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## 4th Annual Call for Projects

*Alan MacEachern*  
[amaceach@uwo.ca](mailto:amaceach@uwo.ca)

The NiCHE annual Calls for Projects have helped support a wide range of great projects over their first three years. They have provided funding for workshops such as "Bringing Subsistence out of the Shadows," online projects such as "The Don River Valley Historical Mapping Project," or curriculum development such as "The People and the Bay." Sean Kheraj's very successful "Nature's Past" podcast series sprung from a Call. (See details of more such projects at <http://niche-canada.org/research>)

We are very pleased to announce the 4<sup>th</sup> annual NiCHE Call for Projects. We are accepting applications for one-time projects with needs between \$2500 and \$10,000. Examples may include a public speaker series, educational resource, workshop, or digital initiative. Your application should be sent as a single file attachment to [niche@uwo.ca](mailto:niche@uwo.ca) and consist of

- a proposal (max. 3 pages) consisting of a brief description of the project, followed by a full description listing the objectives, methodology, and timeline, with special emphasis on whether/how the project will promote public outreach of environmental history / historical geography; involve matching funds and/or partnerships with groups beyond Canadian universities; and/or facilitate student training and involvement
- a budget (max. 1 page) for the entire project, including how the NiCHE funds will be used. (Please note that if you are proposing a digital initiative, which NiCHE presumably would then host or link to, the budget may include funds to hire a web developer.) See the NiCHE website for technical information: <http://niche-canada.org/forms>
- a curriculum vitae (max. 1 page) of each individual applying.

The deadline for submissions is 25 October 2010. Notification will be made by 8 November 2010. Successful applicants will be reimbursed for expenses on submission of receipts; all funds are to be spent by 31 December 2011.

Because much of NiCHE's funding comes via the SSHRC Strategic Knowledge Clusters program, which supports the mobilization and dissemination of research but not research itself, NiCHE maintains this distinction in deciding which projects it can support.

Nous encourageons des demandes qui attendront un public francophone, et les demandes peuvent être soumises en français.

NiCHE also considers requests for funding support throughout the year, particularly for projects that are time-sensitive. For more information, see <http://niche-canada.org/funding>. If you have any further questions, please email [niche@uwo.ca](mailto:niche@uwo.ca).



# A note of welcome & thanks



## CHESS 2011: St Andrews by

Mark your calendars for the next Canadian History and Environment Summer School [CHESS]: Friday, 27 May until Sunday 29 May, 2011 (right before the CHA).



This year, we'll be in New Brunswick at beautiful St. Andrews by the Sea on the Bay of Fundy, to discuss issues facing coastal communities in Atlantic Canada: the past and future of the fishery, the rise of tourism, and the effects of environmental change on Canada's coastlines.

For more information, contact: Bill Parenteau, University of New Brunswick [wparent@unb.ca](mailto:wparent@unb.ca) or Claire Campbell, Dalhousie University [claire.campbell@dal.ca](mailto:claire.campbell@dal.ca) <http://niche-canada.org/chess2011>

Alan MacEachern  
[amaceach@uwo.ca](mailto:amaceach@uwo.ca)

It is a real pleasure to announce that NiCHE has hired two young scholars to assist in maintaining the network, as well as organizing projects and developing new ones. **Jim Clifford** will join us as a Toronto-based project coordinator. Jim is currently completing his PhD on the environmental & social history of eastern London, England (publication in time for the Olympics, I would hope) – see <http://jimclifford.wordpress.com/>. **Jessica van Horsen** will be a Montreal-based French-Canada coordinator for the network. Jess completed her PhD in history at the Uni-

versity of Western Ontario just last month – see her associated graphic novel <http://megaprojects.uwo.ca/asbestos/> or, heck, see her full dissertation at <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/11/>. Welcome to both of you!

I also want to wish the best to **Adam Crymble**, embarking this fall on a PhD in History at King's College London. As our stalwart webmaster, Adam has been a real sparkplug for NiCHE over the past two years. In fact, he's proven so stalwart that he's staying on, managing the website while across the pond. Best of luck, Adam, and glad to have you staying on.

## Environmental History at Carleton

In addition to on-going research projects by a number of faculty and graduate students, especially those by Joanna Dean, John C. Walsh,



Will Knight, Jess Dunkin, Kaitlin Wainwright, and Brett Davidson, last year saw expanded offerings in the teaching of environmental history with the introduction of a new, third-year course in animal history, and also the successful defence of Amanda Sauermann's MA thesis on the regulation of dogs in Toronto. This coming Fall sees two events that may be of interest to environmental historians. The first is a new book edited by James Opp and John C. Walsh, *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, November 2010). New essays by John C. Walsh (dealing with second creation narratives of "home" in the Ottawa Valley), Matthew Evenden (on the landscaping of place at Lake Minnewanka), and James Opp

(on photography and landscape in Southern Alberta) are explicitly informed by environmental histories, but all the chapters deal with themes of

place, space, and belonging that will appeal to NiCHE readers.

