

# PILN SOUNDBITES - APRIL 2011



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- PILN Teams:
- American Samoa
- Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands
- Fiji
- French Polynesia
- Guam
- Hawaii
- Kiribati
- Kosrae
- Marshall Islands
- New Caledonia
- Niue
- Palau
- Pohnpei
- Samoa
- Yap



*Pacific Invasives Learning Network*

## Network News

PILN SOUNDBITES is the monthly newsletter of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network: a participant-driven island network, reporting on news of PILN Teams and the Pacific Invasives Partnership. Past issues are available from the webpage: [www.sprep.org/piln](http://www.sprep.org/piln). Please share this issue with your colleagues and networks. Send comments, feedback or contributions to the PILN Coordinator: [posas@sprep.org](mailto:posas@sprep.org).

## PILN Teams - Updates:

### American Samoa

*Noxious Weed List –request for information*

Tavita Togia is currently looking for information on noxious weeds to assist him with developing a list for American Samoa. If you can help please get in touch with Tavita (email: [Tavita\\_Togia@nps.gov](mailto:Tavita_Togia@nps.gov)).

### Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands

*Oriental Garden Lizard or Bloodsucker Lizard found on Saipan (source: Joe Ruak)*



The Sablan family of Fina Sisu recently handed over to the Department of Lands & Natural Resources' Division of Fish and Wildlife a lizard which is believed to be a non-native lizard known as the Oriental Garden Lizard, Eastern Garden Lizard or Changeable Lizard (*Calotes versicolor*). The lizard was captured by the Sablan's outside on their farm land.

This species is known to eat insects and other lizards smaller than itself. They may also eat bird eggs. Male Oriental Garden Lizards get a bright red throat during mating season, which have lead some to call this lizard the "Bloodsucker". Oriental Garden Lizards are native to Asia and have not been recorded from the CNMI previously. This species has invaded other islands and areas including Diego Garcia and the State of Florida.

The Department of Lands & Natural Resources' Division of Fish and Wildlife, Brown Tree Snake program is conducting surveys in the capture area to determine if there are more of these lizards on island. Survey work is being supported by members of the Sablan family and by the US Department of Interior through biologist James Stanford from the Brown Treesnake response coordination office on Guam.

The Oriental Garden Lizard is not poisonous and they do not pose a threat to human life, however because they are not native to the CNMI, they pose a threat to the native skinks and other lizards in the Commonwealth, as well as the native forest birds. We do not want the Oriental Garden Lizard to become established on Saipan, because of the potential environmental threat it would pose for our native birds and animals.

If you see an Oriental Garden Lizard call 28-SNAKE or 671-777-HISS!

*Contributions for our May Soundbites are now needed!*

## Fiji

*Fiji Invasive Species Taskforce lose one of its members (source: Eleni Tokaduadua)*

Fiji has sadly lost one of its Invasive Species Fighter – Mr Ilaitia Boa – Acting Chief Executive Officer of Biosecurity Authority of Fiji, on Thursday 7 April, 2011. Mr Boa was instrumental in the collaboration efforts between the conservation partners – the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan partners and the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji. In particular, the outstanding work on the American iguana eradication program in Fiji, in which he chaired the Eradication Taskforce, as well as the Fiji National Invasive Species Taskforce. Ms Eleni Tokaduadua (Environment Department of Fiji) wrote: “I’ve had the pleasure of meeting with this gentleman a number of times to try and get both departments to work together on invasive related work under the NBSAP and the Biosecurity Decree. Our partnership, collaborations, networking and engagement of key personnel from the Ministry of Agriculture on the NBSAP implementation as we see today speaks a lot of the humble support he gave during his leadership.” Mr Boa will be sadly missed by all.

*Raising awareness on Ballast Water (source: Anthony Talouli)*

As a follow up to the inaugural Fiji Invasive Species Taskforce meeting held in February where a request was made to SPREP for a ballast water management awareness raising workshop, this is now being planned for the 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2011. A one-day seminar is being organized and coordinated by Anthony Talouli, SPREP’s Marine Pollution Advisor. The seminar will include video presentations and discussion by representatives from the International Maritime Organization, SPREP and Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji.

