

The Talon

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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)

The strange winter weather cycles continued into our spring with alternating warm, sunny, cold, and rainy weather including late frosts killing back spring leaf out in some tree species in our area. Despite unsettled weather events our planned outings for spring this year were distinguished by unseasonably warm and sunny days with good birding and botanizing for members participating! Outing reports below decapsulate events and summary bird, mammal and plant observations data and photos.

Concerning impacts of serious Bird Flu infection of domestic farm fowl, and most concerning, deaths of wild birds like Canada geese and mallards in York Region, are reported.

You will see some spring/summer outing plans in this newsletter. Also, some past outing/meeting reports with details of bird, mammal and plant observations are documented from our autumn 2022 Outings and events.

Continuing development pressures in Southern Ontario with some provincial and federal politician's policy are continuing attacks on the Greenbelt, including in Georgina with the now federally approved Aerodrome. Updates on other key South Lake Simcoe environmental issues are detailed later in the newsletter and reporting on community efforts to address them. Recent high level science reporting on the Great Lakes including Lake Simcoe and a new Provincial Park

announced for the Oak Ridges Moraine area headwater source habitat for South Lake Simcoe creeks, streams and rivers are great advances we can celebrate.

Our executive continues to keep on top of annual administrative organization tasks moving forward, when even as the W.H.O. has cancelled the global pandemic over much of the world, new COVID concerning variants (the omicron BA.5 variant and others), influenzas surges, bird flu H5NI and animal-to-animal and potential to human transmission concerns in other parts of the world among other anxieties continue.

As always, and typical for field naturalist clubs, there are no outings planned in July and August when birds are finished breeding, vacation and family time is important; travel and relaxation for SLSN members. In September birds migrating will be in the air and events will again resume.

Paul Harpley SLSN

2023-05-23

A new COVID subvariant is spreading quickly. Here's what you need to know

XBB.1.16, provisionally dubbed Arcturus, is already making inroads in Ontario, but that's not yet matched in other provinces.

By [Megan Ogilvie](#) Health Reporter
Wed., April 26, 2023 timer4 min. read

[JOIN THE CONVERSATION](#)

Scientists are keeping a close watch on a new Omicron subvariant called XBB.1.16 now spreading rapidly in some parts of the world, including Ontario.

Last week, the World Health Organization designated XBB.1.16 a variant of interest, noting its ability to escape immunity and outcompete other highly transmissible subvariants.

In Ontario, XBB.1.16 is projected to make up almost a third of COVID-19 cases in the province by Wednesday, according to the most recent data from Public Health Ontario.

Experts stress the latest Omicron descendant — unofficially nicknamed Arcturus, one of the brightest stars in the Northern Hemisphere — is not yet cause for alarm. Though XBB.1.16

appears to spread faster than previous subvariants, it does not seem to cause more severe illness.

“We don’t expect it to cause a big spike,” said Jesse Shapiro, an associate professor of microbiology and immunology at McGill University. “But it could cause a small increase in cases. That’s why it’s worth keeping an eye on.”

What is XBB.1.16?

First reported in January, XBB.1.16 is a hybrid of two different BA.2 sublineages.

The fast-spreading XBB.1.16 is closely related to XBB.1.5, currently the most prevalent Omicron subvariant globally.

While XBB.1.16 has a few different notable mutations, it doesn’t represent a dramatic shift in the virus’ evolution, said Shapiro, a researcher with Canada’s Coronavirus Variants Rapid Response Network, known as CoVaRR-Net.

“This is not a major leap. This is not a brand-new lineage like Omicron that had dozens of mutations and took off and caused a huge spike in cases.”

Where in the world has XBB.1.16 been detected?

As of April 17, it has been reported in 33 countries, according to the WHO.

The majority of the 3,648 reported sequences are from India, where XBB.1.16 has led to a rise in infections. The WHO says the subvariant has also been reported in Canada, the U.S., Singapore, Australia, Brunei, Japan and the United Kingdom.

Globally, there has been a weekly rise in the prevalence of XBB.1.16. The WHO reports the global prevalence (its share of all COVID cases) was 4.15 per cent during the week of March 27 to April 2 — up from 0.52 per cent just four weeks earlier.

Where has XBB.1.16 been reported in Canada?

XBB.1.16 is spreading rapidly in Ontario but has not yet made significant inroads in other provinces or territories, said Shapiro, co-lead of CoVaRR-Net’s Computational Analysis, Modelling and Evolutionary Outcomes (CAMEO) Pillar.

“There aren’t any reported cases in Quebec or in B.C. yet. The numbers are still pretty low,” Shapiro said, noting the growth advantage for XBB.1.16 will differ among provinces and regions, and depend on which subvariants previously caused infections and provided immunity in the population.

New data released Tuesday by Public Health Ontario projects that XBB.1.16 will by Wednesday make up 31 per cent of cases in the province. In the first week of April, XBB.1.16 was responsible for just four per cent of cases.

Public Health Ontario reports XBB.1.16's weekly growth rate is about 2.35 times more than that of XBB.1.5, which the WHO in January called the most transmissible subvariant yet.

How big is the public health risk?

The WHO considers the global risk assessment for XBB.1.16 to be low, and states it does not carry "additional public health risk" compared to other circulating Omicron subvariants.

Dawn Bowdish, an immunologist at McMaster University who holds a Canada Research Chair in Aging and Immunity, said the data so far suggests people who've had a bivalent booster within the last six months can expect to have a "reasonably mild course of disease unless they are older or immunocompromised."

She said Omicron subvariants tend to not trigger a particularly strong immune response, meaning people can be reinfected within months, though vaccination can extend the immune window. In the Omicron era, this is leading to waves of older adults needing hospitalization, a pattern that seems to repeat every three to four months.

While XBB.1.16 may not lead to a notable surge in COVID cases, Canada is still experiencing levels of infection higher than at other points in the pandemic, said Bowdish. She stressed, along with Shapiro, the importance of keeping up to date with COVID vaccines, especially for older adults.

"Our lows now for hospitalization are still higher than the peaks in 2020 and 2021 before Omicron. Even though we are at a low point now it's reasonable to expect that this new variant could cause another wave in hospitalizations of older adults."

Shapiro said recent modelling by CoVaRR-Net's CAMEO Pillar shows that doubling the rate at which Canadians are getting vaccinated would lead to a 40 per cent decline in the COVID case level.

"We're in this equilibrium, this steady-but-too-high level of cases," he said. "There are measures we can take to bring the levels down."

New Provincial Park in Oak Ridges Moraine and at headwaters of South Lake Simcoe area streams!

