



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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UQAR's Pascal Bernatchez expertise de pointe en risques naturels: Au Québec maritime, pas moins de 2100 kilomètres de côtes sont sensibles à l'érosion et 43 % des côtes sont potentiellement à risque de submersion. Sous la gouverne du professeur de géographie [Pascal Bernatchez](#), une équipe de chercheurs consacre ses recherches, depuis 2003, à la dynamique et à la gestion intégrée des zones côtières ainsi qu'aux causes naturelles et anthropiques qui influencent l'érosion côtière dans une perspective de développement durable des littoraux et à la déglaciation et aux variations du niveau marin dans l'Est du Québec. Le professeur Bernatchez est le titulaire, depuis 2007, de la Chaire de recherche en géoscience côtière. Financée par le gouvernement du Québec, cette chaire a établi des collaborations avec divers professeurs de l'UQAR et de l'ISMER, dont les géographes Bernard Héту, Thomas Buffin-Bélanger, Guillaume Marie et Simon Bélanger, la géochimiste Gwénaëlle Chaillou et les océanographes Simon Senneville, Dany Dumont, Guillaume St-Onge et Urs Neumeier. Se concentrant principalement sur l'estuaire et le golfe du Saint-Laurent, les travaux de la Chaire de recherche en géoscience côtière sont particulièrement importants pour l'aménagement et la compréhension de la dynamique des zones côtières du Québec maritime. Au fil des ans, la chaire a collaboré avec plus d'une soixantaine de partenaires gouvernementaux, municipaux, privés et organismes à but non lucratif. [UQAR-Info](#)

McGill U PhD candidate Michael Becker studying Arctic wildlife in a warming world: Michael Becker is a polar scientist at McGill University in the Department of Geography studying how our planet's changing climate is affecting the polar desert ecosystem of the Canadian High Arctic. He joined a team of wolf researchers and a BBC film crew to spend three months in a tent on the tundra as they tried to document the lives of a pack of wild wolves. Despite this remote location, the wolves that live here are not beyond the reach of our modern-day impacts. "The land they inhabit is warming faster than most of the planet. This is a surprisingly diverse region, where birds, mammals, and plants eke out a delicate existence in frigid temperatures" adds Becker. [McGill U News](#)

U Saskatchewan’s Colin Whitefield and Cherie J. Westbrook discovers that damming beavers are slowly changing the world: There are consequences of the successful efforts worldwide to save beavers from extinction. Along with the strong increase in their population over the past 100 years, these furry aquatic rodents have built many more ponds, establishing vital aquatic habitat. In doing so, however, they have created conditions for climate changing methane gas to be generated in this shallow standing water, and the gas is subsequently released into the atmosphere. In fact, 200 times more of this greenhouse gas is released from beaver ponds today than was the case around the year 1900, estimates a team of experts that includes Colin Whitefield and Cherie J. Westbrook from the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Saskatchewan. [ScienceDaily](#)

UQAR’s Nicolas Beaudry et Manon Savard récipiendaires de la Distinction Pascal-Parent: Les professeurs Nicolas Beaudry et [Manon Savard](#) sont les récipiendaires de la Distinction Pascal-Parent pour leur contribution à l’enseignement universitaire relativement dans le cadre du Chantier-école d’archéologie. Ce Chantier-école d’archéologie a transformé l’Île Saint-Barnabé, située au large du centre-ville de Rimouski, en véritable laboratoire de recherche. Les professeurs Beaudry et Savard, respectivement historien et géographe mais aussi archéologues, ont ainsi permis aux étudiantes et étudiants de l’UQAR d’investir le patrimoine bas-laurentien par l’enseignement pratique de l’archéologie. Collègue de M. Beaudry et de Mme Savard, le professeur et directeur du module d’histoire Jean-René Thuot indique que les étudiantes et les étudiants qui participent au Chantier-école d’archéologie en ressortent transformés. “Non seulement ont-ils pu participer à un projet scientifique – les travaux de l’île St-Barnabé –, mais ils réalisent qu’ils peuvent apporter une contribution, qu’ils peuvent développer une réflexion autonome, qu’ils peuvent s’autoriser à poser un regard sur un objet archéologique, et plus avant sur un objet culturel. En ce sens, le Chantier-école constitue un formidable catalyseur intellectuel dans le parcours des étudiantes et des étudiants.” [UQAR-Info](#)