## Guam

*Ko’ko’ on Cocos Islands (source: Diane Vice)*



Eight of 15 radioed ko'ko' birds released on Cocos Island on November 16, 2010 are still being radio-tracked five days a week. One of the birds failed to forage and died; and, five ko'ko' slipped out of their harnesses seemingly unharmed (i.e., no feathers or sign of chewing on radio). One additional radio was found recently from a male (father of the three hatchlings) buried underground; probably dragged their by crabs. It is unclear at this point if the bird is alive or dead. The first nest found was in early March and was predated (probably by a monitor lizard). The second nest found hatched three chicks. And a new nest was found as of April 25. The monitor lizard removal program remains active and has removed over 250 individuals in a broad range of size classes. Biosecurity monitoring also continues and does not indicate any signs of snakes or rodents on Cocos.

## Hawaii

*Hawaii-Pacific Weed Risk Assessment update (source: Chuck Chimera)*

The Hawaii-Pacific Weed Risk Assessment (HPWRA) program is an ongoing project of the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC), an organization created to provide policy level direction, coordination, and planning among state departments, federal agencies, and international and local initiatives for the control and eradication of harmful invasive species infestations throughout the State of Hawaii and for preventing the introduction of other invasive species that may be potentially harmful.

As part HISC’s Strategic Plan for 2008-2013, two continuing objectives are to (1) “develop a comprehensive ‘approved planting list’ to ensure that invasive species are not being planted in State projects or by any state contractors, e.g. screened by the Weed Risk Assessment protocol” and (2) to “develop collaborative industry guidelines and codes of conduct, which minimize or eliminate unintentional introductions.” In accordance with these objectives, two Weed Risk Assessment Specialists are presently employed through funding provided by HISC. Charles Chimera, based in the Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) office on the island of Maui, has been employed in that capacity from September 2007 to present. Patricia Clifford, stationed at the Bishop Museum on the island of Oahu, has been employed as a WRA Specialist from August 2008 to present.

To date, over 11,000 species have been screened by the HPWRA and placed into “High Risk”, “Low Risk” or “Evaluate” categories. These assessments have been used by botanical gardens and industry groups in Hawaii as part of the adoption of voluntary codes of conduct agreeing to avoid or discontinue use of several high risk invasive

species. They are also being used by early detection teams and island invasive species committees (ISCs) in the Hawaiian Islands to prioritize weed control efforts.

To make the assessment information accessible to a broader audience of both professionals and the general public, a new website, to be called "Plant Pono" ("Pono" is Hawaiian for "righteous" or "upright") is under development and is expected to be launched at the end of 2011. This site will provide propagation tips and use weed risk assessment results to promote the cultivation and use of native Hawaiian and low risk non-native plants, as well as to discourage use of high risk invasive plants. In the meantime, complete lists of screened species, as well as individual assessments, are available upon request by contacting [hpwra@yahoo.com](mailto:hpwra@yahoo.com)

The HPWRA has evolved from a research project conducted by Dr. Curt Daehler, University of Hawaii Botany Department, to adapt the Australian Weed Risk Assessment for use in Hawaii and other tropical Pacific islands. A summary of Dr. Daehler's results is presented at his website: <http://www.botany.hawaii.edu/faculty/daehler/WRA/>

## New Caledonia

*Communication tools and awareness materials on invasive species of New Caledonia.*

Invasive species booklet : [http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/Campagne\\_comm\\_Nouvelle\\_Caledonie.pdf](http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/Campagne_comm_Nouvelle_Caledonie.pdf)

Audio and Video-clip: <http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/Spot%20EEE%20NC.mp4>

<http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/Spot%20radio%20EEE%20NC.mp3>

Leaflet : [http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/plaquette\\_especies\\_aquatiques\\_nouvelle\\_caledonie](http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/plaquette_especies_aquatiques_nouvelle_caledonie)

[http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/plaquette\\_fourmis\\_envahissantes\\_nouvelle\\_caledonie](http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/plaquette_fourmis_envahissantes_nouvelle_caledonie)