2022-04-22

Global News

ENVIRONMENT

Ontario announces location of new provincial park

By **Isaac Callan** Global News

Posted April 22, 2023 1:38 pm

Updated April 23, 2023 1:01 pm



5:03

RELATED: Ontario's finance minister, Peter Bethlenfalvy officially tabled the 2023 provincial budget yesterday at Queen's Park. He joins Candace Daniel to discuss his \$205B plan – Mar 24, 2023

Editor's note: This story has been clarified to reflect plans to build a new, staffed provincial park with camping spaces in addition to the Uxbridge urban park announcement.

The **Ford government** has confirmed plans to build a new provincial park in the Greater Toronto Area.

The province said it would be creating an "urban provincial park" in **Uxbridge**, Ont., a town in **Durham Region**, located to the northeast of Toronto.

Ontario's minister of the environment, conservation and parks, David Piccini, said the announcement — which was teased in the latest budget document — was timed to coincide with Earth Day.

"Creating the province's first urban provincial park in Uxbridge would be a major step forward for conservation and biodiversity protection in Ontario," Piccini said.

"We look forward to working with the public and local stakeholders to make this vision a reality for residents and visitors to get out and enjoy nature near this rapidly growing region."

In addition to the unveiled plans for an urban provincial park in Uxbridge, the Ford government has confirmed plans are in place to build a new operating provincial park. An operating park

“has staff and provides further recreational opportunities for Ontarians to enjoy as compared to non-operating provincial parks,” a spokesperson said.

The province has 115 operating provincial parks including Algonquin Provincial Park and Kill Bear Provincial Park. Non-operating provincial parks include Windigo Bay Provincial Park and Lighthouse Bay Provincial Park.

The new operating park will include up to 250 camping spaces, according to the province. Officials said it would be the first new operating park to open in 40 years.

Provincial parks are enshrined in legislation to protect significant parts of Ontario’s natural and cultural heritage, offering research and monitoring and sustainable, outdoor recreation.

Read More: <https://globalnews.ca/news/9644269/provincial-park-uxbridge-unveiled/>

2023-04-22

City News

Uxbridge to be home to Ontario's newest provincial park

Ontario’s newest provincial park will be located in Uxbridge in the Oak Ridges Moraine

By [John Marchesan](#)

Posted Apr 22, 2023, 2:15PM EDT.

Last Updated Apr 22, 2023, 2:57PM EDT.

The Ford government says Uxbridge will be home to Ontario’s newest provincial park.

The park will be located in the Oak Ridges Moraine, calling it a “major step forward for conservation and biodiversity protection in Ontario.”

First announced in the 2023 budget, the proposed urban park may include up to 532 hectares of provincially owned lands which it claims will be 50 per cent larger than New York’s Central Park.

“Opening a new provincial park in Uxbridge would give families and people in the community new ways to enjoy the great outdoors all year around,” said Ontario Finance Minister Peter Bethlenfalvy, who is also MPP for Pickering—Uxbridge.

“These lands are situated on an ecologically important and gorgeous section of the Oak Ridges Moraine. They are near major urban centres in the GTA and perfect for hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing,” said Uxbridge mayor Dave Barton.

The government says it will be conducting site assessments and evaluations over the next few months to determine the exact location of the park which may include the Durham Regional Forest, and a possible

120 hectares from the Township of Uxbridge. It is also promising consultation with Indigenous communities, the public, local stakeholders, partners and environmental organizations, before reaching a final decision.

Read More: <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2023/04/22/ontario-first-urban-provincial-park-uxbridge/>

York Region Forest News

The Region has advised it will begin herbicide application in the York Regional Forest for the Afforestation Herbicide Application on York Regional Forest Properties 2023 contract at the Davis Drive Tract, Drysdale Tract, and The Queensville Property. This contract will begin Thursday, May 25 and be worked on throughout June.

For the safety of the public and workers please keep clear of the operation. If you have any questions regarding this operation, please contact Pam Martin at 905-830-4444 x75243.

The Region has advised that the Region's Trail Mowing contractor will be undertaking work in all forest tracts beginning on Monday May 23, 2023. The operation is expected to last up to five weeks. The work will be conducted in one tract at a time and should not last more than two days at any individual location.

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 Matt Currie at 1-877-464-9675 ext.75249

Bird Flu - Continuing Breaking News in Toronto Area G.T.A. Wildlife Disease and Birds found dead.

2023-04-06

York Region News

NEWS

'It's nervous times' as bird flu found in wild birds in York Region

King Cole Ducks lost 350,000 birds to avian influenza in 2022

By Kim Zarzour yorkregion.com

Article was updated Mar 30, 2023



Several dead geese were found at Country Glen Stormwater Pond. It has been confirmed that these geese tested positive for avian flu. People are requested to stay away from the geese. March 23, 2023 - Steve Somerville/Metroland

The warm weather is here — and so, too, is bird flu, a highly contagious virus that can be deadly for wild and domestic animals.

Dead and infected geese have been turning up across York Region, prompting municipalities and public health to warn the public to stay away from wildlife.

The viral infection avian influenza (H5N1) can cause mass disease and death in birds.

Mainly transmitted through the wild bird population, it can spread to commercial poultry and sometimes mammals, such as foxes, skunks, and mink, who eat infected birds.

Rarely, avian influenza can spread to people.

Dr. JoAnne Fernandes, associate medical officer of Health, York Region, said the risk of transmission to York Region residents is low and, at this time, there are no human cases of avian flu in York Region.

Public Health is working with local municipalities and closely monitoring the situation, she said.

In Newmarket, animal services has responded to [reports of geese in distress at Fairy Lake](#) and stormwater management ponds.

The City of Vaughan is [also reporting a significant number](#) of birds that have died or are infected with presumed bird flu throughout the community.

Toronto Zoo [announced this week](#) it has closed its aviaries "out of an abundance of caution" after avian influenza was found at a commercial poultry farm in the Niagara area.

York Region-based King Cole Ducks is on "high alert", Patti Thompson, vice-president of sales and marketing, said.

Last year, the [company lost](#) 350,000 birds due to the virus.

With migrating birds returning to the area, and the virus "hot" in the United States, Thompson said everyone with poultry or backyard flocks is "supersonically aware."

"We all have to be super conscious, make sure that our tires on our vehicles are sprayed and disinfected when they go to a farm, our staff are garbed up and everything's scrubbed and disinfected to make sure we're not bringing anything from outside in ... It's nervous times for sure."

Duck, chicken and turkey are still safe to eat, she added, but it's important to remain cautious.

"Someone told me there's enough virus on the head of a pin to infect 10,000 birds. It might be an old wives' tale, but it tells you one tiny mistake can be devastating."

York Region Public Health recommend steps residents can take...

