



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers

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WLU's Philip Marsh wins prestigious J. Tuzo Wilson Medal: Laurier researcher Philip Marsh was recently named the winner of the J. Tuzo Wilson Medal, presented by the Canadian Geophysical Union (CGU). Marsh, a professor of Geography and Environmental Studies and Canada Research Chair in Cold Regions Water Science, is the first Laurier researcher to win the prestigious award. Since his first trip to the Arctic as a graduate student in 1975, Marsh has devoted himself to researching hydrology — the study of the quality, distribution and effects of water on the earth's surface — in Canada's north. Before joining Laurier in 2013, Marsh spent nearly 30 years as a research scientist at Environment Canada's National Hydrology Research Centre in Saskatoon, studying the effects of snow, ice and permafrost on the hydrology of key northern ecosystems in the Canadian Arctic islands, the western Canadian Arctic and the Mackenzie River Basin, while also working as an adjunct professor at the University of Saskatchewan. A leading authority on Arctic hydrology, Marsh has sat on several international and national societies and commissions, served as the editor of numerous journals and conferences and supervised and collaborated with an array of notable researchers in the field, including William Quinton, Laurier's Canada Research Chair in Cold Regions Hydrology and director of the university's Cold Regions Research Centre. Marsh received the Wilson Medal in early May at the CGU's joint annual meeting with the Canadian Society of Soil Science and Mantle Convection workshop in Banff, Alberta. [WLU Headlines](#)

Western U's Jason Gilliland involved in battle to banish bad buildings from Hamilton: Nine professionals who have volunteered to review key downtown and waterfront developments will begin with a couple of contentious projects. The city's first design review panel includes experienced architects, landscape architects, planners and urban designers. Western University geography professor Jason Gilliland served on the steering committee to set up a DRP in London, Ont. He says the panel review has delayed some projects but a focus on walkability, quality of public realm, heritage and place-making has led to better developments overall. To be effective, he says, the panel's mandate and scope must be crystal clear and the process must remain non-adversarial. "It's valuable if it doesn't stall valuable projects," said Gilliland, a Hamilton native who heads up WU's urban development program. "Developers know their business. They're not in it to make bad buildings. They realize they will make more money if they make good buildings." [Hamilton Spectator](#)

Carleton U's Dan Patterson honoured for great teaching: Dan Patterson from the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies was presented with 2014 Capital Educators' Awards for excellence in teaching. The Capital Educators' Awards recognize the achievements of outstanding educators and celebrates public education in the community – across the entire spectrum, from kindergarten to PhD. The award was presented at the Ottawa Network for Education's EduGala 2014 [Carleton Newsroom](#)

UNBC's Brian Menounos on unprecedented melt of British Columbia glaciers: The mountains of British Columbia cradle glaciers that have scored the landscape over millennia, shaping the rugged West Coast since long before it was the West Coast. But they're in rapid retreat, and an American state-of-the-union report on climate change has singled out the rapid melt in British Columbia and Alaska as a major climate change issue. "We've seen an acceleration of the melt from the glaciers," said Brian Menounos, a geography professor at the University of Northern British Columbia and one of the scientists involved in cross-border, multi-agency research into glacial loss. In B.C., researchers are keeping a close eye on the Lloyd George Icefield west of Fort Nelson, the Castle Creek Glacier near McBride, the Klinaklini and Tiedemann glaciers in the Coast Mountains, and glaciers in the Columbia River Basin. Early results suggest these glaciers are shedding 22 cubic kilometres of ice annually, or about 22 billion cubic metres of water. For comparison, an Olympic swimming pool contains about 2,500 cubic metres of water. "When we start to look at some of these individual mountain ranges, we're seeing some rates that are truly exceptional," Menounos said. Menounos predicts that the smaller glaciers in B.C. — in the Rocky Mountains and the Interior — will be mostly gone by the end of this century. [The Globe and Mail](#)

U Victoria's geography grad student Chris Krasowski mapping solar energy in City of Victoria: Rooftops in the downtown core are prime sun spots—and knowing where to plan future installation of solar panels to capture the most energy is a step in the right direction, agree municipal officials and UVic researchers. Through a partnership between the City of Victoria, the University of Victoria and a research grant from the Federal Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), geography grad student Chris Krasowski will generate a solar map that can identify the specific area of rooftops throughout the city of Victoria that might be best suited for solar equipment. "We need to understand how irradiance in the region varies both spatially and temporally," says Krasowski. "The information collected to make the solar map will tell us what kind of potential there is for rooftop solar energy generation," adds Krasowski. In order to create the solar energy map, Krasowski collects irradiance data using a pyranometer, an instrument that measures solar energy. Once enough data has been collected over the next year, Krasowski will be able to produce a solar baseline for the City of Victoria's VicMap. Along with the solar data, Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data will be used to provide information about rooftop slope and aspect, as well as shading effects from nearby buildings and trees. [The Ring – University of Victoria](#)