[http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/affiche\\_tortue\\_de\\_floride\\_nouvelle\\_caledonie](http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/affiche_tortue_de_floride_nouvelle_caledonie)

Communication plan poster: [http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/poster\\_plan\\_communication\\_nouvelle\\_caledonie.pdf](http://especies-envahissantes-outremer.fr/pdf/poster_plan_communication_nouvelle_caledonie.pdf)

(source: Julie Goxe Responsable de la cellule de veille espèces envahissantes, des actions de formation et de sensibilisation GEE/IAC - Centre IRD de Nouméa - BP A5 Tel: 26-07-64 / 84-24-80

## Pohnpei



*Update on False Sakau (Piper auritum) – By Bejay Obispo, Conservation Society of Pohnpei*

The work to eradicate false Sakau from Pohnpei started in July 2000 and a total of 121 locations were recorded, of which two sites occurred in important watershed areas. Removal of the false Sakau looks promising with total eradication expected by the end of 2012. However, there still are a lot more work needing to be done as new sites are found when inspections take place.

## Samoa

*SNITT plans its first meeting for 2011*

The Samoa National Invasives Task-Team will be having its first meeting for the year on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The meeting will provide an opportunity to hear updates from the various projects undertaken by SNITT members, including Mynah and Merremia, Cane-Toads, African Snail, Mongoose monitoring and GEF-PAS Invasive Species project. For further information, please contact Faleafaga Toni Tipamaa ([toni.tipamaa@mnre.gov.ws](mailto:toni.tipamaa@mnre.gov.ws)).

## Pacific Invasives Partnership News:

Pacific Invasive Initiatives –

*How to eradicate rodents and cats from Islands*



The Pacific Invasive Initiatives successfully completed a week-long pilot training workshop from 11-15<sup>th</sup> April in Nadi, Fiji on a toolkit to eradicate rodents and cats from islands. Attending the training were participants from New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Kiribati and Fiji. The participants were chosen on the basis that they are involved in projects to eradicate animals; thus their experience was crucial in ensuring that the toolkit is practical and realistic. The toolkit is comprehensive in its approach and it provides detailed information on each of the steps necessary in the eradication of cats and rodents from islands. The six-stage project process is applicable to other invasive species, hence those

wishing to tackle weeds and other pest species should not shy away from using this. The toolkit does require some patience to navigate through the documents and templates but once you get the hang of it, it is fairly straightforward. There are many guidance and tips to assist the user move through the pages. To help the user further a fictitious case-study has been created so that the user is able to follow the process and the thinking behind some of the decisions made for the case-study. Feedback from the participants is being incorporated into the toolkit before it is launched in a date to be announced. It is hoped that the toolkit will be useful for the PILN teams and that training of it will take place once it is finalized and resources secured.



*Footprint identification guide – need your input! (source: Marleen Balling)*

PII is setting up a footprint identification guide for invasive species. We are looking for interested contributors who may be able to help with this project. If you are working with tracking tunnels or have been using footprints as part of your wildlife monitoring, we would be interested in hearing from you. Please contact Marleen at [m.baling@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:m.baling@auckland.ac.nz) for any queries or more information.

### Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council Meeting

#### *Guam Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Update and Developing and Emergency Response Plan for Rhinoceros Beetles*



A one day workshop was held on April 4<sup>th</sup> at the University of Guam for participants attending the Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council meeting. The workshop focused on developing an Emergency Response Plan for CNMI and Yap. Dr Aubrey Moore, the entomologist from the University of Guam, provided a brief history of coconut rhinoceros beetle in the Pacific and highlighted its introduction to Guam and subsequent spread. The emergency response plan that Guam had developed was deployed for the rhinoceros beetle, and this proved to be useful in the initial fight. Six different methods have been used since to try and control the Rhinoceros Beetle including quarantining the area, detector dogs, pheromone traps, sanitation, chemical control and biocontrol. Report card for the various methods of control found that detector dogs were the most successful; limited success for quarantine, pheromone traps and sanitation; and those that didn't do too well were chemical control and biocontrol. Trapping of the beetles has shown a stark increase in caught beetles since late 2010 and early 2011 – where the number appears to have doubled. This is of concern for the Guam authorities. Some of the lessons learned by Guam will be beneficial to the other islands – such as improving policies, legislation, increasing manpower, public awareness, and biosecurity practice. Dr Konrad Englberger, Invasive Species Coordinator for Pohnpei facilitated the workshop on the CRB Emergency Response Plan. The ERP is based on a generic response plan that SPC ([www.spc.int/lrd](http://www.spc.int/lrd)) coordinated its development. Pohnpei has adapted this plan for their island setting and their experience is now being shared with other islands (CNMI and Yap).