U Toronto Mississauga’s Tenley Conway on why urban forests and green spaces matter: From New York’s Central Park to São Paulo’s Ibirapuera Park or Toronto’s High Park, green spaces are an integral – even iconic – element of many of the world’s leading cities. Associate Professor Tenley Conway, with the University of Toronto Mississauga’s geography department, researches how municipalities, NGOs, community groups and landowners influence patterns of forests within a city. “Urban green spaces provide a way for us to experience a bit of nature in our everyday lives. In a city like Toronto, access to green space is very important for residents who do not have the means to travel to remote wilderness destinations”, says Tenley. “A growing literature is examining the fascinating ways that city trees and other vegetation support the health and well-being of urban residents. For example, presence of treed spaces next to high density housing is associated with stronger social networks for residents. Additionally, urban green spaces provide a number of ecosystem services, like regulating micro-climates and controlling storm water run-off, which contribute to healthy, functioning cities.” [U of T News](#)

U Waterloo’s Rich Petrone helping restore lands to their natural state after oil and gas extraction: When Canadian energy players establish or expand an oil and gas development they go into it knowing they must restore the existing landscape to an acceptable state. Doing so often requires hydrological and ecological expertise beyond their capabilities. That’s why they rely on researchers in the Faculty of Environment to guide them through the process to ensure the restoration of a healthy ecosystem. “They’re mandated to put the land back to what they call “equivalent capacity,” and that means a lot of different things to different people,” explains Richard Petrone, a researcher in the department of Geography and Environmental Management (GEM). Petrone has been working for years studying the wetlands and forests in Canada’s western boreal forest to assess and advise energy companies on best practices, thus giving these ecosystems the best chance for a full recovery to sustainability. So far, he and a research team led by GEM’s Jonathan Price have built one of the first reclaimed wetlands in the oil sands. [UWaterloo Environment](#)



Brock Geography welcomes Mary Thornbush as Adjunct Professor. Dr. Thornbush is also an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham. [Brock News](#)

Memorial U's Charles Mather has served as head of the Geography Department for the six years that he has worked at MUN. He will be finishing up as head at the end of this month, resuming as associate professor in the new year. Norm Catto will be taking over as head of the department effective January 1. [Memorial U Geography News](#)

UNBC's Gail Fondahl was recently appointed to Scientific Council of the French Polar Institute Paul-Emile Victor. [UNBC News](#)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Emilie Cameron, Rebecca Mearns and Janet Tamalik McGrath. 2014. [Translating climate change: adaptation, resilience, and climate politics in Nunavut, Canada](#). Annals of the Association of American Geographers. DOI:10.1080/00045608.2014.973006

A.D. Clulow, C.S. Everson, M.G. Mengistu, J.S. Price, A. Nickless and G.P.W. Jewitt. 2014. [Extending periodic eddy covariance latent heat fluxes through tree sapflow measurements to estimate long-term total evaporation in a peat swamp forest](#). Hydrology and Earth System Sciences Discussions 11:13607–13661.

Jan F. Gogarten, Aerin L. Jacob, Ria R. Ghai, Jessica M. Rothman, Dennis Twinomugisha, Michael D. Wasserman and Colin A. Chapman. 2014. [Group size dynamics over 15+ years in an African forest primate community](#). Biotropica. DOI: 10.1111/btp.12177

Caleb Johnston and Geraldine Pratt. 2014. [Taking Nanay to the Philippines: transnational circuits of affect](#). In: Theatres of Affect. Edited by: E Hurley. University of Toronto Press, pp. 192-212.

