

The Art Zone Studio

The Original Outdoor Visual Arts Experience

NEWSLETTER

January 2024

In this Newsletter...

	Page #
“Environments”	
Environments is a community artist project culminating in a curated contemporary art exhibition, of unrivalled diverse art practice and work.	2
Art Shows and Festivals	5
Algonquin Canoe Trip	6
Conservation and Science News	7-11

As we enter the New Year the Studio is open only by appointment with the winter weather. The past autumn was relatively warm, and the rainy summer changed to sunny periods, and it was even seasonally warm through Christmas including up to 6 degrees C. on December 27, the day of the official Sutton Christmas Bird Count (CBC).

The big news for Paul and his art is an early winter group art show in Richmond Hill that he was invited to participate in, and was accepted with a major piece called, “South Lake Simcoe Greenbelt” landscape. It is an original masterwork of graphite on board, museum framed of authentic barnboard wood, 30 x 41" horizontal. More in the newsletter on this public art project and art exhibition below.

Paul is accepting contractual agreements for art shows and public engagements for his artwork now into mid-winter to confirm spring, summer events and appearances in southern and northern Ontario.

This newsletter also includes the Sutton CBC Summary Report, and a few key articles on conservation and environmental issues he is involved in and passionate about.

“Environments”

Environments is a community artist project culminating in a curated contemporary art exhibition, of unrivalled diverse art practice and work.

York Region is one of the most diverse areas in Canada, with a long history of migration and settlement. The Curator welcomed participants, volunteers and art exhibition submissions of original artworks related but not limited to the following topics: land, conservation, Greenbelt, loss, hope, the perception of development, and urban sprawl. Intended to showcase the culturally rich and artistically diverse vibrant art of the region, the exhibition limited submission to emerging and professional artists who reside or work in York Region. Artworks include painting, drawing, photography, printmaking, textiles and mixed media.



“South Lake Simcoe Greenbelt”, landscape, graphite on board, 30 x 41" by Paul Harpley

Paul Harpley submitted this one work to the exhibition demonstrating the dynamic natural and cultural landscape of the protected countryside sense of place, of our everyday lived experience in these spaces. Demonstrating their essential ecological, social, and psychological value to Ontarians. With an understated, intimate rendering, elegant design in graphite a longing of place is deeply felt.

The featured artists include, Paul Harpley, Kate Greenway, Hyeon Ju Lee, Sky Cheung, Andrea Taylor, Jing Fu, Talynka Drescher, Sara Guo, Sole Mustica, John Kokkinos, Andrea End, Gregory Chiykosk.

When: Tuesday, January 16 – Sunday, January 21, 2024

Location: Boynton House Art Space, Richmond Green, 1300 Elgin Mills Road East, Richmond Hill, ON

Hours: 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Admission: Free

Paul will be in attendance on Thursday, January 18 between 2 and 6 p.m. and again on Sunday, January 21 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. to discuss his work.

Contact Information: christryph@gmail.com

Curated by [Christos Damianos](#), ENVIRONMENTS is an art exhibition showcasing the work and vision of 12 York Region visual artists on the theme of environment and the Greenbelt.



The official 37th Annual Sutton Christmas Bird Count Summary Report

The Annual Sutton Christmas Bird Count was **Wednesday December 27, 2023** with a total of 7,176 individual birds, a noticeable decrease from last years count. On count day participants documented 51 species in the entire area. Geographically, the survey area includes parts of York Region's municipalities Georgina, East Gwillimbury; Durham Region's northwest of Uxbridge (old Scott Township) district; and parts of south-east Innisfil in Simcoe County. A total

of 36 participant observers formally involved in the field and at feeders for the count area this year engaged on the day.

The observation day started as overcast with some ground fog locally in wet areas at 6:30 a.m. for those “owling”. The air temperature was 5 degrees Celsius. As the day progressed the temperature rose only slightly by 1 degree by 12:30 p.m. continuing cloudy to the end of the day. Winds began from the east to northeast at 6 km/hour and were generally consistent all day. Lake Simcoe, and most moving rivers and streams were completely open water.

