



Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Network – Please see our [LEO Network – Fall 2014](#) map for new posts about environmental change across Alaska, including: high PSP levels in Sand Point, unseasonable weather in Nanwalek, and explaining brown growths on Bethel whitefish. Visit our map archive and follow us on Facebook.

Climate Events in the Circumpolar North - View our Circumpolar Climate Events Map - [Fall 2014 Map](#) for news reports about the falling bird population in Finland, the die-off of seals from avian influenza in Sweden, avian influenza on farms and dead orcas in BC, continued warm weather and ice hazards in Alaska, record setting winds in Iceland, and a developing water crisis in Siberia. See our map archive [here](#).

Avian flu suspected in mass deaths of Scandinavian seals December 16, 2014. An outbreak of bird flu has likely killed about 3,000 seals off the coast of Sweden and Denmark this year. The virus was first detected among sick and dead seals found in April off the coast of Gothenburg southwest of Sweden - and the agency said the death toll was far higher than initially thought. Sweden has an estimated 10,000 seals. In late November, authorities in northern Germany reported that 1,600 seals had died and there have also been reports of seal deaths related to bird flu in Norway and the Netherlands. [Channel News Asia](#)

Avian flu outbreak spreads in BC December 15, 2014. *Mike Hager* - The Canadian Food Inspection Agency has added a ninth B.C. farm to its list of those infected by a highly-pathogenic strain of avian flu that broke out in the Fraser Valley this month. The outbreak means 233,800 birds are either dead or set to be euthanized, and it has also prompted surveillance measures affecting the southern half of B.C. Restrictions have been placed on the movement of poultry throughout the area. [Vancouver Sun](#)

Scientists seek cause of patchy baldness in Beaufort Sea polar bears December 11, 2014. *Yereth Rosen* - Stressed-out polar bears in the southern Beaufort Sea are losing some of their hair, but the precise cause of that stress is yet to be determined, according to a new study in the *Journal of Wildlife Diseases*. Scientists tracked the incidence of what is known as alopecia syndrome among southern Beaufort polar bears from 1998 to 2012. Maternal bears and cubs were not affected, suggesting something in the environment during the November-to-March period, when maternal bears and their cubs are denning. [Alaska Dispatch News](#)

Climate change takes a village December 12, 2014. *Kate Sheppard* – Shishmaref, a remote village of 563 people is located 30 miles south of the Arctic Circle, flanked by the Chukchi Sea to the north and an inlet to the south, and it sits atop rapidly melting permafrost. In the last decades, the island's shores have been eroding into the sea, falling off in giant chunks whenever a big storm hits. [Huffington Post](#)

Study provides first detailed look at how Greenland's ice is vanishing December 15, 2014. *Charlotte Hsu* – The Greenland Ice sheet is the second-largest body of ice on Earth. It covers an area about five times the size of New York State and Kansas combined, and if it melts completely, oceans could rise by 20 feet. This research shows how the elevation of the ice sheet is changing. [University of Buffalo Reporter](#)

Measuring elevation changes on the Greenland Ice Sheet (video) – March 25, 2014. Since the late 1970', NASA has been monitoring changes in the Greenland Ice Sheet. This stunning video captures how the surface elevation has changed in ways that are both more rapid and more complex than previously thought. [YouTube](#)

The Climate and Health E-News is read by people who are interested in climate change and public health in the circumpolar north. For back issues at the Alaska Medical Library, click [here](#). To subscribe or unsubscribe, click [here](#).

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