Dates: 4-8 April 2011. Location: University of Guam. Details: Diane Vice ([dianevice@gmail.com](mailto:dianevice@gmail.com))



The Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council (RISC) met from 4-8 April to develop its new strategic plan for 2012-2016. This followed the conclusion of its first Strategic Plan from 2007-2011. Attending the meeting were representatives from Palau, Guam, Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae, Yap), Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and some key resource persons. Participants were able to reflect on the successes that were made in the 2007-2011 plan, especially the creation of invasive species coordinators for the jurisdictions and the development of the invasive species calendar. Participants also reflected on areas that remained valid for the next Strategic Plan. Through a

series of facilitation sessions, the participants reviewed the RISC mission, goals, objectives and activities under the current plan and were able to articulate a new goal for the new Strategic Plan. The 2007-2011 goal on membership of RISC was deemed to have been achieved, given that all the Micronesian jurisdictions are now RISC members. A new goal that recognizes the need to harness initiatives such as the Micronesia Biosecurity Plan and the model Biosecurity Bill to ensure that biosecurity measures throughout the region are harmonized was proposed. The end product (the Strategic Plan 2012-2016) will be finalized in the coming months before it is presented to the Micronesian Chief Executives for their endorsement.

## SPREP

*Regional Training on the Legal Implementation of the Ballast Water Management Convention with particular emphasis on Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement 16-18 May 2011*

SPREP and the International Maritime Organisation will host a training for maritime lawyers or those in position which oversee/manage the drafting of national Ballast Water Management (BWM) legislation. The training objective is to strengthen national and regional capacity to allow an effective implementation of the BWM Convention through a legal and compliance monitoring and enforcement training. It is also envisaged to have a model BWM legislation developed at the end of the training, as well as detailed steps required for national implementation and the compliance and monitoring aspects including port state control measures. Further details from Anthony Talouli ([anthonyt@sprep.org](mailto:anthonyt@sprep.org))

### Seeking comments on website

The Secretariat is currently soliciting comments (close 27 May) on its website, as it looks towards revamping and re-designing the site for its members and users. Do visit the website – <http://www.sprep.org> and provide comments in the survey document.

### Vacancies, Scholarships & Consultancies:

Global Environment Facility Project Facilitator. Applications are invited for the aforementioned position with SPREP in Apia, Samoa. Full details of the GEFPPF's responsibilities, requirements, remuneration package and lodging an application can be obtained from the Employment section of our website: [www.sprep.org](http://www.sprep.org) or by contacting the Personnel Officer on telephone: +685 21929 Ext. 230, Fax: +685 20231, or direct Email: [luanac@sprep](mailto:luanac@sprep). Deadline 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2011.

China-Pacific Islands Forum Scholarship Scheme: Available to all Pacific Island Forum countries (except Australia & New Zealand) to undertake studies at the undergraduate, postgraduate and scholars levels. Applications accepted between January and April 2011. Enquiries to Mr Filipe Jitoko ([filipei@formsec.org.fj](mailto:filipei@formsec.org.fj))

2012-2013 Fulbright Scholar. The Fulbright Scholar Program and Humphrey Fellowship Program are administered by the Institute of International Education's Department of Scholar and Professional Programs, which includes the Council for International Exchange of Scholars and Humphrey divisions. The competition for 2012-13 Fulbright Scholar grants is now open. The application deadline for most programs is August 1, 2011. U.S. scholars and professionals can learn how to present their credentials at [www.iese.org/cies](http://www.iese.org/cies).