The second is this year's Shannon Lecture Series in Social History, being held from late September to late November on selected Fridays, and co-organized by Jess Dunkin and John C. Walsh. The series' theme is "Storytelling, Storytellers, and the Social Effect of Stories" and includes presentations by Julie Cruikshank (UBC), Carolyn Podruchny (York), and a collaborative effort by Alan MacEachern and Ryan O'Connor (Western) that may be of interest to environmental historians. Please visit the website (<http://www2.carleton.ca/shannonlectureseries/>) for more details.

## PART TIME CONTRACT POSITION: Preserving Canadian Forest History



CC: The Forest History Society on Flickr

NICHE (The Network in Canadian History and the Environment/ Nouvelle initiative Canadienne en histoire de l' environnement), the Canadian Forest Service, and the Forest History Society of Durham, North Carolina are embarking on a two-year collaboration to encourage and enhance the preservation of documentary and photographic records pertaining to the history of Canada's forests. The project includes two major components: (1) a survey and listing of official archives in each Canadian province that could take on forest history related collections; and (2) identification, inspection and description of forest history collections that should be preserved and efforts to place these records in appropriate repositories. This project will require close working relationships with forest history associations and archives and libraries across Canada, with the librarian and archivist of the Forest History Society, and in all likelihood with some of those formerly engaged in the forest sector.

To implement this project, we will make a part-time appointment, for an initial period of twelve months with potential for renewal for a further twelve months. Applicants should demonstrate their suitability in regard to the following criteria. **Required:** University degree. Previous archival research; or extensive experience in the forest products industry, the profession of forestry, or forest conservation, to provide the perspective needed to evaluate forest history documentation. Freedom and willingness to travel within Canada and occasionally to Durham, North Carolina to advance the project; fluency in one and functionality in the other of Canada's two official languages; proven ability for productive interaction with persons with a

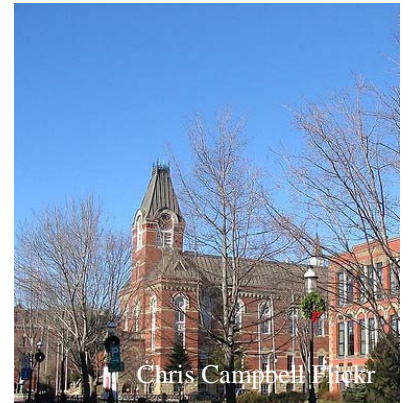
wide range of backgrounds/ experience; reliability; and the capacity to work independently and effectively. **Preferred:** Advanced degree in history or related discipline or archival studies; experience in the use/ inventorying/ classification of documents and photographs; familiarity with Canadian archives; knowledge of Canadian forest history.

In conducting the work of this project, the appointee will be supervised jointly by Dr Steven Anderson of the Forest History Society, and Professor Graeme Wynn of the Department of Geography, University of British Columbia. The maximum available salary is Can\$2500 per month (Can\$30,000 pa) for an average of approximately 20 hours of work per week. As this is a contract position, remuneration does not include benefits. There is a travel allowance commensurate with the needs of the project, and there is provision for re-imbursement of basic incidental expenses.

Applicants should submit a copy of their cv, plus a statement of 1000 words or fewer detailing their interest in and particular qualifications for the position to both Steven Anderson (stevena@duke.edu) and Graeme Wynn (wynn@geog.ubc.ca) as soon as possible. Evaluation of applications will commence 1 October 2010 and continue until the position is filled. The position is available immediately and applicants should indicate the date at which they could commence this employment.

Further inquiries can be directed to either Steven Anderson or Graeme Wynn at the addresses above.

## Environmental History at the CHA in Fredericton



"History, Memory, People, & Place" is the theme of the next Canadian Historical Association annual meeting, in Fredericton, New Brunswick, 30-31 May and 1 June 2011. The organizers wish to welcome panel, paper, and other submissions from those working on environmental history and historical geography. The deadline for applications is 18 October 2010. Please see [http://www.cha-shc.ca/en/Annual\\_Meeting\\_59/items/16.html](http://www.cha-shc.ca/en/Annual_Meeting_59/items/16.html) for details.

## Time and a Place:

Claire Campbell and all the participants at the workshop in PEI would like to thank Josh MacFadyen for all his hard work.



