

The Northern Climate Observer

Climate Change and Health in the Circumpolar North

September 17, 2015

Observations: LEO Network—See new [August](#) posts about the salmon die-off near Seldovia, algae in Kodiak, and unusual beach debris near Shishmaref. See also a new [September](#) post about the polystyrene debris washing up on beaches in Kachemak Bay. THE NEW LEO APP IS HERE!! Click [here](#) to check out 'LEO Viewer'.

Events: See ClimeMap for stories about caribou declines, salmon booms, Japanese knotweed, and snowy owls. [ANTHC](#)

Trending: Massive seabird die-off hits Kodiak September 16, 2015 *Kayla DesRoches* - Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge bird biologist Robin Corcoran said some beaches have large numbers of carcasses; there are over a hundred on the shores of Pasgashack. Corcoran said the refuge first started receiving reports in April and May about a handful of murre die-offs. [KTOO](#) See also LEO Map of other bird-die off events [here](#).

Monitoring: OMG – Greenland's glaciers melting fast August 9, 2015 *Robin McKie* - A study on the rate at which ice sheets are melting has been launched by NASA. The aim of the Oceans Melting Greenland (OMG) study involves the release of more than 200 robot probes from aircraft of the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration's specialist fleet. [The Observer](#)

Research: A giant virus was just uncovered in melting ice September 9, 2015 *Rachel Feltman* - Let's get one thing out of the way really quickly: The ancient, giant virus recently discovered in melting Arctic ice is not going to kill you. But here's the bad news: It's not the first ancient virus that scientists have found frozen — it's the fourth found since 2003. And you can be sure it won't be the last. [The Washington Post](#)

Research: Northern forests are changing fast September 7, 2015 *Asaf Shalev* - Warmer and drier weather patterns in northern latitudes are driving the trend toward more severe fire seasons. In turn, wildfires, along with other factors such as insect infestations, are transforming the world's boreal forest ecosystem -- the vast northern forests that stretch from Interior Alaska through Canada, Northern Europe and Russia. [Alaska Dispatch News](#)

Research: Arctic mosquitoes thriving under climate change September 15, 2015 Warming temperatures are causing Arctic mosquitoes to grow faster and emerge earlier, significantly boosting their population and threatening the caribou they feed on. [Science Daily](#)

Observing: Alaska observer network promotes grass-roots environmental science September 13, 2015. *Yereth Rosen* - Before environmental changes can be quantified and analyzed in peer-reviewed academic studies, they have to be witnessed and reported. Enter the local observer network, which goes by the acronym LEO. Reports, filed in communities, include descriptions of sea ice, plants, fish and bird die-offs, the appearance of unusual species. [Alaska Dispatch News](#)

Video: Sunfish and pomfret sighting – September 3, 2015. Footage of a large ocean sunfish captured in a surface trawl off of Icy Point, Alaska in July 2015, courtesy of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Narration is by Joe Orsi, research fisheries biologist at NOAA's Ted Stevens Marine Research Institute at Auke Bay in Juneau, Alaska. [KTOO](#)

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