The heavy rains that began at daylight with seasonally very warm temperature during the count, were unexpected. In the many years the count had never had a survey day like this! The continuous rain for separate periods of time for 2-3 hours in some locations made observation from vehicles and walking in the field challenging. Many feeders were completely unproductive for birds in this weather event. The birds were clearly out in the bush, underneath cover. Given the challenging weather constraints for observation there were two incidences where some ducks and gulls were counted to species - family only level. Thanks to our good geographic coverage with participant observers, the total list (only 4 fewer species compared to a year ago) was commendable.

Some highlights and notables for the count day were, Golden-crowned kinglet (1), Brown creeper (2), Red-breasted nuthatch (3), Belted kingfisher (2), Barred owl (2), Great Horned owl (1), Eastern Screech owl (4), Double-crested cormorant (2), Bonaparte’s gull (3), Merlin (1), American kestrel (1), Northern harrier (1), Snow bunting (70). Indigo bunting (3) - new for the count, and a pair of Green-winged teal (2) was well documented. It is also a new waterfowl species historically for the count.



American robin, photo by Paul Harpley, SLSN member

An obvious species with low numbers this year was American robin (4). Two consistent bird species of interest for bird watchers on the Sutton Count, Bald eagle and Snowy owl were not seen on count day, the first time in many years. One showy bird species, the Pileated woodpecker (3) was documented, but with the rain were not flying a lot so were hard to find. Count week bird species (not actually seen on the day) included Redhead duck, Greater scaup, Ruffed grouse, Red-shouldered hawk, Northern shrike, Horned lark, White-throated sparrow, and Purple finch.



Pileated woodpecker, photo by Richard Weatherston, SLSN member

The three of four expected owl species recorded on count day, Great Horned, Barred, and Screech, were difficult to call, hear and locate with the increasingly rainy early morning field conditions.

Thanks to all participants on the Christmas Bird Count this year as field birders or feeder watcher/property observers. South Lake Simcoe Naturalists (SLSN) members' contributions, and local or 'from further afield' birders' efforts always result in documenting birds that would otherwise not be found. Your collective efforts on the day are vital to annual Sutton count success.

Paul and Debra Harpley

Provisional List of Planned 2024 Ontario Art Show and Events

Baysville Arts & Crafts Festival, August 10 & 11

Kawartha Arts Festival, Fenelon Falls, August 30 & 31

The Art Zone Studio – Open on selected dates in July, August & September

Georgina Studio Tour, September 28 & 29

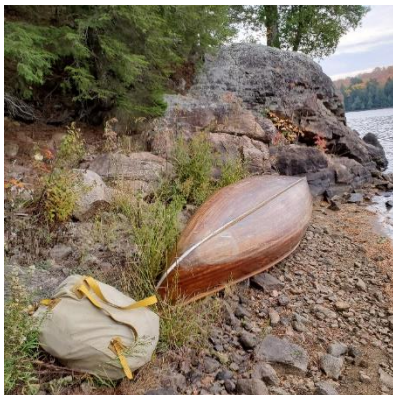
This is a provisional list. Contact The Art Zone Studio to confirm dates and so on.



Algonquin canoe trip

One would never expect to be canoeing in Algonquin Park in October and be able to paddle in shirt sleeves and go swimming to cool off. For 4 days in early October 2023 we followed the route from Smoke Lake into Ragged Lake and explored all the bays and islands including West Bay and Crown Bay. It had been 40 years since we'd paddled this route.

While on the trip with a riot of autumn Algonquin foliage of red, yellow and green this renewed Paul's interest in Algonquin subject artwork in the next few years. The trip reminded him of the years he worked in the Park as a young university student. He was a Park naturalist and later in wildlife research for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources with Black bears out of the Algonquin Wildlife Research Station (AWRS).



