

Climate and Health E-News

Raising Awareness about Climate Change and Public Health in the Circumpolar North

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Circumpolar Climate Events Click [here](#) to view this month's map or visit our [archive](#).

Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Click [here](#) to see this month's map or visit our [archive](#).

High Arctic heat at 1,800-year high, outmatching 'medieval warm period' *October 1, 2012*. The Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard is now warmer than at any other time in the last 1,800 years according to a new study published in the journal [Geology](#). This includes the year 950 to 1250 when Vikings took advantage of ice-free waters to settle Greenland. Climate models suggest that by 2100 Svalbard will warm more than any other landmass on earth *with* average winter temperature rising by as much as 10 degrees C, or 18 degrees Fahrenheit. [ScienceDaily](#)

Scientist seeing fewer sick seals, walrus, polar bears *October 3, 2012*. The mysteries behind what made ice seals and walrus sick last year and caused bald spots on polar bears remains largely unanswered. Despite extensive laboratory analysis, no specific disease agent or process has been identified. "At this point we are thinking it may be a combination of factors," said NOAA spokesperson Julie Speegle. The theory is, something is weakening the animals' immune systems and in a more weakened state they are more susceptible to illness. Alaska Native hunters who rely on the animals for food, find the lack of answers unsettling. [Alaska Dispatch](#)

It's not too late for troubled fisheries *September 27, 2012* A study published in the journal [Science](#) finds that some 80 percent of the world's fisheries are in decline but could recover with proper management. The authors of found that taking quick action to allow depleted stocks to recover to sustainable levels could result in future catches that are 8 to 40 percent larger than are predicted if current unsustainable fishing practices continue. [ScienceDaily](#)

Want to eat locally, forage Alaska's wild plants *October 2, 2012*. How many folks think of food when they see a patch of [devil's club](#), or a cup of tea when they spot [Labrador](#) growing in a boggy marsh? And for that matter, how many even know what they're looking at? Foraging, a time-honored tradition in Alaska Native cultures, has largely fallen by the wayside of modern life. Even as more folks seek out local foods, most tend towards farmers' markets, fishing and hunting or gardening. But harvesting wild plants is another, often overlooked, avenue of subsistence. [Alaska Dispatch](#)

Video of the Week: Loss of Arctic sea ice and a 'giant parasol' *September 23, 2012*. The polar ice cap has always been like a giant parasol (umbrella) reflecting sunlight away from the Arctic Ocean. But the loss of our parasol is accelerating the disappearance of sea ice; a big problem as measured by the ongoing extreme weather in the Arctic. This excellent 6 minute video by the Yale Forum, explains the mechanisms at the ice edge and implications for global climate. [Yale Climate Change Forum](#)

Climate and Health E-News is received around the circumpolar north by people who are interested in climate change impacts and public health. For back issues click [here](#). To subscribe or unsubscribe, please click [here](#).

Regards – Mike

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Safe, Healthy, Sustainable Communities