



GeogNews

News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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U Victoria's Trisalyn Nelson's SPAR Lab applies geomatics to grizzly bear conservation: We live in a world filled with spatial information and many geographers are making the most of it. At the forefront is UVic's Spatial Pattern Analysis and Research (SPAR) Lab, headed by Trisalyn Nelson. She and the students in the lab use spatial data to provide analysis on everything from when to close roads so that female grizzly bears can best feed, to helping predict crime areas, to mapping local food supply and demand. "Our society is now generating incredible amounts of spatial information, creating an explosion of really large datasets that we can use for research and projects in communities," says Nelson. The SPAR lab often teams up with other institutions or businesses to tackle issues. Recently, they worked with the Foothills Research Institute, looking at the impacts of habitat conditions and human disturbance on the long-term stress and health of grizzly bears in northern Alberta. Researchers can't ask a grizzly why it prefers one patch of berries over another, but the animal's travel patterns—collected via satellite collars—speak for them. For example, mapping found that female grizzlies spend more time than male bears near roads. That puts them at a higher risk of human-caused mortality, either from poaching or being struck by vehicles. "The findings have some pretty important management implications," says Nelson. "Using maps, we can locate where and when conflict between people and bears is likely." [UVic knowEdge](#)

Dalhousie U's James Boxall targets students' difficulty negotiating maps: Students today may know how to find these places using Google, but a Dalhousie University geography professor says they have trouble pinpointing them on good old-fashioned maps. James Boxall, director of Dalhousie's Geographical Information Sciences Centre, says when he gives his first-year geography students a quiz, they only get about half the answers right. And students' scores aren't getting any better. Thirty years ago, students on average answered about 70% of his questions correctly. "Their understanding of the most basic, basic elements of the world has been getting worse over time," said Boxall "I think maybe we're relying too much on Wikipedia and Google Earth, where the technology will answer the question right in front of us. It trivializes learning and knowledge." Boxall says the amount of basic geography that students learn in high school is also part of the problem and that recent studies show roughly half of the geography teachers in Canada don't have expertise or training in the subject, with geography "lumped in" with history and sociology in social studies classes. He hopes that a declaration endorsed by the Canadian Association of Geographers and the Royal Canadian Geographical Society to promote geography and support educators will help improve understanding of geography. [Herald News](#)

U Victoria's Chris Darimont on Salmon eating wolves near Bella Bella: [Chris Darimont](#), an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Victoria, recently provided comment for a CBC TV story about salmon-eating wolves near Bella Bella in the Great Bear Rainforest. Chris is an interdisciplinary conservation scientist who applies natural and social science tools to confront conservation problems that are both conceptually interesting and acutely applied. [CBC TV](#)

U Alberta's Sandeep Agrawal urges urban planners to think about human rights issues: Urban planners must consider the impact of zoning laws on human rights when they decide how land should be used, says Sandeep Agrawal head of the University of Alberta planning program. Sandeep was hired to give an expert opinion after an advocacy group last year challenged a Toronto requirement that group homes for mentally ill people needed to be at least 250 metres apart. The separation was introduced decades ago to prevent concentrations of these facilities due to fears about crime, lower property values and other disruption, Agrawal says. But opponents argued the rules breached human rights protections by stigmatizing people without justification based on their illness, he said Friday. "I have not come across any documentation or study that says (these) group homes ... have a harmful impact on their surroundings," said Agrawal, who at the time was a professor at Toronto's Ryerson University. "People are afraid, it's a perception, but there's no documented evidence of its harm whatsoever." The case went to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario and the courts. Several other municipalities changed their rules, and the separation was eventually eliminated by Toronto city council as part of an overhaul of zoning regulations, he said. [Edmonton Journal](#)

Memorial U geographers put graduate spotlight on Kim Olson: After graduating with her MA in Geography in 2011, Kimberly Olson became one of the Regional Partnership Planners for the Rural Secretariat, Office of Public Engagement, an entity in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador that strives to enhance the sustainability of rural communities and regions in the province. "For me, geography is about the interactions between people (citizens, government, academia, nonprofit sector, etc.) and the environment (physical and cultural)," stated Kim. "Much of what I do with the Rural Secretariat touches on this very topic and includes engaging the public on issues including land use planning and resource management and conducting community-based research on issues that impact the region." "Completing a MA in Geography has opened many doors, including the opportunity to work in a field that is complimentary to my studies. [Memorial Geography](#)

