.ca/news/city-of-toronto-receives-bird-friendly-city-certification-from-nature-canada/>

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## Issues SLSN is following in our Region

### Ontario Government Changes to planning Policy and Operational Arrangements impact on Conservation.

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2021-04-13

## Ontario Nature

Hello everyone,

In case you haven't heard, Bill 257 with Schedule 3 was passed yesterday. So MZOs no longer have to be consistent with the PPS (except in the Greenbelt).

Here's our press release with Environmental Defence and Ecojustice: <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/ontario-government-passes-bill-257-planning-act-amendments-that-unleash-sprawl-mzos-from-basic-planning-rules-841735252.htm>

Anne

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Anne Bell, Ph.D.

Director of Conservation and Education




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## Ontario Government Passes Bill 257: Planning Act Amendments That Unleash Sprawl MZOs From Basic Planning Rules

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EWS PROVIDED BY

**Ontario Nature**

Apr 13, 2021, 05:00 ET

*Province brushes aside expert warnings about threat to the environment, the rule of law – and the future solvency of municipal governments*

TORONTO, April 13, 2021 /CNW/ - Yesterday, the Government of Ontario used its majority to force passage of Bill 257 – including Schedule 3, which amends the *Planning Act* to give the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing nearly unchecked power to fast-track development on precious farmland and significant natural areas across the province. The revised law exempts Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs) from requirements to be consistent with fundamental land use planning principles and requirements, set out in the *Provincial Policy Statement* (PPS).

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Grey County Farm © Noah Cole (CNW Group/Ontario Nature)

The government has used Bill 257, the *Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion Act, 2021*, as a Trojan horse to stage its attack on environmentally sensitive lands. It has ignored near-unanimous warnings from farm organizations, municipalities, environmental NGOs, legal practitioners, and thousands of other Ontarians about the on-the-ground dangers that the changes pose to the rule of law in Ontario.

"Bill 257's amendments to the Planning Act turn MZOs – tools which are already flagrantly abused – into blunt instruments for sweeping aside any concern that stands in the way of a favoured developer's project. The result will be to expose people to floods and landslides, pave over much of our best remaining farmland, woodland, and wetlands, and burden municipal governments with even more unsustainable neighborhoods that lack enough density to support their own maintenance, operations and services." said Phil Pothen, Ontario Environment Program Manager at Environmental Defence.

"Our farmland and natural areas are now vulnerable to the whims of the Minister," says Caroline Schultz at Ontario Nature. "MZOs jeopardize the many benefits that these places provide, including flood control, local food, clean water, carbon storage, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities and more."

"MZOs are issued without public notice or opportunity for appeal, sidestepping planning rules around public consultation. Now, with the Bill 257 changes, they can no longer be challenged in the courts, regardless of potential adverse environmental, social or economic impacts. This situation is compounded by last December's amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* forcing Conservation Authorities to acquiesce to MZOs even where they know it will expose Ontarians to flooding, landslides or other environmental hazards.

"The Ontario government has introduced Bill 257 to provide legal cover for its unlawful use of MZOs. This bill puts protected wetlands and natural features across Ontario at risk of being destroyed," said Laura Bowman, Ecojustice lawyer. "It is a replay of the strategy the provincial government used to tear up Ontario's climate laws in 2018, and to gut environmental assessment in Bill 197 last year. Break the law, then rewrite the law to try to cure their illegal conduct."

With Bill 257, the government is depriving land use planners, elected councils and other community members of the leverage that they need to insist that developers comply with the PPS. It has undermined the rule of law and procedural fairness that we expect in Ontario.

About ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENCE: Environmental Defence is a leading Canadian environmental advocacy organization that works with government, industry and individuals to defend clean water, a safe climate and healthy communities.

About Ontario Nature: Ontario Nature protects wild species and wild spaces through conservation, education and public engagement. Ontario Nature is a charitable organization representing more than 30,000 members and supporters, and more than 150 member groups across Ontario.

About Ecojustice: Ecojustice uses the power of the law to defend nature, combat climate change, and fight for a healthy environment. Its strategic, public interest lawsuits and advocacy lead to precedent-setting court decisions and law and policy that deliver lasting solutions to Canada's most urgent environmental problems. As Canada's largest environmental law charity, Ecojustice operates offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, and Halifax. SOURCE Ontario Nature

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## Plastic Issue Update – Take Action

**Gord Zwaigenbaum, SLSN member – contributed Plastic issue information.**

**How is plastic waste/ pollution Managed internationally?**

### Canada

What is Canada doing to help plastic pollution?

The proposed approach will put **Canada** on a pathway to achieve zero **plastic** waste by 2030.

"The Government of **Canada** is working hard to address **plastic pollution** and move toward a more circular economy, including by banning certain harmful single-use **plastics**. Nov. 13, 2020

### United States

[The US is one of the world's biggest sources of plastic pollution](https://www.theverge.com/2020/10/30/plastic-waste...)