Post-doctoral Program Coordinator for Bodega Marine Laboratory at UC Davis' Aquatic Invasive Species Program. A 50% (half-time) post-doctoral position for 18 months starting immediately is open at UC Davis's Bodega Marine Laboratory to coordinate the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program. Requirements: Ph.D. in marine, environmental, or ecological sciences; superb communication (verbal, written, powerpoint, report production) skills; excellent demonstrated ability to collaborate on and lead scientific teams; superb time management and organizational skills; experience with database management. Prior experience in California, with resource management and policy, and relational databases desirable. Applicants should submit electronically a current c.v. and contact information for two references to: Ms. Janet Kukulinsky, HR Analyst ([jkukulinsky@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jkukulinsky@ucdavis.edu)). Position starts immediately.

Rare Conservation: Program Development Consultant for Micronesia Ridge to Reef Program. Rare is looking to hire a consultant/regional expert to provide assistance in May, June and July in an effort to design and launch a new program in Micronesia focused around ridge to reef conservation — working through local communities to protect and manage watersheds/mangroves/near shore resources (coral reefs, sea grass, etc.) to support the maintenance of healthy small island ecosystems and strengthen resilience and adaptation of islands and communities to climate change effects. This project is in collaboration with Micronesia Conservation Trust. If you have any questions, please direct them to [knugyen@rareconservation.org](mailto:knugyen@rareconservation.org).

International Consultant – Development of a comprehensive biosecurity operation manual, Government of Seychelles. The consultant will visit and hold in-country consultations with relevant stakeholders including the PCU before embarking on the development of the manual. S/he will be required to draft, layout and format the manual and present it in a publishable format. Except for the country visit for the in-country consultation the consultant will be home based. Applications, including cover letter and full CV, should be sent to: UNDP-GEF Programme Coordination Unit Les Palmes Building, 2nd Floor

P.O. Box 310 Victoria, Seychelles Telephone: 225914/ Fax: 226064 E-mail: [l.rose@pcusey.sc](mailto:l.rose@pcusey.sc) or [v.herminie@pcusey.sc](mailto:v.herminie@pcusey.sc) or [d.dugasse@pcusey.sc](mailto:d.dugasse@pcusey.sc) Closing Date for applications: Friday, 6th May 2011

## PestNet Alert Snippets:

Have you been on the PestNet Website lately?

Have you visited the Pestnet website recently - [www.pestnet.org](http://www.pestnet.org)

You will see a few changes. Thanks to Matt Taylor and team at University of Queensland. There are some attractive rotating pest images. Summaries have been completely restructured, so that the sub-menus load quickly and can be more easily followed - it's a great change. The Google search engine has been added, so searches are fast AND there is a Pestnet video there too - have a look. The video was made by Graham Smith, GrahamSmithDesign, Melbourne, and the voice-over is actor Maria Angelico. It took hours of work, but they did it for almost nothing. Our thanks to both of them. Certainly would like to hear from you about the changes

### Giant African Snail nabbed in Lautoka



A Giant African snail was found on a container ship that berthed at the Lautoka wharf yesterday. A bio-security team was deployed at the wharf to investigate the matter on the Yellow Moon. More than 150 containers were offloaded as the bio-security team searched and sprayed the ship and all the containers. The ship arrived from Noumea, New Caledonia and was due to leave for Suva this morning. The search delayed the ship's departure.