U Victoria's Cam Owens on environmental assessment processes: In one of the latest in the Faces of UVic Research project [Cam Owens](#), an Assistant Teaching Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Victoria, talks about his research on the environmental assessment process. Cam's research interests surround the following three themes: land use conflict and decision making; theories of place and sustainable cities. [Faces of UVic Research: Cameron Owens](#)

Crime pays for Simon Fraser U's Martin Andresen: Martin Andresen, an associate professor of criminology who uses spatial statistics and geographic information systems to study urban crime patterns, has won the Julian M. Szeicz Award for Early Career Achievement from the Canadian Association of Geographers. Andresen has taught at SFU since earning his PhD in 2006. He won the Early Career Achievement award in recognition of his contributions to the geography of crime, as well as the geography of international trade, with a focus on Canadian issues. With a PhD in geography and a BA and MA in economics, Andresen has a unique insight into international trade. In fact, his most impressive accomplishment to date is solving the "border puzzle"—a 15-year-old economic concept that claimed there was 22 times more trade between Canadian provinces than with U.S. states. While that theory did control for factors such as the economic size of provinces and states, and the distances between them, "it just didn't make any sense," says Andresen. "And if you did the math, it basically was impossible." He says that gathering the correct data and using appropriate statistical methods makes that border-effect disappear. [SFU People](#)



WDCAG 2014

Western Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers

*The University of Victoria is situated
on the traditional territories of Coast Salish First Nations*

The Department of Geography at the University of Victoria is pleased to host the Annual Meeting of the Western Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers, March 7-8, 2014.

Victoria is a coastal community at the southern tip of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. We enjoy the most temperate of Canada's climates, gorgeous scenery and a rich cultural history.

March 7th will feature a variety of field excursions followed by a keynote speaker in the evening; and March 8th a day of presentations followed by a banquet celebration.

Faculty, staff, students and others are invited to present their research tied to the conference themes of: Community-Engaged Research, Teaching and Learning; Environment and Sustainability; Geomatics; Human Geography; and, Physical Geography

Abstract Submissions: All interested presenters are asked to submit an abstract of 250 words through the registration system at: wdcag.geog.uvic.ca by Friday, January 24th, 2014. Details for preparing your abstract are available at the conference website.

Presentation formats

Oral presentations: Grouped by theme, sessions will include 3-4 15 minute presentations with 5 minutes for questions.

Poster presentations: Posters will be displayed throughout the conference. Authors should be prepared to present a brief summary of their materials and be available for questions during a scheduled poster presentation session. Materials should be of professional quality and be clearly legible from a distance of three to four feet.

Workshops: Workshops will be 45-60 minutes in length including time for discussion and questions. Preference will be given to proposals that are participatory, interactive, innovative and / or collaborative.

Other ideas? Interested in organizing a panel discussion? Visual or performance art? Something a little outside the box? As part of our review process, we'd love to hear about it to explore the possibilities! Please email us at wdcag@geog.uvic.ca

Logistics: All rooms will have digital projectors and a PC with MS PowerPoint available for presenters. It is the presenter's responsibility to ensure the compatibility of their presentation. Please bring your presentation on a USB flash drive to be uploaded at the beginning of your session.

For further information or questions visit <http://wdcag.geog.uvic.ca> or contact wdcag@geog.uvic.ca

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

B.C. Eaton and M.A. Hassan. 2013. [Scale-dependent interactions between wood and channel dynamics: modeling jam formation and sediment storage in gravel-bed streams](#). Journal of Geophysical Research: Earth Surface. DOI:10.1002/2013JF002917

Lynn-Ee Ho and David Ley. 2013. ["Middling" Chinese returnees or immigrants from Canada? The ambiguity of return migration and claims to modernity](#). Asian Studies Review. DOI:10.1080/10357823.2013.853167

T. Hoffmann, T. Müller, E.A. Johnson and Y.E. Martin. 2013. [Postglacial adjustment of steep, low-order drainage basins, Canadian Rocky Mountains](#). Journal of Geophysical Research: Earth Surface. DOI:10.1002/2013JF002846

Aleck Ostry and Kathryn Morrison. 2013. [Method for estimating the extent of regional food self-sufficiency and dietary ill health in the Province of British Columbia, Canada](#). Sustainability 5:4949-4960.