[https://www.theverge.com › 2020/10/30 › plastic-waste...](https://www.theverge.com/2020/10/30/plastic-waste...)

1.

Oct. 30, 2020 — The **US** produces more **plastic** waste than any other country, and a big chunk of that likely winds up **polluting** oceans and coastlines around the world. Is the government doing anything about plastic pollution?  
Save Our Seas Act (aka “SOS Act”)

There is also an active federal bill in Congress aimed at reducing marine **plastic pollution** and marine debris. The Save Our Seas Act of 2017 (S. 756) will ensure that NOAA can continue its work researching and ultimately preventing trash in our marine environment.

### China

**China**, one of the world's biggest users of **plastic**, has unveiled a major plan to **reduce** single-use **plastics** across the country. Non-degradable bags will be banned in major cities by the **end** of 2020 and in all cities and towns by 2022.

Carry your own utensils or a wooden spork and **avoid** using **plastic** utensils. Review restaurants and cafes and recognize them when they **avoid** straws and **plastic** packaging – and let them know you want them to do better when they don't. Use reusable water bottles, coffee mugs, and bags.

### Russia

Russia's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment recently announced that the largest country in the world is warming at a rate two and a half times faster than the rest of the world (Antonova, 2015). This is due in part to Soviet-era policies which largely ignored environmental concerns to focus on immediate economic benefit during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as a continuing problem with high levels of pollution in the country.

### Mexico

Supermarkets and some stores (mostly of foreign-origin) have begun implementing the use of reusable bags called “Bolsa Verde” or “Green Bag”. These reusable bags could be used to replace thousands of **plastic** bags.

A whopping 123 tonnes of **plastic waste** is produced every day in **Mexico** City, and only 6% of it is recycled. To try and curb the use of single-use **plastics**, the **Mexico** City government has started to implement regulations on **plastic** bags and disposable products, and to promote biodegradable **plastics**.

### Brazil

An average of 17.5% of all rigid and film **plastic** is recycled each year in **Brazil**. 60% of the recycled **plastic** comes from industrial residue and 40% from urban refuse.  
What is being done to stop plastic pollution?

Carry your own utensils or a wooden spork and **avoid** using **plastic** utensils. Review restaurants and cafes and recognize them when they **avoid** straws and **plastic** packaging – and let them know you want them to do better when they don't' Use reusable water bottles, coffee mugs, and bags.

### Argentina

The country's president, Mauricio Macri, signed a decree in August reclassifying some materials destined for recycling as commodities instead of **waste**, allowing looser oversight of mixed and contaminated **plastic** scraps that **are** difficult to process, and **are** often dumped or incinerated. Carry your own utensils or a wooden spork and **avoid** using **plastic** utensils. Review restaurants and cafes and recognize them when they **avoid** straws and **plastic** packaging – and let them know you want them to do better when they don't' Use reusable water bottles, coffee mugs, and bags.

### United Kingdom

The **UK** is making great steps to tackle the **plastic** that blights our streets, rivers and oceans – protecting wildlife from ingesting harmful **plastic** with our world-leading ban on microbeads in rinse-off personal care products, and introducing a highly successful **plastic** bag charge which has seen 13 billion **plastic** bags

Following a consultation exercise in October 2018, the **UK Government** made regulations to ban the sale of **plastic** straws, cotton buds and stirrers, subject to certain exemptions, which came into force in **England** in October 2020. A ban on **plastic** cotton buds has been in place in Scotland since October 2019

### Germany

**Germany** will ban the sale of single-use **plastic** straws, cutlery, cotton buds and food containers from July 2021, aligning with an EU directive intended to **reduce plastic waste**. Federal Environment Minister Svenja Schulze, says, “Many disposable **plastic** products are superfluous with no sustainable use of resources **Germany** will ban the sale of single-use **plastic** straws, cutlery, cotton buds and food containers from July 2021, aligning with an EU directive intended to **reduce plastic waste**. Federal Environment Minister Svenja Schulze, says, “Many disposable **plastic** products are superfluous with no sustainable use of resources

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## Israel

Although close to half of all the generated waste is biodegradable, most of it is dumped in landfills. Just like the rest of the world, Israel's biggest challenge lies in the handling and recycling of the increasing amounts of plastic waste.

Moreover, according to Ayalon, the Packaging Law is not adequately enforced. The law permits the export of only 20 percent of plastic waste abroad, but in the absence of enforcement and economic incentives, the recycling corporations decided to transport all waste elsewhere.

There is no official data on the quantities of plastic waste exported from Israel, but it is believed that the situation is not significantly different from what is happening in the EU. In 2016, Europe [collected about 8.4 million tons](#) of plastic waste of which 1.6 million tons were sent to China, [the largest plastic waste importer in the world](#). As of January 1, 2018, China banned the import of 24 kinds of materials, including PET, effectively overriding the possibility of importing waste into the country.