### Useful resources posted on Alien-List

- PaDIL (Pests and Diseases Image Library) <http://www.padil.gov.au/>
- Plant Biosecurity Toolbox - The Plant Biosecurity Toolbox (PBT) provides detailed, web-based diagnostic protocols and information sheets to assist with the rapid identification of exotic plant pests and diseases and management in the event of an incursion.
- Contingency Plans - The Contingency Plans (CP) provide web-based diagnostic information to assist with the rapid identification of exotic plant pests and diseases, but differ from the PBT in that in the management advice offered for the initial period just after an incursion has been verified.
- Remote Microscope Diagnostics - Remote Microscope Diagnostics or RMD facilitates pest identification by connecting microscopes with computers over the internet - users share live images with experts in real time around the world.
- Australian Biosecurity - The Pests and Diseases Image Library helps protect against invasive threats to Australia's economy, environment, human health and amenity.
- Barrow Island QIM - The Barrow Island PaDIL website is unique in that it presents an entire island's known invertebrate fauna. We use this resource to assist with the active Quarantine Incursion Management (QIM) on Barrow Island.
- New Zealand Biosecurity - The purpose of this library is to detect pests and diseases found on fresh produce imports from around the world at New Zealand Borders.
- Smut Fungi of Australia - The Smut Fungi of Australia is an interactive guide for the 300 species of plant pathogenic smut fungi (Ustilaginomycetes) known from Australia.
- Thailand Biosecurity - This website is to assist with the identification of Pests and Diseases that are of concern to the Biosecurity of Thailand.

## Meeting, conference and training announcements:

*These announcements are for the May only. More events can be found on our webpage: <http://www.sprep.org/PILN/Calendar.htm>*

### Invasive Species in a Globalized World Conference

Date: 11-13<sup>th</sup> May, 2011. Venue: University of Chicago, USA. Details: <http://pge.uchicago.edu/invsive-species>.

Please contact Reuben Keller ([rpkeller@uchicago.edu](mailto:rpkeller@uchicago.edu)) if you have any questions.

The goal of the conference is to bring together people working on invasive species from a broad range of perspectives, including ecologists, economists, legal scholars, historians and outreach/communication specialists. The conference begins on Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup> at the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago with a keynote address by Rick Shine (University of Sydney, Australia): *Invasive Cane Toads in Australia: the ecological, evolutionary and social effects of a tropical amphibian in a strange land.*

### Ant Survey Training for Pohnpei and Kosrae

Date: 16-19 May, 2011 (Pohnpei) Date: 23-26<sup>th</sup> May, 2011 (Kosrae). Venue: Pohnpei and Kosrae: Details – Cas Vanderwoude (casperv@hawaii.edu) or Sheri Mann ([sheri.s.mann@hawaii.gov](mailto:sheri.s.mann@hawaii.gov)).

Each workshop is limited to 20 participants due to the number of GPS available. On Tuesday, we will have a class session. We will be learning about invasive ants, how to conduct a survey and how to use a GPS for easy survey methods. For this we need a meeting room (with AC preferred) and a data projector. If no projector is available, I can bring one. On Wednesday, we will have a practical session. The group will break into 2, and each group will conduct a practice survey at a forest site or a point of entry like the seaport or airport. On Thursday we will have another class session, except this one will focus on data management, mapping etc. For this one, we need as many laptops or computers as possible as well as internet access. The project has a web page (still being set up but with some information already there. Go to [www.littlefireants.com](http://www.littlefireants.com) and click on "pacific ant project".

International Day for Biodiversity 2011: Biodiversity and Forests.

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2011. Venue: Worldwide. Details: [www.cbd.int/idb/2011/](http://www.cbd.int/idb/2011/)

On the occasion of the 2011 International Year of Forests, the theme for International Day for Biodiversity in 2011 has been selected to be 'Biodiversity and Forests'. The global launch of the UN Decade on Biodiversity is also scheduled to take place on this date, in Tokyo, Japan.

### **Funding opportunities:**

#### Conservation Leadership Programme

BP Conservation Leadership Programme. The Conservation Leadership Programme is offering Future Conservationist Awards of up to \$12,500 to high potential teams who aim to develop their skills through practical conservation projects. <http://www.conservationleadershipprogramme.org/FutureConservationistAward.asp>.

#### SeaWorld Busch Gardens Conservation Fund

SeaWorld Busch Gardens Conservation Fund. The Fund supports research in one of four areas: 1) Species research, 2) Animal rescue and rehabilitation, 3) Habitat protection, 4) Conservation education. It has no set minimum or maximum grant amount but in the past it has supported projects ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000 for a one-year term. See: <http://www.swbg-conservationfund.org/grantInfo.htm> No deadline - SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund Animal Crisis Grants. For more information see: <http://www.swbg-conservationfund.org/animalCrisisGrants.htm>.

