

THIS WEEK IN "LITTERLAND"

www.litterpreventionprogram.com

June 5, 2016



LOVE YOUR LAKE VISITS TORONTO

Clean ups are in play across Ontario. (See story below.) In Toronto a bevy of beach tidying occurs June 18, 19 and 25. Then it's Pickering's turn June 26.

Illustration credit:
A Greener Future



City birds less fearful of litter than country cousins

Crows have helped researchers at Exeter University understand why some creatures cannot survive urban life. Chosen for their flexibility, innovation and having a fear of new things more acute than other birds, the crows served as a control group

for measuring hesitancy when approaching food in the presence of an unknown object or just food alone. By comparing the reactions of crows, ravens and magpies, scientists saw that urban birds were much less fearful of litter than those in rural settings. They found the birds' fear decreased relative to their familiarity with the foreign object, meaning they adjusted over time to take advantage of opportunities, say the study's co-authors, PhD student Alison Greggor and Dr Alex Thornton. Their work appears in the journal, *Animal Behaviour*. "As humans alter habitats around the world, animals' responses to novelty can dictate whether they perish or thrive." Thornton [told The Irish Examiner](#) this week.

'Love your lake' one piece at a time

Ontario-based litter charity A Greener Future has made waterfront clean ups its summer focus. [Love Your Lake](#) collects and counts every piece of litter that volunteers retrieve from the waterfront. The campaign began in May in Niagara Region. The final event in Kingston on July 23 will be the 100th. A progress report tallied the haul for 32 clean ups from May 15 to 29. In all, 21,356 items were picked up along 100 km of Lake Ontario shoreline from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Oakville.

[ATTACKED BY SEAGULLS, MAN STILL HAS TO PAY FOR ABANDONED CONE](#)

An ice cream cone-eating tourist in Paignton, Devon received a double scoop of trauma. First Steve Higgins, 52, was attacked by vicious seagulls. They ate his ice cream. Then he was ticketed £80 for littering because he left his empty cone on the grass.

[New finding in Melbourne: Butt litter builds better bricks](#)

Researchers at Australia's RMIT University have used cigarette butts to build a better brick. They tout an industry-ready process that uses 10 per cent butt content to fashion a lighter, better insulating brick using half the energy normally required for brick making. Not only cheaper to produce, the heating process immobilizes the toxins like arsenic and heavy metals contained in the filters.

DID YOU KNOW?

A £250,000 UK government research project into the urban seagull problem in coastal towns was scrapped last year due to budget cuts. Tougher trash sacks, even "super falcons", have been tried for deterring gulls, their mess, attacks disease and noise. Still, UK gull numbers have grown to more than one-quarter million breeding pairs.

HEADLINE LITTER GRABBERS (MAY 29 - JUN 5)

Some of what made our News Reel this week

Zoo art is meant to capture attention (6/4)

Smithsonian National Zoo in Washington trotted out some can't-miss sculptures, larger than life animal shapes made from littered items. See them [here](#).

UK bag charge proves popular (5/31)

Now that a plastic bag fee of 5p is in place in England, 70 per cent of people not only support it, they want it broadened to cover all stores. That's up eight points from October when the fee was introduced. ICM did the poll on May 11 for Break the Bag Habit coalition.

United Nations Environment Assembly talks (5/29)

The world's environment ministers talked about marine litter at UN meetings held May 23 to 27 at UNEP's head office in Nairobi. A resolution on marine debris and litter says member states are to encourage product manufacturers to consider the life-cycle environmental impacts.

Smoking here could be expensive (6/1)

In Wales, Conwy Council took 60 littering smoker cases to a magistrate on Thursday. Only one of the 60 showed up. Fines amounting to £37,000 were imposed.

Eco-tourism fishes for litter in litter boats (6/2)

KBAC Flooring of South Africa teamed up with [Plastic Whale](#) to make boats from plastic EU marine litter and take Amsterdam tourists on the water to retrieve plastic.