# Ontario's New Scholars

A research snapshot of four New Scholars, presented in

Foreword by Adam Crymble

After being so impressed by the "Research Snapshots" five New Scholars wrote for our last newsletter, we've decided to make the profiles a permanent fixture. Each month we post a new article; all entries can be found and followed on the NiCHE New Scholars Profiles blog: <http://niche-canada.org/ns-scholars>

The profiles offer New Scholars an opportunity to share their research-in-progress. Contributors are asked to explain their path of study and emphasize why they believe their research is relevant. In exchange, students gain exposure and some practice sharing their ideas in an engaging format for a wide audience.

Over the past four months, we were pleased to present four new profiles, all from Ontario-based students. For those

who missed them on the website, we've brought them back to life in the following pages. Read about the contributions of Indigenous peoples, showcasing our nation's natural history, wild birds and the building of the St. Lawrence Seaway. And while you're at it, you can learn a little bit about the future scholars in the environmental history & historical geography fields.

If you, or someone you know, might be interested in contributing a snapshot, send an email to Jim Clifford at [cljim22@gmail.com](mailto:cljim22@gmail.com). Contributors should be PhD candidates – or recent graduates – who do not yet have a faculty position, and who are pursuing a research program.

Happy reading!



CC: [http://basedinvilligen.blogspot.com/2008\\_07\\_01\\_archive.html](http://basedinvilligen.blogspot.com/2008_07_01_archive.html)

# Involving and Acknowledging Indigenous Peoples

*Christopher Parsons*

From climate change research in the arctic to pharmaceutical research in South and Central America, indigenous peoples have become essential collaborators in the study of American environments. With an intimate knowledge of population dynamics, medicinal plants, seasonal cycles and climate shifts, the traditional ecological knowledge of aboriginal peoples can bring a unique insight and skill set to contemporary conservation biology and ecology. Recent large scale projects such as the International Polar Year have sought not only to involve aboriginal communities in the collection of scientific data, but to make sure that these communities profit from their participation and are enriched by the project's results. Ecologists such as Terry Chapin and organizations such as UNESCO have recently argued that from the boreal forests of Ontario to the temperate rainforests of the Pacific Northwest, cultural diversity and biodiversity are intimately linked. Studies of native environments in North America and plans for their conservation are incomplete and inadequate without a consideration of the indigenous communities that call them home.

Efforts to twin the study of American ecosystems and indigenous cultures might seem novel. Yet, as I travelled to libraries and archives throughout Canada, the United States and in Paris, I found evidence that the participation of aboriginal communities has been an essential facet of "environmental science" in North America since the sixteenth century. My doctoral research, "Plants and Peoples: French and Indigenous ecological knowledge in colonial North America" argues that, whether it was colonists, missionaries or naturalists, the investigation of American flora began with efforts to translate

indigenous ecological knowledge and to transport it to Europe in printed texts and manuscripts, as medical commodities such as ginseng, or as botanical and zoological specimens. The history of the expansion of Western Science in early Canada and colonial North America was less a story of universities and royal gardens than it was about the incorporation of new peoples and new knowledges.

Yet as indigenous knowledge arrived in Québec, Paris or Versailles, the participation of indigenous communities in French enlightenment science was effaced. French naturalists in North America and Europe claimed that scientific knowledge could only be made by those that had been adequately trained (many botanists and zoologists were in fact also trained as physicians) and who had been endorsed by institutions such as the Académie Royale des Sciences and the Jardin du Roi. French naturalists sought to make Paris a scientific capital of the world, making itself the centre and marginalizing the Iroquoian and Algonquian peoples of North America who had been indispensable to their research. The result was that indigenous ecological knowledge, while making the scientific study of North America possible, was not only silenced but was deemed illegitimate.

Indigenous environmentalists such as Winona LaDuke have been rightly wary as a new generation of ecologists turns to their communities for help in developing land management strategies. With fresh memories of their encounters with international pharmaceutical and agricultural companies and still fighting the effects of their encounter with institutions such as the Académie Royale des Sciences, ecological research can hardly be considered innocent. Yet, understanding that North American aboriginal

peoples have been central to the study of American ecosystems for over four centuries, we can continue to work to develop cooperative and collaborative research programs that not only involve indigenous communities at every stage but acknowledge those contributions.

*Christopher Parsons is a PhD Candidate at the University of Toronto*



# Nature's Nation: Exploring Canadian Natural History Muse-



William Knight

This past May I submitted my thesis proposal on 19th century Canadian natural history museums. It was the same week the Canadian Nature Museum in Ottawa re-opened—glass tower and blue whale and all. The proposal went in just as the museum opened its doors to popular acclaim: an auspicious start to my research project and a reminder that this particular natural history museum looms large in many imaginations, not just my own.