#### UNESCO: Pacific Youth Visioning for Island Living 2010 Small Grants

Youth Visioning for Island Living is a capacity building initiative that aims to empower young people in small islands to make a difference. The UNESCO Office for the Pacific states encourages young people and or youth organisations from member countries to submit applications to support a wide range of projects. If you are a young person or a youth organisation and would like to take part in this opportunity, feel free to contact Natalia Pereira ([n.pereira@unesco.org](mailto:n.pereira@unesco.org))

#### Rapid Response Facility

The Rapid Response Facility (RRF) is an emergency small grants programme jointly operated by Fauna & Flora International (FFI), UNESCO World Heritage Centre, and the United Nations Foundation. With a target processing time for grant applications of just 8 working days, the RRF provides rapid support to enable conservation practitioners to tackle emergencies in some of the World's most important sites for biodiversity. To date it has supported 16 rapid interventions in 14 UNESCO designated natural World Heritage sites, responding to the conservation impacts of a range of emergencies such as natural disaster, armed conflict and sudden increases in illegal activity within these protected areas. Those interested in approaching the RRF for emergency funding should see [www.rapid-response.org](http://www.rapid-response.org), which provides details on application procedures, funding criteria, and case studies of past RRF grants.

### **Invasive news and interesting links and websites**

#### Pacific oysters spread in European waters

Bremerhaven, Germany, April 11 - Pacific oysters introduced by French oyster breeders to European waters in the 1970s are growing in numbers researchers have characterized as a harmless invasion. The warming of the Atlantic waters attributed to climate change has contributed to the spread of the non-native oysters coasts as far as Germany and Ireland.

## Rock Vomit Sea Squirt invades Alaska



April 7, 2011 - Although it looks like something a whale coughed up, this chunky, brown mass is actually an invasive species of sea squirt. Known as *Didemnum vexillum*, this species has been given a much more vivid nickname – Rock vomit - since its discovery in June 2010 in Sitka, Alaska. Rock vomit likes to cling to rocks as well as piers, boat hulls and other hard surfaces. Using a remotely operated vehicle, or ROV, from NOAA's Auke Bay Laboratories, researchers are trying to learn more about this sea squirt. The invasive species costs Alaskan aquaculture industries upwards of \$500,000 annually. Although rock vomit feeds on plankton and decaying plant matter, it can be deadly to other creatures. 'It's a crazy organism', Linda Shaw, a NOAA Fisheries habitat biologist, said in a press release. 'It smothers other creatures while producing acidic toxins that in turn prevent anything from growing on it. Rock vomit creates a type of barrier between groundfish and their food. It's been causing problems worldwide.'

## CBD Secretariat invites review of AHTEG report on Alien Species

4 April 2011: The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has circulated the draft report of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on addressing the risks associated with introduction of alien species as pets, aquarium and terrarium species, and as live bait and live food. The AHTEG met from 16-18 February 2011, in Geneva, Switzerland. The report includes: an overview of key concepts and terms; an overview of databases and networks on invasive alien species (IAS); and main discussions and conclusions, per the AHTEG's terms of reference. It also includes a set of recommendations to the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA). The final report will be made available to the SBSTTA for its 15th meeting, convening from 7-11 November 2011. Comments on the draft should be submitted to the CBD Secretariat by 25 April 2011. <http://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2011/ntf-2011-074-ias-en.pdf>

## Weevil starts to chew its way through a major weed

An imported weevil released in forestry blocks in the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand several years ago is finally starting to chew its way through a major weed. The Chinese weevil was released in 2006 by the Crown Research Institute, Scion, as a biological control agent for Buddleia. Buddleia is one of the country's worst forestry weeds, costing the industry about \$3 million a year in lost production and control costs. Scion scientist Michelle Watson says the weevil is finally spreading naturally through the Bay of Plenty, reducing large patches of buddleia to bare stems. She says the success of the Chinese weevil is good news for other primary groups currently look at using imported biological control agents for other difficult weeds and pests.