Read More:

https://www.yorkregion.com/news/its-nervous-times-as-bird-flu-found-in-wild-birds-in-york-region/article_fb4aa17e-d309-523b-9999-14de0a30e262.html

2023-03-24

York Media

https://www.yorkregion.com/news/i-couldn-t-believe-what-i-was-seeing-bird-flu-causes-mass-mortality-of-geese/article_bf2a8e75-180f-5ba6-b83c-563af2097242.html



About eight geese found dead in the water and on the shore of Country Glen Pond on March 16. - Erin Alegrias photo

'I couldn't believe what I was seeing': Bird flu causes mass mortality of geese in Markham

Dead geese tested positive found in Country Glen Stormwater Pond, Toogood Pond, Monkhouse Pond and Swan Lake

By **Irene Wong** Markham Economist & Sun

Friday, March 24, 2023

In Markham, most people love heading over to the beautiful ponds to gaze at wildlife, or to get some steps on the scenic trail that loops right around the ponds. The ponds are home to many Canada geese, ducks, and other birds.

Yet, it will be different this year.

Recently, dead geese have been found in Markham with suspected avian influenza, commonly known as bird flu.

Read More:

https://www.yorkregion.com/news/i-couldn-t-believe-what-i-was-seeing-bird-flu-causes-mass-mortality-of-geese/article_bf2a8e75-180f-5ba6-b83c-563af2097242.html

2023-03-23

CP24 News

Markham puts up signs after dead geese test positive for avian flu

Dead geese test positive for avian flu in Markham



Officials in Markham have put up signs at several bodies of water where several dead geese had been located.

Bryann Aguilar, CP24 Web Content Writer
@BryannAguilar

Published Thursday, March 23, 2023 7:01PM EDT
Last Updated Thursday, March 23, 2023 7:01PM EDT

Officials in Markham have put up signs at several bodies of water where several dead geese had been located, warning residents to avoid the areas due to suspected avian influenza.

The signs are posted at Country Glen Stormwater Pond, Toogood Pond, Monkhouse Pond and Swan Lake.

Read More:

<https://www.cp24.com/news/markham-puts-up-signs-after-dead-geese-test-positive-for-avian-flu-1.6326625#:~:text=Officials%20in%20Markham%20have%20put,Monkhouse%20Pond%20and%20Swan%20Lake.>

Great Lakes Science Conference, IAGLR 66th Annual Conference on Great Lakes Research, *Adapting to Climate Change*. Held in Toronto, May 8-12, 2023.

The International Joint Commission held its Annual Conference in Toronto at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Toronto. The first time in 44 years, scientists from all over the world met and presented the most recent and significant science results, innovations and conservation ideas and plans focus on large freshwater lakes. Yes, scientists from all over the world including Australia, Africa and beyond. The annual conference now is concerned with all great (large) Lakes around the world.

This science forum from May 8-12 right in our 'own backyard' included a special session, posters, and papers on ***Lake Simcoe science***, also coinciding with the 2022 State of the Great Lakes Report, a major update on the Great lakes Observing System-Annual Impact Report, the Smart Great Lakes Strategic Plan 2020-2025, and GIGLR the Cooperative Institute for Great Lakes Research, and more.

I was privileged to present a paper on the Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe research organization continuing science research and innovation over two decades with partners in the South Lake Simcoe region (information below).

Paul Harpley

Paper Presented at the Conference: Current Science Research, South Lake Simcoe Region

Harpley, Paul¹, Hilton, Ian¹ and Milne, Rob², *Probing the Land/Water interface at rivers and streams: South Lake Simcoe, Sand and Clay plain landscape*, (1) The Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe, Pefferlaw, ON, Canada, (2) Wilfrid Laurier

University, Waterloo, ON, Canada (presenter in bold). Accepted paper, Conference: **IAGLR 66th Annual Conference on Great Lakes Research, *Adapting to Climate Change***. May 8-12, 2023. Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
Conference Link: <https://iaglr.org/iaglr2023/>

Outings Reports

Thursday March 23: York Regional Forest, Pefferlaw Tract, West

The trails were snowy, wet and a bit icy in some places, typical for this time of year. The outing was planned for a winter walking/snowshoeing and nature study experience, and with the conditions cautious walking was the choice. The location was the north-west part of the largest natural wildlands in our area, at the Pefferlaw Tract, York Region Forests West, at Forestry Road.

We entered the forest in an area we have not had an outing in a number of years. Upland mature forest and past W. Pine and other forest tree species dominate the Tract. The trails generally flat/gently undulating with the recent snow accumulation gave some flexibility for exploring. Highlights were some large White pine stands, various mammal tracks and a diversity of native tree species in fine condition.

Wildlife and plant species observed in the order when first species encountered, and numbers seen on the outing.

Birds: Bald eagle 1 (at distance flying over), Red-tailed hawk 1 (on local road), Crow 1.

Mammal track and signs: White-tailed deer – various, including large buck, mouse and exposed snow tunnels melting, much domestic dog scat on and off trail – not picked up by owners! A few people with dogs off-leash seen. **Trees:** E. White pine, W. birch, E.W. cedar, W. ash (many declining – E. as borer), Balsam fir, Sugar maple, W. spruce, American beech (small size regeneration), Black cherry, Canadian yew



Large White pine tree growing up above maples.



Accelerated growth of spruce branches bundle.

Thursday April 13: Birding by roadside around proposed Pepperlaw area Aerodrome

Members undertook an early in the season breeding bird walking survey of the roads at recently federal government approved Aerodrome site area, 10 a.m. to 12:05 p.m. It was a morning outing in mid-April to search for arriving breeding birds amongst migrants. As anticipated many migrant birds were moving through. Species documented were expected. One significant Eastern meadowlark was seen and heard on an agricultural field east off the aerodrome site, subsequent checks revealed the bird had moved on possibly north to the Carden area. The weather was sunny and seasonally warm.



Members scanning the site and observing an adult Bald eagle soaring over the forest and field habitat.



Wet graminoid grasses meadow.

Wildlife and plant species observed in the order when first species encountered, and numbers seen on the outing.

Birds: Canada geese 5, Mallard 35, Grackle 3, Cardinal 1, Song Sparrow 5, E. phoebe 1, Rock dove 5, Mourning dove 4, Raven 2, Blue jay 1, E. meadowlark 1, B.C. chickadee 1, Flicker 1, Crow 3, R-w blackbird 4, Bald eagle 1, Turkey vulture 7, Hawk (Buteo-unconfirmed at distance).

Wednesday April 26: Birding and nature study at Sutton West mixed forest landscape

A walking outing of forest and field meadow area with streams and small wetland landscapes. Interesting bird species and usually high biodiversity including migrant and breeding birds on flat accessible trails with easy to walk on surfaces were experienced by a diverse group of members. The hike at the location started at 2:30 and went to 4:15 p.m. with some members continuing to explore further. The weather was cloudy (90%) seasonally warm at 8 degrees C.