I can begin with own memories of the Victoria Memorial Museum. The museum inhabits a neo-gothic pile that we called the 'castle' when I was growing up in Ottawa. The museum was on our family's regular Sunday circuit and was probably a life-line for my parents with six restless kids packed into a Parisienne station wagon. What I remember most from those visits are the habitat dioramas: they shimmered mysteriously like aquariums, spilling pools of light into the darkened halls of the museum.

Those cases were really my first encounter with 'nature.' The dioramas presented Canada as a series of beautifully composed tableaux: they impressed upon my suburban mind a Platonic form of nature—pristine, austere, and devoid of people. And as nature went, so did Canada—indeed, what was the difference? The museum proposed a wild north to Ottawa's carefully tended parkways and tulip beds, and hinted at Canada as nature's nation, which lay beyond the pruned lilacs and docile Jersey cows of the Central Experimental Farm, another regular family outing destination.

These impressions are no doubt filtered through several years of exposure to environmental history literature. Yet I like that something that enchanted me as a child should now motivate me as a new scholar: the difference being that I now view dioramas as much more complicated 'meaning machines,' as Donna Haraway puts it. My project, however,

is about more than dioramas; these are important, but I want to locate them as part of the wider flows of specimens, people, and ideas that circulated through North American and European museums in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. One question I have is how does a national nature emerge out of such transnational flows?

Susan Sheets-Pyneson makes some progress in charting this networked exchange in her 1988 book *Cathedrals of Science*. That monograph, part of a small historiography about natural history museums, is also the only one that recognizes Canada, which is ignored in Tony Bennett's more recent *Pasts Beyond Memory* (2004). I am also curious about field expeditions, especially by American museums such as the Carnegie and the Smithsonian, which Robert Kohler examined in *All Creatures* (2006). There is thus a good literature to draw on—and room for my own study.

I have a suspicion that as I follow this topic through the various provincial and national museums, I will be drawn back into fisheries. This topic was the subject of my M.A. thesis, during which I discovered the Dominion Fisheries Museum (DFM), a short-lived institution located in Ottawa in the 1890s. It drew several thousand visitors a year to marvel at its aquariums and its working fish hatchery, and was originally a repository for displays exhibited at international fisheries. The DFM was folded into the Victoria Memorial Museum when it opened in 1912, and so it gave me a little thrill to discover that aquariums were once again a part of the contemporary natural history museum. And I won't be surprised—given all the tales I've heard about dissertations taking interesting turns—if aquariums make an unscheduled appearance in the final draft of my thesis.

*William is a PhD Candidate at Carleton University*

# Red Coats and Wild Birds

Kirsten Greer

My doctoral project, “Red coats and wild birds: military culture and ornithology across the nineteenth-century British Empire,” interrogates the intersections between British military culture and the practices and ideas of ornithology, with a particular focus on the Mediterranean region. The collecting practices of British military officers have been integral to the establishment of many natural history and ethnographic collections in the United Kingdom and in the colonies, as military men mapped avian, moral, and racial geographies of the British Empire. Similarly, their natural history collections, as well as the birds commemorated with their names, present historical and cultural meanings intricately linked to identity, colonialism, and empire.

Considering that British officers often occupied several imperial sites throughout their military careers, to what extent did their movements shape their environmental knowledge of these places? How did British military naturalists encounter different local cultures (with different attitudes to hunting, birds, field science etc.) and different local natures (different sets of birds and environments)?

In order to answer these questions, I have centered my work on the Mediterranean region as a “colonial sea” in the production of hybrid identities and cultural practices, and the mingling of the peoples, ideas, commodities, and migratory birds. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Mediterranean region emerged as a crucial site for the security of British trade routes to India and South Asia, especially with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. The military stations in the Mediterranean acted as trans-imperial sites, connecting Britain to India through the flow of military manpower, commodities, ideas, information, and bodily experiences across the empire.

The relationship between British military men and the production of colonial knowledge produced a particular kind of subjectivity in the spatialization of the Mediterranean region. By critically examining the material remnants of the avian imperial archives, I have demonstrated how the practices and performances of British military field ornithology helped to materialize the Mediterranean as a moral “semi-tropical” place for the cultural acclimatization of white, transient, British soldiers to and from India; and to make “visible in new ways” the connectivity of North Africa to Europe through the geographical distribution of birds.

The intersection between the British military, “home,” and migratory birds has been central to my research. The



emotional connection to “British” migratory birds in the Mediterranean allowed officers to assert their own moral, temperate approach to nature when commenting on local cultures of natures in Gibraltar and Malta. When back home in Britain, their networked ornithological knowledge helped define notions of national, “British” birds, which in turn influenced in part the bird preservation movement. I have therefore stressed the importance of examining both the trans-imperial and the trans-local in the formulation of environmental knowledge and ideas of birds.