We really enjoy paddling in Algonquin Provincial Park although we've canoed in Killarney and the French River. In the coming years we want to spend more time in Algonquin like we did years ago with a young family. The forest and wildlife have changed and then again not so much.



"Moonlight Reflections, Timber Wolf", limited edition 21.5" X 17" \$45. 325 s/n, Paul Harpley

CONSERVATION and Science News

Climate Change

The Guardian

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/jan/09/2023-record-world-hottest-climate-fossil-fuel>

Record-smashing 2023 a preview of "catastrophic future"

The global average temperature was at least 1 degree Celsius above pre-industrial averages every day last year and hit at least 1.5C warmer nearly half of the days in 2023, scientists at the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service report, noting that the record-

smashing temperatures drove massive wildfires, unprecedented ocean temperatures and a sharp decline in Antarctic sea ice. The hottest year on record, last year offered a preview of the "catastrophic future that awaits us if we don't act now," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warns.

Full Story: [The Guardian \(London\) \(1/9\)](#), [Barron's \(tiered subscription model\)/Agence France-Presse \(1/9\)](#)

2024-01-12

New Scientist

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2411366-extreme-droughts-are-worse-for-plants-than-we-thought/>

Environment

Extreme droughts are worse for plants than we thought

Grasslands are almost 40 per cent less productive after a year of extreme drought, an experiment spanning six continents suggests

By [Chen Ly](#)

8 January 2024



One of the shelters used to mimic extreme drought, this one at the Central Plains Experimental Range, Colorado

Melinda Smith

Grassland productivity drops by a larger amount than we had thought during extreme drought, according to experiments at 100 sites around the world. The finding suggests plants may struggle to cope with the more frequent and severe droughts that climate change is expected to bring.

[Melinda Smith](#) at Colorado State University and her colleagues designed a shelter that can be placed over a piece of land, and topped with strips of plastic to divert some of the rain away from the vegetation below.

Read more

[The uncomfortable reality of life on Earth after we breach 1.5°C](#)

Working with other researchers around the world, Smith and her team were able to install such shelters at 100 grass or shrubland sites across six continents.

For each site, the team aimed to mimic what would be considered an extreme drought for the area – the type that would be seen once in every hundred years, says Smith. For example, a rainier site in Europe would have more plastic strips on the roof, compared with a drier site, to better simulate a drought.

After a year, the team found some of the experiments were successful at replicating drought conditions, and some less so due to higher-than-average rainfall in certain regions.

NEWS

Federal and Ontario Government Planning – Lake Simcoe

2023-11-09

Barrie Today

https://www.barrietoday.com/local-news/province-drops-13m-into-lake-simcoe-for-phosphorous-reduction-7808177?utm_source=BarrieToday.com&utm_campaign=7967a87d89-DailyBAR&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c8859d4fc8-7967a87d89-323665374

Province drops \$1.3M into Lake Simcoe for phosphorous reduction

One study will look at chemicals and metals in the water and sediment to identify new threats to the watershed

[Bob Bruton](#)



Lake Simcoe's Kempenfelt Bay is shown in a file photo. Raymond Bowe/BarrieToday

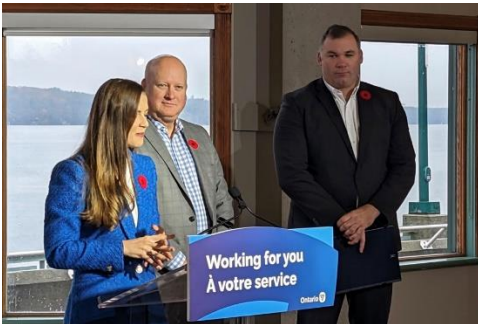
The province is sinking another \$1.3 million into four new multi-year projects to further reduce phosphorus levels entering Lake Simcoe.