Wildlife and plant species observed in the order when first species encountered, and numbers seen on the outing.

Birds: W. turkey 2, Crow 4, C. geese 3, Grackle 3, R-w blackbird 5, Mourning dove 3, Osprey 2, Raven 1, Cardinal 2, B.C. chickadee 3, Hairy Woodpecker 2, W.B. nuthatch 3, Blue jay 2, Ronin 5, R.B. gull 2.



Members walking grassland trail Late afternoon view of grassland meadow where it meets wet forest

Tuesday May 16: Virginia area – Bike birding in Georgina near Lake Simcoe

A lively group of members arrived in the area ready to bike the relatively flat roads on this sunny warm morning through field, forest, wet-meadow and lakeshore habitat in and out of established and new suburban development areas near the Hamlet of Virginia. Bikers brought snacks and drinks for stops. There was a range of bikes and strategies for the outing.

for the easy riding area. Member Cora lived in the area and provided access to a couple of locals' small trails, notably in some great wet forest habitat near the Lake.

A highlight was having a midday meeting break with our drinks at Cora's place in the sun, watching a lot of birds at her active feeder! Some interesting and important plants were seen and documented just coming out with the warming temperatures. Some roadside areas of invasive species especially buckthorn and Garlic mustard that threaten to invade natural areas were noted. The local community park provided views of gulls, waterfowl and a wayward cormorant. An electricized Black squirrel and an Osprey with a catfish in a tree were notable observations, and photographically documented by member Susan.

Wildlife and plant species observed in the order when first species encountered, and numbers seen on the outing.

Birds: (Species only listed) Mourning dove, R-w blackbird, Hairy woodpecker, Downy woodpecker, A. goldfinch, S. sparrow, Starling, R.B. gull, D.C cormorant, Osprey. **Plants:** May-Apple, Jack-in-the pulpit, White trillium, Painted trillium and Red trillium, Skunk cabbage, Canada violet and Forget-me not.

Susan Weatherston submitted photos



Electricized Black squirrel on telephone pole



Osprey with catfish in old dead American elm tree

Some Plant and local Park at Lake photos



May-Apple



Swamp forest and Skunk Cabbage



Documentation Photos: Cellphone, Paul Harpley

Only paid-up members receive notice and full information regarding upcoming Outings, Meetings and Events.

SLSN Membership Information

NORMA KNOWLTON
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Phone 905-476-4747

Outings, Meetings: Any Provincial and municipal COVID-19 restrictions and safety protocols in effect. Information on the latest conditions and public health guidance can be found on the Government of Ontario [website](#).

Phone 905-722-8021 for **non-member** inquiries, and details of **2023 Spring/Summer planned outings, including Black River birding and nature study, breeding birds hikes to Sutton mixed forest and meadows, and Oak Ridges Moraine hiking and more.**

Virtual Internet Action Meetings, webinars, videos, research on Critical Natural Heritage and environmental issues

Invasive Species Centre

Webinar: Introduced Plant Pathogens Threatening North American Forests

August 16, 2023 @ 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm CDT

<https://naisma.org/event/webinar-introduced-plant-pathogens-threatening-north-american-forests/>

2023-03-15

Ecojustice

In this video, are some examples of how the Canadian Government has... and has not... followed through on its responsibilities to protect the environment. This includes approvals of oil and gas projects, the use of pesticides and environmental racism. You can [watch it on TikTok](#) — there's no need to create an account.

Canadian wildlife Federation

Learn More About Pollinators!

Did you know that we wouldn't have many of the fruits and veggies we count on for food without pollinators? We'd say goodbye to tomatoes, apples, cucumbers, blueberries and even chocolate. Learn more about pollinators by watching this Hinterland Who's Who video!

[Watch video >](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geHTg_Mdh90&ab_channel=HinterlandWho%27sWho%2FFauneetfloreduypays

Ontario Biodiversity Strategy

Continuing Planning, Review and Comment Process – engage in documents and comment

Connect at: info@ontariobiodiversitycouncil.ca

Parks People Park People • communications@parkpeople.ca

Help Us Inform Our Research on Canadian City Parks

Answer Park People Survey Before May 30

We need your help to support our important research which will make a difference for Canadian city parks! Take 5 minutes to share your vision of city parks by completing our survey and get a chance to win one of three \$100 gift cards.

Complete the survey before May 30, 2023.

Your responses will inform our 2023 Canadian City Parks Report, and we will share the findings with municipal parks staff and our network of park professionals and enthusiasts across Canada.

The survey is open to anyone living in a Canadian city, and we need as many answers as possible! After answering the survey, please make sure to [share broadly with your network](#).

Pefferlaw/Sutton Airport Development Inc. Aerodrome Update

“PAR”, Georgina and beyond residents organizing PROTEST in Ottawa being planned Now! Against the federal Liberal Trudeau Government approval of the Aerodrome!

Karen Wolfe representing PAR Posted on Facebook, May 12 advising that PAR’s previous designation request with the federal Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) to get federal environmental oversight for the project had officially been denied! A response was sent to Federal Environment Minister, Steven Guilbeault, posted on Facebook (as below).

“Dear Minister Guilbeault:

I am in receipt of your letter **dated May 11, 2023**, in which you advised me that you will not be designating the Sutton Airport Development Inc. project. The reasons put forth by you are subject to the fact that this project is under the jurisdiction of the Federal government. And as such, the provincial and local by-laws identified as safeguards in your letter, do not have jurisdiction if they prevent the proponents from moving forward with their plans to import 1.2 million cubic metres of fill onto this environmentally sensitive property. As I am sure you know, any attempt to prevent this from happening will trigger interjurisdictional immunity which will make any provincial and/or municipal regulations impotent. As a result, without IAAC designation, this project will have no environmental oversight.

That is not only disappointing, it is frightening. Please reconsider.

Karen Wolfe”

PAR represented by Karen Wolfe May 5, 2023, via e-mail to concerned citizens advised,

“...I have been speaking with our York Simcoe MP, Scot Davidson and we think the timing and the weather are right to stage an in-person protest on Parliament Hill. According to Scot, the opportune time would be Wednesday, June 14 from noon to about 3:00 pm which would mean we would have to leave Pefferlaw at 7:00 am and return after 3:00 pm. I am reaching out to all of you to see how many of you would be willing to participate in this demonstration. Once I get a feel for the numbers, I will move forward to arrange ground transportation and other details so please send me an email to let me know if you are interested on or before May 31. Cheers, Karen”

Advocacy Chair

PAR

**17 Otter Cove,
Pefferlaw, Ontario**

LOE 1N0

(705) 437-1216

Recent Fill Issue Recent Article

Searched by member Hugh Sibbald for review, includes reference to past documented problems in South Lake Simcoe area municipalities. P.H.