Lastly, my own archival and field research in the Mediterranean has provided me with an opportunity to understand the impact of British imperialism on more contemporary issues of bird migration protection. My investigations in Malta have revealed how bird hunting is still a hotly contested issue, and how some have claimed that the European Union is another form of imperialism now imposed on the Maltese. I have attempted to shed light on Malta’s British colonial past as a means to illustrate the ways in which telling Maltese bird hunters what to do from a British perspective might aggravate the problem. Furthermore, I have highlighted the importance of studying the complexity of migratory birds across multiple borders and local cultures of nature in order to understand the tensions implicated in claims to a territory’s “natural heritage,” and the rights to use or protect it.

My doctoral project has benefited greatly from the support and insight of my co-supervisors, Dr. Laura Cameron and Dr. Joan Schwartz, at Queen’s University, and my host-supervisor, Dr. David Lambert, at Royal Holloway, University of London.

*Kirsten is a PhD Candidate at Queen’s University*

## Watching from the Future as Canada Builds the St. Lawrence Sea-

Daniel MacFarlane

The St. Lawrence seaway and power project – the 181.5 mile stretch of the St. Lawrence from Montreal to Lake Erie consisting of extensive navigation and hydro-power works – was an undertaking of the first magnitude: to illustrate, it is considered one of the greatest global engineering feats of the 20th century, and is the largest construction project in Canadian history. The construction of the St. Lawrence project required a massive configuring of the St. Lawrence basin, flooding some 20,000 acres of Canadian land and resulted in the dislocation of some 8,000 people, mostly in Ontario.

My doctoral dissertation looks at the Canadian federal government's role in the creation of the St. Lawrence seaway and power project. This chiefly involves exploring Canadian-American environmental diplomacy and the tangled negotiations stretching from the first half of the twentieth century and into the 1950s that culminated in the joint agreement to construct the St. Lawrence project, which was built between 1954 and 1959.

In the wake of the Second World War, the economic and transportation advantages of a St. Lawrence project were joined by a growing need for hydro power and potential defence benefits (such as shipping iron ore from Labrador-Quebec to the Great Lakes steel mills). With the U.S. Congress continually preventing a joint Canadian-American waterway from coming to fruition, the Louis St. Laurent government began to consider "going it alone." The idea of a unilaterally Canadian waterway seized the imaginations of Canadians, who I contend were motivated by an environmental – or hydraulic – nationalism that framed the St. Lawrence as an exclusively national resource. Moreover, this reveals a "high modernist" conception of the environment and river resources as something to be controlled and manipulated to further the goals of the state. However, the United States considered an all-Canadian seaway an economic and national security risk, and prevented Ottawa from proceeding without American participation.

The history of the St. Lawrence seaway and power project is relevant to our current and future understanding of environmental issues in a number of respects. I will discuss just two here. Firstly, it speaks to what should be done today regarding the seaway. Secondly, it can inform debate about the future of Canadian water resources, particularly vis-à-vis the United States.

The seaway has resulted in a range of environmental problems, with invasive species the most prominent. Although this was not the necessary result of

the seaway and could have been avoided if there had been sufficient political will, these negative environmental effects will likely wreak further havoc in the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes basin if not adequately handled. But the seaway also provides a form of transportation (and hydro power) that is more environmentally friendly than other competing forms of moving bulk goods, which could become even more pertinent with the unstable future of fossil fuels. The St. Lawrence project thus has the potential to have either a positive or negative economic impact.

The history of the seaway indicates that both Canada and the United States tend to act in their own self-interest concerning natural assets. This is especially pertinent for the future of Canadian water resources. Over the course of the St. Lawrence negotiations, the U.S. pressured Canada into abandoning its unilateral plans and allowing American participation; we are likely approaching a point where the U.S. begins to more actively seek Canada's abundant water resources, be they waters solely in Canada, such as in the north, or shared resources, such as the Great Lakes. What will be the result? How should Canada approach such matters in the future? Will the United States respect Canadian sovereignty if there is a water crisis?

*Daniel MacFarlane is a PhD Candidate at the University of Ottawa*



# NiCHE à la première école d'été de l'ESEH

Du 28 juin au 2 juillet dernier, l'European Society for Environmental History (ESEH) tenait sa première école d'été dans les Yvelines (France) au musée de Port Royal des Champs. Organisée par Gregory Quenet de l'Université de Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, elle portait sur le risque et les catastrophes en histoire environnementale. NiCHE a financé la participation d'une délégation de quatre chercheurs étudiants et professeurs de son réseau. L'initiative réunissait dans un cadre champêtre des chercheurs internationaux de disciplines diverses ; historiens de l'environnement, anthropologues, géographes, etc.