Barrie-Innisfil MPP Andrea Khanjin, who is also Ontario's minister of the environment, conservation and parks, made the announcement Thursday morning at Southshore Centre along the city's lakeshore.

"(It's) to improve the health of the lake and the communities that depend upon it," Khanjin said of the funding. "We're taking action to restore and protect (Lake Simcoe)."

Khanjin said there has already been a 50 per cent reduction in phosphorus entering the lake from sewage treatment plants, and that algae levels have been reduced.

Three of the four projects are being led by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA).



Barrie-Innisfil MPP Andrea Khanjin, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority CAO Rob Baldwin and Barrie Mayor Alex Nuttall are shown at Thursday's Lake Simcoe funding announcement at the Southshore Centre in Barrie. Khanjin is also the province's minister of the environment, conservation and parks. | Bob Bruton/BarrieToday

"For many decades, phosphorus had been one of the foremost issues impacting the long-term health of the lake," said Rob Baldwin, the LSRCA's chief administrative officer. "The funding announced today will support necessary and extensive monitoring work that we do to calculate the amount of phosphorus entering the lake."

Projects include water sampling and analysis to monitor phosphorus and other nutrients flowing into Lake Simcoe, to help determine which future actions can be taken to improve the lake's overall health.

There will be a study of chemicals and metals in the water and sediment that could harm the lake. This research can help identify new threats to the watershed, as well as ways to protect it, now and during the long-term.

Projects also include creating wetlands and ponds, restoring streams, building channels and planting grasses to better manage stormwater in Innisfil, Newmarket and Oro-Medonte. These projects will help landowners and municipalities lower the amount of pollution going into Lake Simcoe from urban areas.

And Toronto Metropolitan University has received funding to conduct water quality research that will help tackle barriers to improving water quality from the Holland Marsh.

“Let’s be clear, the Holland Marsh is our salad bowl. (It) feeds our cities,” said Khanjin, citing its importance.

Since 2018, the province has committed more than \$27.3 million to protect and restore Lake Simcoe, including a \$24-million investment for a new phosphorus recycling project to help reduce phosphorus discharges from the Holland River into Lake Simcoe. These investments are part of a commitment to implement the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan.

“The lake has always been a touch point for everybody that lives in Simcoe County,” said Barrie-Springwater-Oro-Medonte MPP Doug Downey. “The importance of water, the importance of the ecology, we all just know it, but we have to tell our story and protect it for future generations.”

Barrie Mayor Alex Nuttall said the new funding needs to be spent wisely.

“There’s been some incredible wins, there’s also been some missed opportunities on Lake Simcoe,” he said. “I think when we’re putting this funding in place, we need to make sure that those who know the science, those who’ve done the work, are able to put those dollars where we believe they’re going to have best use and that’s what the (LSRCA) is doing.”

Nuttall also went on to criticize the federal government for not meeting its financial responsibility in funding Lake Simcoe’s health.

During the last four years, the province says it has invested more than \$3.3 million in 19 multi-year projects in the Lake Simcoe watershed to improve stormwater management and help reduce phosphorous pollution.

Its reduction is needed to protect the lake’s cold-water fishery and prevent excessive weed growth and algae blooms.

The **Art Zone Studio**

e-mail ArtZoneStudioCanada@gmail.com or phone 905-722-8021
ahead if weather is questionable.

Featured artwork at The **Art Zone Studio**



Canadian Nature Artist **Paul Harpley**

© All Webpage Content Is Worldwide Copyrighted
Wilderness Places Paintings

Limited Edition and Original Art **Art Zone Studio**

6045 Frog Street, Pefferlaw, ON L0E 1N0

905-722-8021

By Appointment OR By Chance

Original acrylic paintings, watercolours, drawings, sculpture, garden art, jewelry. Canadian artists.

Also, African and Canadian Inuit Art. Other artists represented: Graham Ames, Natcho Franzoi, Janet Harpley-Aco, and Thomas Amoah.