2023-05-10

The Globe & Mail

IN DEPTH

How Ontario’s rules for dealing with excavated dirt aim to clean up the industry

[MATTHEW MCCLEARN](#)

PUBLISHED MAY 10, 2023



A telescopic deep digger, right, picks up material as an excavator works below, preparing the ground for a condo development in downtown Toronto. FRED LUM/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Deep in a pit on a construction site in downtown Toronto hemmed in by high-rise buildings, an excavator deftly shovels bucket after bucket of dirt and mud into a triple-axle dump truck. Filled within minutes, the truck disappears up a steep ramp into heavy city traffic. Another takes its place.

Excavating and moving dirt is a routine operation ahead of building condo and office towers, and for water and sewer, transit, pipeline and highway construction. By one estimate, Ontario – Canada’s most populous province – generates more than 25 million cubic metres of excess silt, clay, gravel and other soils annually, enough to fill Toronto’s Rogers Centre more than 15 times. But it’s a mystery where it all goes, because those myriad truckloads have moved with little documentation and less supervision.

This belies the large sums of money involved. In 2016, the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers partnered with two other construction industry organizations in the province to study 24 projects of various sizes. They found that managing excess soil represented an average of 14 per cent of total project costs.

In 2012, it was estimated that soil management for a single large project – Metrolinx’s Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit project in Toronto – might cost more than \$100-million. The final tab is another mystery: Metrolinx refused to answer questions from The Globe and Mail about how much soil it moved, what it contained or where it went.

What’s clear is that in [Ontario](#), soil went places it shouldn’t have.

Often those trucks drove to landfill sites, where two valuable resources – reusable soil and landfill space – were squandered simultaneously. They sometimes heaped contaminated soil on farmland or rural properties, with or without owners’ consent. Sometimes they emptied onto vacant city lots, wetlands or industrial parks under the cloak of darkness. Allegations of organized criminal involvement were not uncommon.

Read More: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/article-ontario-rules-clean-up-excavating/>

Climate Change News

“Think Globally - Act Locally”

Georgina Tree Planting Effort Criticized

Hessel Pape local community tree advocate recently was quoted regarding Town of Georgina tree planting efforts in 2023.

2023-04-17

York Media

'Replacing not the same as increasing': Georgina's tree-planting efforts focus on replacing already removed ash trees

Town distributing limited number of tree seedlings, pollinator planting packs during the week of April 17

By **Amanda Persico** Georgina Advocate

Monday, April 17, 2023

2 min to read

Article was updated 17 hrs ago



Georgina resident Hessel Pape wants to see the town increase the number of trees planted. - Amanda Persico/Metroland



A little less conversation and a little more action is needed to address climate change.

And one of the easiest things to do is plant a tree, said Georgina resident Hessel Pape.

“We all know the benefits of trees,” he said. “The environmental benefits are obvious.”

Those benefits include: absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen; preventing flood damage and erosion; and providing shade, habitat and food.

“And the list goes on,” Pape said.

With so much discussion about climate change, planting trees is a simple solution — an actionable solution.

“Listening to the news, there’s so much concern over climate change. But very little actually seems to be done. We can’t just talk about it, we have to do something.

“The least anyone can do is plant a tree for future generations.”

Pape is calling on the town to increase its tree coverage at the grassroots level by creating a tree planting incentive to encourage each resident to plant a tree on his or her property.

“One tree won’t make that much of a difference, but if even half of the homeowners plant a tree, what a difference that will be.”

Pape hopes to see a resurgence of Arbor Day, the traditional day to celebrate and plant trees — an annual reminder on the importance of trees.

And Pape hopes Georgina will be the tree planting leader of the region.

Currently, about 44 per cent of the town’s land surface is covered by treetops, said Georgina’s temporary forestry services supervisor James Pugh.

That’s up from about 39 per cent in 2005.

Read More:

https://www.yorkregion.com/news/replacing-not-the-same-as-increasing-georginas-tree-planting-efforts-focus-on-replacing-already-removed/article_a044962f-60f6-51c4-a688-85d83e673e47.html?li_source=LI&li_medium=ymbii_top

Community Led Events

Farmer Led Letter Writing Campaign to tell Ford Government - back-off on Bill 97

<https://www.nfu.ca/speak-up-to-protect-ontarios-farmland-for-farming/#:~:text=Take%20Action%3A%20Speak%20up,Liberal%20Party%20of%20Ontario>

Take Action: Speak up to protect Ontario's farmland for farming

MAY 18, 2023 | [NATIONAL FARMERS UNION ONTARIO \(NFU-O\)](#)
[FARMLAND OWNERSHIP](#)

The Ontario government's newly introduced Bill 97 and Proposed Provincial Planning Statement will weaken farmland protections by allowing up to three lot severances per farm parcel in prime agricultural areas province-wide for residential, non-farm uses in addition to weakening important protections for specialty crop areas.

This legislation will have impact on all Ontario farmers now and in the future, including:

- fragmenting and permanently removing farmland from productive agricultural use
- limiting farm business growth
- inflating farmland prices
- creating conflict with non-farming residential neighbours
- adding significant new burden to already stretched municipal and regional services and service providers

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO), and the National Farmers Union – Ontario (NFU-O), along with numerous commodity and agricultural organizations are united in their opposition to Bill 97 and the Proposed Provincial Planning Statement.

The provincial government wants to hear from individual farmers by June 5, 2023. Your voice is needed to tell the government that farmland must be protected for farming – to ensure the current and future value of agriculture to the province's economy, to our long-term food security, and long-term vibrant rural communities.

Together, OFA, CFFO and NFU-O are asking you to personally tell provincial political leaders that removing farmland protections in the Proposed Provincial Planning Statement is short-sighted and will undermine your work in contributing to the provincial economy, your rural community, and protecting our local and long-term food security.

Use our action tool below to communicate your concerns to Hon. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing at minister.mah@ontario.ca, and

- Doug Ford, Premier
- Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- John Vanthof, Opposition House Leader and Critic, Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Marit Stiles, Leader, Official Opposition
- Mike Schreiner, Leader, Green Party of Ontario
- John Fraser, Interim Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario

Act Now!

<https://www.nfu.ca/speak-up-to-protect-ontarios-farmland-for-farming/>

Lake Simcoe Area Events – Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition

1) Laugh For Lake Simcoe, May 26th at The Orillia Opera House: The Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition's annual comedy fundraiser features 4 of Canada's top comedians, and so much more. Find all of the details [here](#).