Les séminaires ont porté sur les catastrophes, les rapports corporels à l'environnement, la restauration de la nature, les changements climatiques, le conservationnisme postcolonial, etc... Les participants ont pu notamment réfléchir à la difficulté de définir la notion de « catastrophe » de manière à rendre compte de la diversité des perceptions et des événements dans le récit historique. Parmi les conférenciers, mentionnons les contributions de Bruno Latour, Stéphane Castonguay, Rajan Chakrabarti, Marcus Hall, Thomas Leroux, Uwe Luebken, Christof Mauch, Franz Mauelshagen et Joy Parr.

Enfin, des sorties sur le terrain ont permis de découvrir des cas très riches pour l'histoire environnementale. Par exemple, l'enchevêtrement des composantes environnementales et culturelles d'une abbaye et les aspects patrimoniaux d'un paysage lentement façonné lors de la visite du domaine de Port Royal, ou encore, la recherche de la maîtrise de la nature (l'eau, la faune et forêt) pour le loisir royal au domaine du château de Versailles.

Gaston Côté, doctorant en études québécoises CIÉQ-UQTR

What sort of people travel to Versailles, France and instead of visiting the palace like every other tourist, investigate the complex and far-reaching water systems that were created to make the palace possible? Environmental Historians, that's who.



This summer, NiCHE helped organize, fund, and run the first European Society for Environmental History (ESEH) Summer School at the Musée national de Port Royal des Champs in Yvelines, France. The theme for the summer school was "Events, Disasters, Narratives and Temporalities in Environmental History," and from 28 June to 2 July, students, professors, and independent scholars discussed and debated major issues surrounding the history of

environmental catastrophes and the role of environmental historians.

Both mentally and physically demanding, the summer school had participants cycle around the French countryside, taking full advantage of the setting as we discussed readings and research from morning to night. Field trips took us to a variety of places, including an explosives factory-turned national park outside of Paris, a medieval city, and of course, Versailles.

Although this was a summer school run by ESEH, participants came from all over the world with widespread and diverse interests, showing once again the international and transnational nature of environmental history and environmental historians, a true strength of our field.

All of this considered, and still reeling from the stimulating and inspiring discussions that took place, I consider myself fortunate to be one of those people who visits Versailles and ignores the palace for the historic landscape that surrounds it.



# Call for papers: Countercultures and the environment

Colin Coates, Glendon College, York University

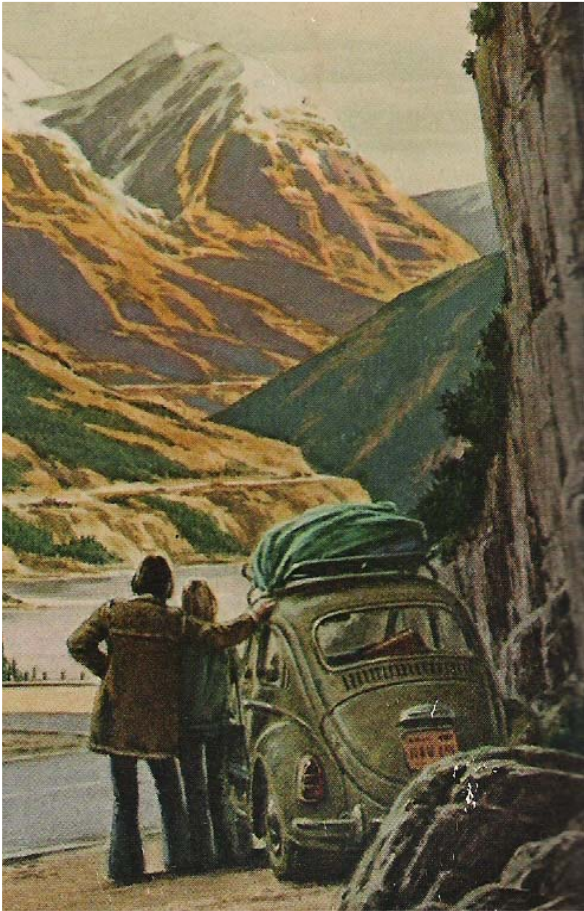


Image: Mark Vonnegut,  
The Eden Express, 1975



I would like to invite formal proposals for a two-day workshop on “Countercultures and the Environment” that will take place in early July 2011 on Hornby Island, British Columbia. This workshop will bring together different researchers who work on 1960s and 1970s back-to-the-land movements and their relationship to nature and the environment. Papers should explore the environmental idealism of this movement, and the sometimes difficult environmental circumstances the groups faced. In particular, communal ideas of property will be examined alongside counterculture visions of nature and the environment. The workshop will aim at producing a collective publication, and papers will be circulated prior to the workshop. Please send proposals of up to 250 words accompanied by a one-page curriculum vitae to Colin Coates: [ccoates@gl.yorku.ca](mailto:ccoates@gl.yorku.ca).