UBC geography graduate student Blake Allen a hops farm intern: There has been a steady growth in microbrewing in Vancouver. Alongside growth has been a willingness by local home brewers to purchase local hops. Add the fact that students love almost anything to do with beer, and a perfect match is made. The UBC hopyard—a sustainable, organic, small-scale, and community centric hop farm—is located at the UBC Farm. It supplies hops grown exclusively in Vancouver. Blake Allen, a human geography major graduating this spring, was the 2013 hopyard intern and responsible for the hops. It's easy to visit the farm with Blake whose eyes are filled with pride as he speaks about the hops. "I have brewed three batches of beer myself with the hops from the farm. One of them was the best batch of brew I ever made hands down," states Blake. Before becoming the intern, Blake had been obsessed with learning all he could about hops. "You would have seen me with a hop book in my hands almost everyday." Nothing held him back when he heard about the internship. It was the perfect opportunity to integrate his personal passion with his academic study. Under Blake's care, 2013 was the first substantial year of growth for the hopyard. Blake turned his attention on continuing to build relationships with Vancouver's home-brew community and created a business marketing plan to promote a u-pick that took place in late August. Blake not only learned hands-on skills on how to grow and maintain hops, but also the business, marketing, and community outreach sides of farming. Skills he can apply beyond his outdoor classroom. His internship included a directed studies course with Dr. Jim Vercaammen. [UBC Sustainability](#)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Jean T. Ellis, Douglas J. Sherman, Eugene J. Farrell and Bailiang Li. 2014. [Temporal and spatial variability of aeolian sand transport: Implications for field measurements](#). *Aeolian Research* 3:379–387.

Colin Robertson and Trisalyn A. Nelson. 2014. [An overview of spatial analysis of emerging infectious diseases](#). *The Professional Geographer*. DOI:10.1080/00330124.2014.907702.

Karen Ross. 2014. [“No Sir, She Was Not a Fool in the Field”: Gendered risks and sexual violence in immersed cross-cultural fieldwork](#). *The Professional Geographer*. DOI:10.1080/00330124.2014.907705

Emily Schnebele, Guido Cervone, Shamanth Kumar and Nigel Waters. 2014. [Real time estimation of the Calgary floods using limited remote sensing data](#). *Water* 6:381-398.

Jian Yang, Peijun Li and Yuhong He. 2014. [A multi-band approach to unsupervised scale parameter selection for multi-scale image segmentation](#). *ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing* 94:13–24.

Other “Geographical” News

So many PhD students, so few jobs: With too many fledgling academics and not enough entry-level jobs into the academy, why aren't institutions and permanent members of staff doing more to bridge the gulf between PhD and post-doc? Those nearing the end of their PhDs and wishing to pursue an academic career will not be blind to the incredibly tough job market they are facing, and neither are the established members of staff who supervise, train, and support them through their graduate study. However, while departments and academics acknowledge the role they must play in securing funding and opportunities for prospective PhD students, there is an astonishing culture of non-responsibility when it comes to ensuring that PhD graduates have academic roles to go into when they graduate. It is essential for universities to cease the irresponsible recruitment of as many PhD students as possible and time for them to start redressing the balance between early career research supply and demand. Quite simply: universities need to stop merely training academics and instead start providing some of the jobs they have trained them for. [The Guardian](#)

Ancient DNA ends Australia's claim to kiwi origins: Australia can no longer lay claim to the origins of the iconic New Zealand kiwi following new research showing the kiwi's closest relative is not the emu as was previously thought. Instead, the diminutive kiwi is most closely related to the extinct Madagascan elephant bird -- a 2-3 meter tall, 275 kg giant. And surprisingly, the study concluded, both of these flightless birds once flew. [ScienceDaily](#)

Flood love doesn't equal baby bump in southern Alberta: Despite a popular urban legend, it seems many southern Albertans were too busy rolling up their sleeves to drop their pants after last year's historic floods. There are academic studies that both support and reject the theory that catastrophes are somehow related to conception. Some researchers say natural disasters bring people closer together and create more intimate settings — like in the case of blackouts. But University of Calgary's Rebecca Sullivan cast further doubt, saying such urban myths are just fantastical reconstructions of everyday life. “We can believe there are crocodiles in the sewers of New York, just as we can believe that — during the flood — everyone was having amazing sex,” Sullivan said. “It's not out of the realm of possibility and it adds a level of fantastic-ness to an already liminal moment.” [Metro](#)

Urban geographer's brush with the law risks sending cold chill through social science: Almost two years ago Bradley L Garrett, boarded a plane at Heathrow airport. As it taxied on the runway, the British Transport Police arrived and dragged him off the plane. He was accused of conspiracy to commit criminal damage. Garrett, a geographer at the University of Oxford, originally from the US, went on trial earlier this month for alleged crimes surrounding his research into urban exploration. While Garrett clearly crossed certain legal boundaries, by embarking on what he called "recreational" trespass, he did so as an ethnographer conducting legitimate social scientific research for what he considered the public good. In the course of four years of ethnographic work, Garrett became very intimate with urban explorers and with this access was able to write a book of stunning detail about urban exploration in London and beyond. These explorers journey into buildings, construction sites and sewers, photographing the scenes as they go. Whether urban explorers are aware of it or not, their photographs show us how much of the world has been privatised, permanently segregated from the public by locks, hired guards, barbed wire and surveillance cameras for exclusive use by financial elites. This insight is a direct result of Garrett hanging out with these Underground spelunkers and skyscraper climbers. But hanging out with them also landed him in court. Since Garrett was prosecuted, we should be concerned about the chilling effect his case may have on social scientific research. [The Conversation](#)

Some not so "Geographical" News



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