2) Bradford Bypass Townhall Meetings:

Did you think the Bradford Bypass was already a "done deal"? Not necessarily, thanks to a recent [court ruling](#). The Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition, Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition and FROGS are inviting the public to attend one (or more) free IN-PERSON Townhall events (Bradford, Holland Landing & Sutton) to learn about and discuss the impacts the Bradford Bypass would have, what the alternatives are, and what we may still be able to do to delay and/or stop this project.

Bradford: Sunday June 4th, 4-6 p.m.

Bradford & District Memorial Community Centre, (Old Community Centre) 125 Simcoe Road, Bradford – Auditorium Room upstairs

Add this event to your google calendar using this

link: <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/event?action=TEMPLATE&tmeid=NW5xaTU5cGdjOGU2b3YzY2p1MDBjOW00NGQgY2xhaXJlM1hbGNvbG1zb25AbQ&tmsrc=claire.malcolmson%40gmail.com>

Sutton: Sunday June 11th, 3-5 p.m.

The Link, 20849 Dalton Road, Sutton.

Add this event to your google calendar using this

link: <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/event?action=TEMPLATE&tmeid=NWxmdmVkb3Vlam5jY2J1cmFjYWx1YjMyN3EgY2xhaXJlM1hbGNvbG1zb25AbQ&tmsrc=claire.malcolmson%40gmail.com>

East Gwillimbury: Tuesday June 20th, 6-8 p.m.

Holland Landing Public Library, Trillium Room, 19513 Yonge Street, Holland Landing.

Add this event to your google calendar using this

link: <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/event?action=TEMPLATE&tmeid=MWZ2YnNyaGNuNmRkcjhkNGJlZW11ZHVvMzEgY2xhaXJlM1hbGNvbG1zb25AbQ&tmsrc=claire.malcolmson%40gmail.com>

Walk-ins welcome, but if you want to get on a list for email reminders, please add your information to this secure form: [Interest in Bradford Bypass & Townhalls](#)

Durham Region Area Events: Stop Sprawl Durham – Oak Ridges Moraine, South Lake Simcoe headwater streams, Duffins/Rouge rivers etc.

Stop Sprawl Durham: stopsprawldurham@gmail.com

Follow-up since SLSN Past Newsletter Outing Rouge N.U.P. article.

The biggest and most controversial Greenbelt carveout occurred beside the Rouge National Park in the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve. It is being reviewed by the Federal government for its potential impacts to the park and species at risk.

Catch up with Durham stop sprawl work, including making comments on the Official Plan by reviewing their most recent newsletter and actions [HERE](#).



Watersheds across Durham stand to be adversely impacted including the **Carruthers Creek Headwaters above Ajax**. The lush rolling landscape **will be urbanized** if this Official Plan is locked in as is. If you care deeply about our watersheds and are concerned about the steep costs of

preparing for and mitigating flood risk, this is the moment to raise your hand and make your voice heard.

Materials to be considered at this Special Meeting, including the recommended final draft Regional Official Plan, will be available on May 3 [HERE](#).

We're here to help you!

Want to know why sprawl is bad for us? Visit: [Why stop S P R A W L?](#)

Want to understand for yourself if we actually *need* the amount of land proposed for new areas? [Read our submission to the Auditor General of Ontario](#). Or this [report from former Waterloo Chief Planner, Kevin Eby](#).

What to see how Regional Councillors voted for BILD-proposed plan a year ago? [Watch the meeting linked on this page](#) (scroll down).

Need help sending a letter to your Regional Councillor? Find an email [list here](#).

Suggested wording for a letter (don't forget to personalize the wording to make it your own!):

*Durham Region's Draft Official Plan is a **multigenerational screw-up of epic proportions!***

Taken together, recent decisions of Durham Council and the Province will push roughly 14,000 acres of new sprawl outward onto prime farmland and natural landscapes. It means these precious acres of farmland, wetland and woodland will be destroyed forever! It means taxpayers will pay higher taxes to subsidize infrastructure costs for the benefit of big developers. It means this plan will undermine our ability to build the compact, climate-resilient communities that are urgently required.

Please vote against this draft and work to reduce the amount of land proposed for growth areas. Maximize the land that we already have allocated and allow inching outwards only when no other option remains. I urge you not to cave to pressure from the development industry. Put the needs of your constituents - present and future - first.

*Lobbyists for the building and development industry are at the front of the line asking for a HUGE SLICE OF CAKE, and their haste to secure it will disadvantage all of us. Durham Region can offer them the smallest possible slice first and then only **offer more** when the shared consequences are better understood, and builders can tangibly demonstrate the benefits of securing more "cake" to everyone, not just those at the **VIP table**.*



Have you signed this letter which is now sent to Ford, Clark, Bethlenfalvy and Ashe?
[Click and send now!](#)

We know what you must be thinking! Why target Pickering Mayor Kevin Ashe? Didn't he vote to oppose the Greenbelt carveouts and urbanization of DRAP on December 5, 2022 with the rest of Pickering Council? He did! But...

...Mayor Ashe hasn't retracted a letter he sent to Minister Clark on November 16 endorsing sprawl in the Ag Preserve which was sent without approval from the newly elected Pickering Council:

"Dear Minister Clark,

You recently received a letter from Mayor Ryan requesting the repeal of the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act, 2005, in the city of Pickering. As the newly elected mayor of the city, I would like to support this request."

Don't fancy what we've pre-drafted in the automated letter? You can go ahead and edit in the text box to make it your own. **Personalization of these letters is always a great idea!**

Read this excellent blog on car-dependency by a member of 'Stop Sprawl Durham':
<https://anoutsidechance.com/2023/05/11/building-car-dependent-neighborhoods/>



Pickering NOT A WILLING HOST for an airport!

It's official! Pickering is NOT A WILLING HOST for an airport and will be a champion of high frequency rail instead!

It was **another late night at Council**, but in a vote of 6-1, the city returned to the historic position of opposition to an airport in north Pickering.

Led by Councillors Nagy and Cook, the motion that had been twice deferred, passed with support from Councillors Brenner, Butt, Robinson and Pickles. Mayor Ashe, while not opposed to an airport, did vote in support of advocacy for high frequency rail.

Please write the councillors who voted in support of this motion and thank them!

Next, please **ask your Regional Councillors to strip out wording in the draft Durham Official Plan that indicates strong support for an airport** as part of the Region's economic development goals. Read more in the **submission by Land Over Landings to Envision Durham** (written prior to recent "not a willing host" motion).

You can add the suggested paragraph below to the email to regional councillors that you're sending (see Official Plan section above):

Please remove mention of airport and related services on the Pickering Lands in the draft Official Plan. The Plan must not pin future economic benefits and prosperity on the operations of an unapproved and increasingly unlikely potential future airport. I request that the policy directions in the Official Plan be modified, especially given the recent motion informing the Region that Pickering is NOT A WILLING HOST for an airport.