The deadline for proposals is 30 November 2010. Les propositions en français sont bienvenues.



Hornby Island Farm by Wease on Flickr

## Transnational Ecologies Announces Migratory Natures Photograph and Audio Recording Contest



Photo Credit: "Flock Landing" by Mark Peck

Laura Cameron

niche.transnationalecologies@queensu.ca

Many in Canada's eastern provinces are beginning to witness sights and sounds of seasonal movements: monarch butterflies are coming through, geese are leaving and the numbers of human observers in the parks have started to swell. Of course such witnessing is the result of many factors - including one's place on the globe, one's cultural and historical contexts as well as changing climates and migration patterns. Send us your photographs (or recordings) of your sighted (or heard) 'migratory natures'. And send along an explanatory description/story as well. All photos and audio files will be posted on the Transnational Ecologies pages and the best ones will be featured on the NiCHE main page. Transnational Ecologies offers 3 book gift certificates of \$50 each for the best in the following categories: (1) most original photograph (2) most original recording (3) most beautiful contribution of either sound or image. Please send audio files in mp3 format: they should be small enough to be sent via email.

Rules

\* This competition is open to NiCHE members worldwide. NiCHE membership is free and there is no fee for entering this contest.

\* You must be the photographer and owner of the copyright for any image entered. Likewise you must be the sound recordist and owner of any recording entered.

\* You can submit a maximum of three images and three recordings to this contest.

\* You will retain copyright of your entries at all times and will always be credited alongside your picture or audio file. By entering this competition, you grant NiCHE the right use your photograph or audio file for promotional or educational purposes.

\* Full time employees of NiCHE and members of the NiCHE executive are not eligible

\* Results are at the sole discretion of the judges and cannot be appealed. Not all prizes will necessarily be awarded.

\* The deadline for entry is 1st November 2010.

Please send your entry as an email attachment to: [niche.transnational.ecologies@queensu.ca](mailto:niche.transnational.ecologies@queensu.ca)

Canadian Presenters at the  
ESEH Conference  
"Encounters of Sea and  
Land," in Turku, Finland,  
2011



NiCHE member Kristin Greer worked with Jan-Henrik Meyer from the UK to organise two successful panels for ESEH conference: "Don't kill Our Birds!" - The Transnational Politics of Migratory Birds Protection. Watch out for the full program at the conference website: <http://eseh2011.utu.fi/>

### Have News For NiCHE Members?

The NiCHE website is set up to allow you to submit news about upcoming events, jobs, scholarships or anything else you think the Canadian environmental history and historical geography community might be interested in.

Contributing is free and easy. Sign in or register for a free account. Then all you have to do is click on the Submit News link on the right menu bar and type in your message.

For more information, visit our contributing help page:

<http://niche-canada.org/contributinghelp>

## Natures Past: Archival Evidence of Environmental and Climate Change

A new exhibit at the Provincial Archives of Alberta in Edmonton, AB co-sponsored by the Provincial Archives and NiCHE examines how documentary archival materials (ranging from journals, ledgers, correspondence, photographs, and survey records) can be used to understand past environmental change and human relations with the rest of nature. In conjunction with the exhibit an interdisciplinary public lecture series featuring talks by historians and physical scientists will be held at the archives in the fall.

### Natures Past Lecture Series

October 13, 2010 at 7:00 pm

#### **Forests, Fires, Climate and People: An Illustrated History of Forests, Fire and People and How they Interacted**

Lecturer: Dr. Peter Murphy, University of Alberta

Forests returned to Alberta about 10,000 years ago after the glaciers retreated; people followed about the same time. People, forests and forest fires have coexisted and developed together in changing relationships since.

October 20, 2010 at 7:00 pm

#### **Human Response to the Killing Winters in Alberta's Neutral Hills Territory in the Fur Trade Era**

Lecturer: Dr. George Colpitts, University of Calgary

The Hudson's Bay Company posts in the North Saskatchewan River Basin provide scholars with a wealth of environmental data. This talk examines how Fort Pitt's journals from the 1830s provide a window into the tumultuous Cree-Blackfoot Neutral Territory, and a means of reconstructing a climatic fault-line in the Northern Great Plains where, in the crises presented by mild, snowless winters, buffalo-hunting plains people found the means of striking temporary peace accords in the famous "Neutral Hills" of the province.

October 27, 2010 at 7:00 pm

#### **Archives of the Ancient Past: Landscape and Drought History in Alberta**

Lecturer: Dr. Alwynne B. Beaudoin, Royal Alberta Museum

Dramatic images of prairie droughts - cracked earth, dried-up lakes, and dust clouds engulfing settlements - are well represented in documentary archives and have become part of Alberta's mythology. Yet for thousands of years people living in Alberta have coped with periodic drought. We can "read" this drought history through a different kind of record, a landscape archive preserved in lake cores and tree rings. Are all droughts the same? Do droughts show predictable patterns? Are recent droughts really more severe and apocalyptic than events in the distant past? Research is revealing a complex and varied landscape history that provides valuable context for those dramatic pictures.