Yolande Pottie-Sherman and Daniel Hiebert. 2013. [Authenticity with a bang: Exploring suburban culture and migration through the new phenomenon of the Richmond Night Market](#). Urban Studies. DOI:10.1177/0042098013510954

Emilie Roy-Dufresne, Travis Logan, Julie A. Simon, Gail L. Chmura and Virginie Millien. 2013. [Poleward expansion of the white-footed mouse \(*Peromyscus leucopus*\) under climate change: Implications for the spread of lyme disease](#). PLOS|One. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0080724

J.M.E. Tondu, K.W. Turner, B.B. Wolfe, R.I. Hall, T.W.D. Edwards and I. McDonald. 2013. [Using water isotope tracers to develop the hydrological component of a long-term aquatic ecosystem monitoring program for a northern lake-rich landscape](#). Arctic, Antarctic, and Alpine Research 45:594-614.

Heidi Walker, A. John Sinclair and Harry Spaling. 2014. [Public participation in and learning through SEA in Kenya](#). Environmental Impact Assessment Review 45:1–9.

Linlin Xu, Jonathan Li and Alexander Brenning. 2013. [A comparative study of different classification techniques for marine oil spill identification using RADARSAT-1 imagery](#). Remote Sensing of Environment 141:14–23.

Other "Geographical" News

Canada dance mapping study: On September 25, 2013 the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council launched an interactive, searchable map of dance in Canada. The map pinpoints more than 900 dance-related organizations in genres that include Asian, African, Aboriginal, European, Latin, classical, folk, contemporary, urban and more. The organizations include presenters, funders, festivals, companies and dance schools. In coming weeks and months, we aim to triple the number of entries. This pioneering mapping microsite is an initiative of the Canada Dance Mapping Study. [Canada Council for the Arts](#)

Canadians answer the question: 'Where is Harvard University?' Smug Canadians got tremendous satisfaction earlier this week from sharing a video produced by Harvard University's daily newspaper, The Harvard Crimson. The video showed Harvard students -- among the best and brightest in America -- failing to answer a simple question: "What is the capital of Canada?" Now that we've had our laughs, we decided to turn the tables and find out how many Canadians know where Harvard is ([Answer](#)). Watch the video above to find out how they did. [The Province](#)

Cave and climate change: Educating the public at Rats Nest Cave, Alberta: Rats Nest Cave is a Provincial Historic Site whose mandate is to present its natural history to the public. In addition to a suite of interpretive messages, diverse climate changes over the geological history of the cave are discussed starting with the cave-hosting rock and the fossils it contains, to its origin along a thrust fault, ending with its enlargement and secondary mineralization during the Quaternary glaciations. A program of speleothem remediation has been undertaken which serves to reinforce the conservation and sustainability message. [20th National Cave and Karst Management Symposium](#)

Tourism evolution - on the synergies of tourism studies and evolutionary economic geography: Evolutionary Economic Geography (EEG) is receiving increasing interest from tourism scholars. EEG has proven to be a useful explanatory paradigm in other sectors. There remains, however, a lack of theoretical discussion on evolutionary principles of economic change within relatively low-technology service sectors, of which tourism is a prime example. This paper introduces EEG to a wider tourism audience by presenting the core principles of EEG and how they relate to tourism studies. A selection of new research paths combining EEG and tourism studies is highlighted together with a number of latent research synergies which can progress both EEG and tourism studies. [Annals of Tourism Research](#)

Greenland's shrunken ice sheet - we've been here before: Think Greenland's ice sheet is small today? It was smaller -- as small as it has ever been in recent history -- from 3-5,000 years ago. [ScienceDaily](#)

Some not so "Geographical" News



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GeogNews Archives: <http://www.geog.uvic.ca/dept/cag/geognews/geognews.html>