## Australia

100% of all **Australia's** packaging will be reusable, recyclable, or compostable by 2025 or earlier. 70% of **Australia's plastic** packaging will be recycled or composted by 2025. 30% average recycled content will be included across all packaging by 2025

## New Zealand

A **new** initiative supported by **Plastics NZ** is **plastic** lumber, where **plastic** is recycled into planks for park benches, fence palings, and other jobs. Auckland Council has adopted a zero-waste by 2040 policy, and other councils around the country are following with policies

## New Zealand plans initiatives to eliminate single-use plastics

10 Dec 2019 (Last Updated December 10th, 2019 10:37)

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2021-03-19

**The Green Party of Ontario**

## **Ontario ban single use plastics!**

This week, in recognition of **Global Recycling Day**, we are repeating our calls for the Ford government to ban single use plastics.

Last year the federal government finally decided to take action on plastic pollution.

They're banning plastic checkout bags, straws, and cutlery this year.

**But they forgot to include the worst offenders in plastic pollution - after bottles and coffee cups.**

[Let's cut plastic pollution!](#)

Canadians generate an astounding 3.2 million tonnes of plastic waste each year - yet only nine per cent gets recycled. The rest of the 2.8 million tonnes of plastic ends up in our landfills, our Great Lakes and people's backyards.

We need to do better.

Without tackling plastic water bottles and coffee cups, we won't fix the problem.

It's time for the Ontario government to do its part in our fight to help our planet.

We're asking Premier Ford to make a plan to phase out single-use cups and water bottles.

[Add your name today to stop plastic pollution from harming nature.](#)

**Take Action:** [https://secure.gpo.ca/ban\\_single\\_use\\_plastics?source=C21.CPP.E.TLNK](https://secure.gpo.ca/ban_single_use_plastics?source=C21.CPP.E.TLNK)

Jessica Tan  
GPO Communications Team

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**Palm Oil Issue – local action**

**Christine Legree – SLSN member**

2021-01-31

**Vegan no palm oil butter**

Vegan no palm oil butter I bought. It is delicious. As we know, palm oil in products entails the oppression and at times killing of Indigenous peoples to drive them off their lands in Indonesia. More palm oil plantations are planned in South America threatening Indigenous Peoples and their

beautiful forests /animals there too. I bought this butter at **Whole Family Health Food, 236 Dovedale Dr., Keswick, near Walmart. Please let others know. It is reasonably priced at \$5.99 for a good sized container. Good News.**



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021-04-15

## Greenpeace

According to a new report, wealthy countries like Canada are encouraging deforestation through international trade in **risky commodities like palm oil**. [1]

Unfortunately, Canada's **deforestation footprint** is huge. Why is this bad news?

Fires and deforestation for oil palm plantations have been linked to viruses like COVID-19 — and extreme fires in 2019 caused severe respiratory illnesses for hundreds of thousands of people. [2]

**[Add your name now to tell the Canadian government to stop fuelling deforestation through palm oil trade.](#)**

*This is not just about us.* The industry's expansion is a major cause of climate change and is a danger to 54% of all threatened mammals and 64% of all threatened birds globally. We urgently need to reverse this trend.

**Since 2007, palm oil imports to Canada are up a massive 400%.**

It's now everywhere we go, making its way into chocolate bars, potato chips, shampoo and even toothpaste. It's so pervasive that Canadian farmers are even using it to feed cows, as we learned during the recent "Buttergate" scandal. [3]

**New research by Greenpeace reveals there is a high risk we could end up with a lot more of it on our shelves and in our kitchens** if a trade deal is approved with Indonesia — the largest palm oil producer in the world. [4]

**[Any deal that opens the door to more destructive palm oil would be a disaster. Add your name to stop this.](#)**

Right now, the federal government is considering a "Canada-Indonesia comprehensive economic partnership agreement". A previous deal involving palm oil giants Malaysia and Singapore made palm oil imports cheaper.

Minister for International Trade Mary Ng has a mandate to "promote a cleaner environment" as a top government priority. But while the government talks a lot about climate change and biodiversity loss, our palm oil imports keep rising.

**[Join us in sending Minister Mary Ng a clear message to take her environmental mandate seriously and shut the door to dirty palm oil.](#)**

Instead of more deals in rainforest destruction, we should be protecting the world's forests, supporting Indigenous communities and farmers growing local food resilience.

Together, we can put an end to the destruction and start building a greener and healthier future for all.

With gratitude and solidarity,

Shane

[1] <https://www.carbonbrief.org/scientists-calculate-trade-related-deforestation-footprint-of-rich-countries>

[2] <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2021.661063/full>

[3] <https://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/story/46330/whats-the-beef-with-palm-oil-7-things-you-need-to-know-about-buttergate/>

[4] <https://ipolitics.ca/2021/03/29/feds-not-farmers-risk-prolonging-buttergate-with-low-tariffs-on-dirty-palm-oil/>