November 3, 2010 at 7:00 pm

#### **Through the Eyes of the State: Using Government Records to Explain Environmental Change in Manitoba, Canada**

Dr. Shannon Stunden Bower, University of Alberta

Since the government of Manitoba passed legislation facilitating land drainage in 1895, the province's agricultural landscape has undergone a dramatic transformation. This presentation will consider how this transformation was documented in government records, with particular emphasis on how these records illuminate diverse public opinions as well as the approach of the state.

**Lectures are free, but please RSVP to [paaevents@gov.ab.ca](mailto:paaevents@gov.ab.ca) or 780-427-1750 if you wish to attend.**

## My Friend Don



Michael Del Vecchio

During the first weekend of May 2010, I had the good fortune to participate in a two-day, arts based, interdisciplinary research project on the Don River in Toronto, entitled "My Friend Don" ([www.myfrienddon.com](http://www.myfrienddon.com)). On an extremely rainy and cold May morning, I set out with ten other brave and ambitious explorers to discover the Don River first hand. We canoed the Don from the 401 to the Queen St. East Bridge, spending the night on the river's bank and collecting 'data' along the way. Two months later, the crew reassembled to present our research.

This project pushed the boundaries of 'traditional research' and created a framework to conduct interdisciplinary field studies that I hope to build upon in the future. It is my aim to take the research model developed by my friends and colleagues at LabSpace Studios in Toronto ([www.labspacestudios.com](http://www.labspacestudios.com)) and open it up to an even more interdisciplinary audience. I plan to attract people from all disciplines who are interested in the crossroads of the arts, humanities, sciences, social sciences, and environment. If you are interested in participating or helping organize such a project, please feel free to contact me at [mdelvecc@uwo.ca](mailto:mdelvecc@uwo.ca).

Michael Del Vecchio is a First Year PhD Candidate in the Department of History and Center for Environment and Sustainability, University of Western Ontario



#### Featured Blogs:

Matthew Evenden, Canadian Water History,  
<http://blogs.arts.ubc.ca/wordpressmu/waterhistory/>

Sean Kheraj, Canadian History and Environment  
[www.seankheraj.com/](http://www.seankheraj.com/)

Lauren Wheeler,  
 Can Enviro Rock?:  
[canenvirock.wordpress.com/](http://canenvirock.wordpress.com/)

Olivia Smith,  
 Air, Waters, Places:  
[airwatersplaces.wordpress.com](http://airwatersplaces.wordpress.com)

Colin Tyner, the Labour of Nature, and Island Life:  
[colintyner.wordpress.com](http://colintyner.wordpress.com)

Dean Bavington's Blog:  
[www.deanbavington.org/blog](http://www.deanbavington.org/blog)

NiCHE Members and many others,  
 Active History:  
[ActiveHistory.ca](http://ActiveHistory.ca)

## Call for Bloggers

Jim Clifford  
[cljim22@gmail.com](mailto:cljim22@gmail.com)

Do you have a personal blog that you use to share ideas about your research or about environmental history more generally. In an effort to bring more regular posts to the NiCHE website I will be reading through existing environmental history blogs and asking the authors for permission to republishing some of the best posts on our site. Please send me links to blogs I should follow.

If you don't have a blog, but are interested in contributing occasional posts for the NiCHE website, please send me short (500-800 words) and accessibly written contributions. We are happy to post blogs in both English and French and on any

topics that will interest environmental historians and historical geographers. These topics might include reflections on environmental history and current events, reports on research trips or conferences, overviews of websites and other internet resources that deal with environmental history, and updates about your research project. You may also continue to use the website to post CFPs, organise panels for conferences and announce events (see the contribute link in the top-right corner). If you have any more ideas for the website feel free to contact me. I will also use our Twitter and Facebook accounts and the Newsletters to share links to interesting blogs from our membership and the wider environmental history community, so please follow these accounts.

### New Blog:

[thesandcounty.wordpress.com](http://thesandcounty.wordpress.com)



Jeremy Marks

My blog is dedicated to exploring the relationship between wildness and civilization. I am exploring how we talk about, imagine, and conceptualize Nature in our lives. I am also examining how historians and other social scientists attempt to find a way to treat Nature as more than simply another variable in the writing of human history but actually as a driving force in history itself. I explore these themes through essays, postings, and other media (photography) and I also respond to current events and analyze them within this framework.

Find More Links at [niche-canada.org/resources](http://niche-canada.org/resources)