



No. 170, August 16, 2013

**Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Network Updates** – We have four new observations posted on our [LEO - August Map](#) including about the bumper salmon berry harvest in Unalakleet, spruce bark beetle concerns in White Mountain, erosion and stream quality changes in Golovin area, and an interesting beetle in Pitkas Point . You can visit our map [archives](#) and follow LEO on [Facebook](#)

**Circumpolar Climate Events Updates** – Hot, dry weather across much of the circumpolar north has resulted in temperature records and wildfires in Alaska and Canada, Dutch elm infestations in Sweden, an early grain harvest in Finland, and urban polar bear troubles in Russia. See our [Climate Events Map](#).

**Invasive sawfly identified in Sitka** August 13, 2013. The green alder sawfly is native to Europe, East Asia and North Africa. The insect was first positively identified in Alaska in 2009. By that time, the sawfly was actively defoliating thin-leaf alders along riverbeds in Anchorage, Seward, Kenai and in the Matanuska-Susitna area. Michelle Putz with the U.S. Forest Service noticed one of her red alder trees in Sitka didn't look healthy. The tree was covered with hundreds of the pale-green caterpillar-like insects. [Associated Press](#)

**Arctic mussels affected by change in temperature, ice: study.** August 7, 2013. A recently published [study](#) from the coast of Greenland, finds that places where blue mussels thrive are “particularly sensitive to changes in air temperature and ice extension”. This is killing older mussels and pushing the mussels to other locations. [Nunatsiaq Online](#)

**Sea life relocating fast in response to climate change** August 9, 2013. Sea life is relocating towards the poles at a rate of hundreds of kilometers per decade, shaking up ecosystems and fishing industry. The changes are far more dramatic than those seen on land, where species have been moving towards the poles at just six kilometers per decade. Warm-water species such as tuna are now coming within reach of the Canadian border and having a negative impact on BC populations of Pacific salmon. [CBC](#)

**Permafrost thaw interrupting health care for Russian reindeer herders** August 5, 2013 The indigenous Nenets reindeer herders in northern Russia annually migrate several hundred kilometers between summer and winter pastures. In a warming climate, ice-rich permafrost is being significantly reduced, causing erosion and increasingly areas of open water. This is reducing the Nenets’ ability to travel and access healthcare centers in villages. [International Journal of Circumpolar Health](#)

**With warmer winters, ticks devastating N.H. moose population** August 9, 2013. It’s only a few weeks until the end of summer, a terrible time to be a moose in the New Hampshire wild. Tens of millions of winter ticks are preparing to hatch next month from eggs hidden in thick brush. There was a time when eggs laid in this age-old cycle perished on winter snow. But that hasn’t happened lately in New Hampshire, where a warming trend has winters starting later and ending sooner. [Washington Post](#)

**Video of the Week – Climate change and shift of the North Pole** May 16 2013. Alaska Native elders have been commenting for years about noticing changes in the orientation of the stars in the night sky. Now a [study](#) by researchers at the University of Texas, Austin, report that increased melting of the Greenland ice sheet, and to a lesser extent, ice loss in other parts of the globe have helped to shift the North Pole several centimeters east each year since 2005. [YouTube](#)

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*Regards – Mike*

Michael Brubaker  
Center for Climate and Health  
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

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