Craig Townsend. 2014. [Spatial measurement of transit service frequency in Canada](#). Journeys. November 2014. 33-43.

Colin J. Whitfield, Helen M. Baulch, Kwok P. Chun and Cherie J. Westbrook. 2014. [Beaver-mediated methane emission: The effects of population growth in Eurasia and the Americas](#). Ambio. DOI:10.1007/s13280-014-0575-y

Xiuying Zhang, Dongmei Chen, Taiyang Zhong, Xiaomin Zhang, Min Cheng and Xinhui Li. 2014. [Assessment of cadmium \(Cd\) concentration in arable soil in China](#). Environmental Science and Pollution Research. DOI:10.1007/s11356-014-3892-6

Other “Geographical” News

Using Twitter to analyze mood in Canadian cities: Are some cities happier than others? Do single events dictate the mood of entire metropolitan areas? By analyzing tweets and the emotions they convey, researchers at the University of Ottawa hope to increase the knowledge smart cities have about their citizens’ quality of life. Putting theory to practice, researchers at the University of Ottawa compiled data from six cities—Ottawa, Montreal, Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto and Halifax. The data comprises 132,181 tweets from December 4 to December 10, 2014. A summary of the most interesting findings: When the Montreal Canadiens won over the Vancouver Canucks earlier this month, “happy” tweets by people in Montreal were 69% higher relative to those by their western counterparts; Halifax is Canada’s party city, with happy tweets on Friday evening and the weekend 17% higher relative to those posted by Vancouver residents during the same time; On average, Edmonton is the “least happy” city of the six, with most cities surpassing the proportion of happy tweets in Edmonton by 5% to 12%; and, Positive tweets were 13.8% higher in the morning in Vancouver and Montreal relative to Edmonton, while Ottawa (7.8% higher relative to Edmonton) and Toronto (8.6% higher relative to Edmonton) take over during the day. [UOttawa News](#)

UBC Okanagan faculties adopt mindfulness to improve learning: As the New Year approaches, many people take time to make resolutions. At UBC Okanagan, mindfulness has not only become a resolution, but a fast-growing movement to improve education—in and outside the classroom. Promoting Stress Management and Resiliency Techniques (known as SMART), smartUBC is a program originally developed in the United States intended to help educators. Evidence-based research proves that mindfulness programs create better educators. “The scientific evidence developed in the last 20 years is clear,” says LaGrange. “We can change our brains and by doing so we can become more mindful, more able to respond effectively and with less stress. We now know how the brain changes and what processes we can use to change our minds so that we can be happier, healthier and able to respond to others in ways that are kind and compassionate.” [UBC Media](#)

Volume of world’s oldest water estimated: The world’s oldest water, which is locked deep within the Earth’s crust, is present at a far greater volume than was thought. Researchers estimate there is about 11m cubic kilometres (2.5m cu miles) of it - more water than all the world's rivers, swamps and lakes put together. The researchers found that the water was reacting with the rock to release hydrogen: a potential food source. It means that great swathes of the deep crust could be harbouring life. [BBC News](#)

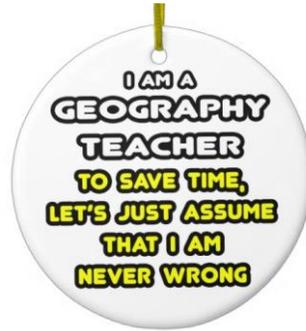
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Attention scientists, engineers, technologists, environmental managers and other stakeholders in Digital Earth: we welcome your participation in the Digital Earth 2015 Symposium as a presenter, and invite you to submit an Abstract of your proposed oral or poster presentation for consideration. Details on the Symposium can be found at the [digitalearth2015.ca website](http://digitalearth2015.ca), which also contains specific information on the [Call for Abstracts](#), as well as details for the [Call for Special Sessions and Workshops](#). Questions regarding the Symposium may be directed to info@digitalearth2015.ca

Some not so “Geographical” News



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

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