ACTION NEEDED - #NoPickeringAirport Motion

Send letters (or calls) to **Pickering Council**. If you're a Pickering resident, and **especially if Councillors Robinson, Pickles, or Butt are your councillors**, tell them to keep their promises. They assured their constituents they opposed an airport yet voted to defer a motion confirming that Pickering is **not a willing host** for a potential future airport.

Email:

sbutt@pickering.ca

dpickles@pickering.ca

lrobinson@pickering.ca

CC:

chair@durham.ca, mayor@pickering.ca

See these YouTube links for Councillors **Butt**, **Pickles**, and **Robinson** affirming their airport positions. Write and implore them to **"KEEP YOUR PROMISES!"**

See (and borrow from!) our submission to
ENVISION DURHAM re: draft Official Plan



SUBMISSION TO ENVISION DURHAM Comments on Draft Official Plan

April 3, 2023

Introduction

In March the United Nations warned yet again that we are in an urgent climate crisis that demands rapid and sweeping changes both in the next seven years and through the following twenty years.¹ This is virtually the same time horizon as is covered by the Durham Official Plan.

However, in spite of the declaration of a climate emergency by Durham Region Council, the draft Regional Official Plan is, in key respects, a plan to continue "business as usual" through the years up to 2051.

This business-as-usual approach is characterized by the continuing conversion of precious farmland to low- and medium-density suburban development, and the continuing reliance on high-energy transportation options to move between geographically dispersed activity centres. A business-as-usual approach will make it difficult or impossible for Durham Region to meet its expressed climate mitigation goals, while simultaneously making Durham communities more vulnerable to the damaging impacts of climate destabilization as the crisis becomes increasingly severe.

This is not to say there are no good ideas in the draft Official Plan. There are many good ideas, reflecting in part the very progressive approach taken by Durham Region planning staff and the public consultation process in 2021 and early 2022. However, these good ideas are undercut by other policies enacted by Durham Region, particularly the substantial additions to urban settlement areas reflected in the current draft Official Plan.

In this response to the Draft Regional Official Plan (hereinafter, "the Plan"), we will discuss some of the laudable goals set out throughout the Plan. We will also point out why, in its current form, the Plan includes provisions that will effectively make the realization of its stated goals unlikely if not impossible.

Public opinion survey shows 4 out of 5 Ontarians are calling for a repeal of Bill 23!

Information Release, SPR, April 2023
For more information e-mail policy2023@bell.net

An Assessment of Ontario Public Opinion Regarding Bill 23 (the *More Homes Built Faster Act*) and Related Measures Affecting the Greenbelt and Affordable Housing

Toronto, April 2023

Highlights: On-line survey research was conducted in the period December 2022 to March 2023, to assess Ontario public opinion regarding the recent measures by the Government of Ontario related to Bill 23 and its potential impact on housing and the Greenbelt.

The on-line survey research was carried out independently by an expert survey research group and not funded by government or other sources. Dozens of NGOs and community organizations from across Ontario participated in the stakeholder portion of the survey.

The results show widespread opposition in Ontario to the Government's Bill 23 and measures affecting the Greenbelt and affordable housing. Based on over 6,400 responses, the survey showed, in summary:

- **In a random sample survey, four out of five Ontarians surveyed (81%) called for the repeal of Bill 23 and for an ethics review on the Government's handling of these measures.** People are calling for Government action to reconsider these measures.
- **As to housing, the government rationale for Bill 23 and the related measures, 79% of those surveyed believe the government's measures will have no impact on the affordable housing which is desperately needed in Ontario today.**
- **At 80%, opposition is much higher than a Mainstreet survey published in December 2022, and another published by Abacus Surveys in March 2023 which both reported that people were opposed to the Bill 23 measures 2 to 1.** In both of those surveys, Ontarians were vehemently opposed to the Bill 23-related measures adopted.
- **In additional targeted surveys: Opposition was shown to be widespread across many specific groups examined (such as farmers, planners, housing providers, ratepayers (homeowners), and others), not only among environmental groups.** Further, 80-90% of Ontarians pointed to numerous serious, negative impacts expected from these measures in areas as diverse as municipal finance, housing, farming, and environment.

In short, a strong majority of Ontarians urge the Government to reverse the Bill 23 measures.

More details are provided within.

Ontario Nature News and Information Links

<https://ontarionature.org/>

May 2023 conservation updates for Ontario Nature's 150 member groups and their supporters. Together, we are the voice for nature. Please share this monthly newsletter with members of your group.

New Groups!

Ontario Nature is pleased to welcome two new groups to our Nature Network this spring.

Heart Lake Turtle Troopers: Formed in 2021, HLTT's mission is to support the protection and monitoring of the local turtle population through a citizen science volunteer program, by working in partnership with community stakeholders to raise community awareness, recruit and engage citizen volunteers and organize and deliver public engagement activities. HLTT are based in Brampton and will join the Carolinian East Region.

Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory: Formed in 1995, PEptBO is a registered charity with a mandate to monitor, report on and promote analysis of bird migration and to act as official caretaker of the Prince Edward County South Shore Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA). PEptBO will join the Ontario East Region.

Sign Action Alert on proposed Provincial Policy Statement

In keeping with many recent law and policy changes that facilitate sprawl development, the provincial government is now proposing to replace the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan) with a new Provincial Planning Statement (ERO #019-6813).

This proposal is deeply concerning, given that the PPS and the Growth Plan are critical provincial policies that provide comprehensive, integrated, balanced direction on land use planning. The proposed new Provincial Planning Statement will jeopardize decades of progress on land use policy. For more information and to sign the Action alert, go to Ontario Nature Website.

New Coalition Seeks Regulation on Sale of Invasive Plants

The Great Lakes West Regional Meeting hosted an informative talk by Cathy Kavassalis of Canadian Coalition for Invasive Plant Regulation (CCIPR) that has an important initiative we wanted to share with the entire network and beyond:

Founded in 2022, CCIPR wants invasive plants in the horticultural and the pet/aquarium trade regulated and is calling on the Government of Canada to act. If the status quo remains, Canada will fail to safeguard our country's biodiversity and will fall short of its international obligations by 2030.

A coalition of volunteers, representing organizations and individuals from across Canada have developed six recommendations to improve policies, tools, and regulations for invasive plant management. Invasive plants are harming our economy, environment and public health.

Visit ccipr.ca for more information and to download the latest whitepaper. It details the current risks, and offers insight into what we can do to change Canada's current path including developing a risk assessment database, banning high-risk plants, and labelling risky plants at the point of sale.

Article submitted by CCIPR

LASC Brings Karst and Alvar Ecology to the Public Eye

The Lennox and Addington Stewardship Council (LASC) has created some practical resources on unique karst and alvar habitat, including this educational video (credit to Eleanor Crowder) and informative backgrounder. Karst and alvar are home to many rare and at-risk species, including the loggerhead shrike.

The Wildlife Preservation Canada 2022 data reveals 68% of the breeding pairs of loggerhead shrike are found in the Napanee Plain. There are 90 alvars in the Napanee Plain Natural Area which represent an area of 729.75 hectares. In Ontario, alvar/karst landscapes can be found from Prince Edward County and north to Marmora. Alvars that have survived climate changes and invasive species are now threatened by quarrying, development, new infrastructure, suburbanization, and recreational vehicles.

LASC would like to acknowledge members Adele Crowder and Amanda Gray, two retired Queen's University professors, for the creation of these resources which have been shared with municipalities and other organizations.

Article submitted by the Lennox & Addington Stewardship Council

Reduce Your Environmental Footprint

Our planet's natural environment is under unprecedented stress. We need systemic change to address the most pressing environmental issues we face today, but there are still many ways that we as individuals can contribute to restoring a healthy planet by reducing our environmental footprint. Here are suggestions to get you started.

Enabled Birding Mapping Project on Carden Alvar – Birding is for EveryBody

Accessible? Or not? The lack of information about accessible birding locations is a barrier for many. Birds Canada, Ontario Field Ornithologists and Toronto Ornithological Club are working on a project to allow users to select a trail and receive a map with detailed information such as parking, obstacles, trail surface and slope.

Armed with enthusiasm and phone apps, members of the Carden Field Naturalists have volunteered to assess trails in Carden. The resulting maps of Carden and 11 other areas in Ontario will help people of all abilities find the information they need to plan and enjoy a visit to birding hot spots.

Article submitted by Ann Gray, Carden Field Naturalists

Interesting Links and Opportunities

- Learn about the proposed changes to the Provincial Policy Statement and the impacts on nature and farmland at Ontario Farmland Trust's lunch and learn webinar on May 17.
- The first week of June is International Nature Journaling Week – a free opportunity to learn more about how you can use observation, writing, and sketching to deepen your connection to nature.
- Join Ontario Nature and the Owen Sound Field Naturalists for a Bioblitz of Sauble Dunes Nature Reserve on Saturday, May 27.

GREENPEACE



The bees and our food system are in trouble. The American bumblebee, a native species of Canada, is on the verge of extinction. **Shockingly, scientists have estimated that the population of bumblebees has declined by a staggering 99 percent over the past three decades, with grave implications for the entire ecosystem.** [1] [2]

But here's the good news: You have the power to make a difference right now. The government just shared plans to launch a 60 day consultation on its national plans to protect nature. By signing this petition, you can call upon Steven Guilbeault, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, to take immediate action and ban the dangerous insecticides which are harmful to the bees.

Call out to the government for action now 

It's not just the American bumblebee that is under threat. Bees, butterflies, and other essential pollinators are disappearing at an alarming rate worldwide. This dire situation is caused by the use of harmful insecticides, diseases, habitat loss, and climate change. [4] **The consequences of their disappearance are far-reaching, as scientists estimate that 1/3 of the global food supply relies on the pollination services provided by bees and other insects.** [3] **Without them, our entire food system will be in serious jeopardy.**

Save the bees now 

To avert this crisis, we need to ban harmful insecticides and herbicides, such as neonicotinoids and glyphosate, which are devastating bee, butterfly, and other insect populations on a massive scale. Shockingly, Canada currently lacks comprehensive legislation to protect these little engineers in our food chain. Meanwhile, several European countries have already taken action and banned harmful insecticides that remain legal in Canada. [5] It's high time we catch up and safeguard our food system and the natural world.

You can play a crucial role in this fight for the survival of bees and pollinators. I urge you to add your name to our petition today, to demand immediate action from Minister Steven Guilbeault. Every signature counts, and your support will help us demonstrate the widespread concern for this issue and the urgent need for change.

Thank you for your time and commitment to this vital cause. By standing up for bees and pollinators today, we are securing a healthier and more sustainable future for ourselves and future generations.

Shane

Head of Nature and Food Campaign, Greenpeace Canada

SOURCES

[1] <https://canadiangeographic.ca/articles/our-shared-garden-the-importance-of-native-plants/>

[2] <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/bumblebees-decline-pollinators-1.5106260>

[3] <https://www.usda.gov/peoples-garden/pollinators>

[4] <https://www.un.org/en/observances/bee-day>

[5] <https://blog.cwf-fcf.org/index.php/en/why-did-health-canada-change-their-mind-about-neonics/>

Greenpeace, 33 Cecil Street, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1N1

[Unsubscribe](#) [Manage preferences](#)

Bird populations Decline in North America at Tipping Point

2023-04-17

Audubon



Golden-winged Warbler.

Birds are at a tipping point

“Urgent action is needed to help these birds before they become endangered.” That was the dire warning in the latest State of the Birds report from the U.S. North American Bird Conservation Initiative: **More than half of U.S. bird species are in decline. And of those, 70 species, including the beloved Golden-winged Warbler and Rufous Hummingbird, are identified as at a “Tipping Point”—birds that have lost 50% or more of their populations in the past 50 years and are on track to lose another half or more in the coming decades.**

Yet there is hope for birds because we have *you*—and together, we’re helping them survive by protecting the places they need.

2023-05-02

David Suzuki Foundation

To view this email as a web page, [click here](#)



Federal environment minister says Ontario is failing caribou

Federal Environment and Climate Change Minister Guilbeault and his team have assessed — not for the first time! — that Ontario is failing to effectively protect the habitat that boreal caribou need to recover and survive.

This assessment mandates the minister to make a recommendation to cabinet to employ a “critical habitat protection order,” which would enable the federal government to intervene.

Cabinet has seen similar recommendations before and decided not to act.

Tell cabinet to issue the order to protect caribou

Time is running out. Canada’s failings in protecting species at risk recently made [headlines](#).

Ontario still hasn’t developed caribou range plans — though it was mandated to do so in 2012. Instead, it’s granted the forestry industry a permanent exemption from Endangered Species Act prohibitions and has no mechanism for monitoring cumulative effects on caribou habitat.

Please join us in [asking for an emergency order](#) to protect critical caribou habitat in Ontario.

Thank you for caring about caribou.

Rachel Plotkin
Boreal Project Manager

P.S. To ensure caribou have a future in Ontario, cabinet must act. [Will you help?](#)

SLSN -This is an important Ontario Wildlife issue that our organization has long brought to members attention. Still little would seem to have been Done.

Paul Harpley SLSN