## Major late blight research project funded by the USDA

Given that world potato production is about 320 million tons per year and world tomato production is about 120 million tons per year, late blight is a major problem worldwide. With total costs of the disease estimated at more than \$7 billion per year, it can drive farmers out of business and increase food prices. Howard Judelson, a professor of plant pathology at the University of California, Riverside, has received a \$9 million five-year grant from the United States Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) to research late blight and ensure a sustainable and long-term control of this devastating disease.

## Massive fish kill in Milwaukee harbor linked to virus (Dan Egan, Journal Sentinel)

A massive fish kill last month in the Milwaukee harbor has been linked to a deadly fish virus that was first discovered in Lake Michigan in 2007. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources reports it is the first time the disease known as viral hemorrhagic septicemia, or VHS, has been found in Lake Michigan waters since 2008. VHS is sometimes referred to as a fish-specific version of the deadly Ebola. It is harmless to humans, but can affect several dozen fish species, including popular sport and commercial fish such as perch, trout and whitefish. Nobody knows how the virus got into the Great Lakes, but a likely explanation is it was carried in by oceangoing freighters.

## World first stoat poison will strengthen protection for native birds

A new toxin for the control of mammalian pests, thought to be the first registered in the world for at least twenty years, has been developed in New Zealand. Its use will strengthen the ability of pest control agencies to better control stoats, and feral cats. Stoats pose a huge threat to threatened native species like kiwi. One significant reason of this new toxin is because of its humaneness. It works very quickly; as stoats become unconscious within about 15 minutes, and die shortly afterwards. There is also an antidote available which significantly reduces the risks to non target species.



### Biological invasions a major threat

Invasive species get less attention than natural disasters but may be as economically damaging and warrant corresponding action, North American researchers say. When the Nile perch invaded Africa's Lake Victoria, it contributed to the extinction of 200 fish species, biologist Anthony Ricciarde of McGill University and his co-authors said. Such invasions can have huge financial impacts: the destruction of ash trees by the emerald ash borer is predicted to cost the United States \$10 billion over the next decade. Hazard-reduction plans such as vulnerability reduction practices, rapid response and assessment, and systems for sharing of information and coordination among authorities could minimize the impacts of biological invasions, and at a cost that is low relative to the cost of a major event. They point to New Zealand, which has passed legislation to coordinate management of threats to its biodiversity and natural resources under a central authority.

**Invasive ladybugs eat their native competition, but a shared enemy determines who survives** (source: Beth Gavrilles – bethgav@uga.edu)

A University of Georgia researcher studying invasive ladybugs has developed new models that help explain how these insects have spread so quickly in the UK and their potential impacts on native species. In recent years, some people in the United States have noticed swarms of ladybugs amassing in the fall, even infesting their homes. These are Asian lady beetles, insects native to eastern Asia, introduced to the U.S. as a biocontrol for aphids and have since spread throughout the country and into Canada. Assistant Research Scientist Richard Hall, of the UGA Odum School of Ecology wanted to know how this insect could have invaded the U.K. so quickly, and what the impacts on native species are likely to be. "What makes this insect a good biocontrol also makes it a good invader," Hall said. "It has multiple generations per year, compared to just one for native British ladybugs. It tolerates a wide range of environmental conditions. And it has a generalist diet—it likes aphids, but it will also eat other ladybugs. In other words, it eats its own competition."

### Defra to remove problem monk parakeets from wild

A species of parakeet that threatens wildlife and crops is to be removed from the wild, the government has said. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) said the monk parakeet, from South America, was an invasive species. It announced control measures to either rehouse the birds, remove their nests, or - as a last resort - shoot them. Defra estimates there are around 100 of the green-and-yellow birds in the UK, mainly in the south east of England. Although the species had not yet caused any damage, Defra said they had the potential to threaten "national infrastructure".

## New Publications:

### Scientific

Mohammed, R.S., Mahabir, S.V., Joseph, A.K., Manickchan, S., & Ramjohn, C. 2011. Update of Freshwater turtles' distributions for Trinidad and possible threat of an exotic introduction. Life Sciences Department, University of West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. 5 p. Unpubl. Manuscript.

Jarra, F.C., Barrett, S., Murray, J., Stoklosa, R., Whittle, P., Mengersen, K. 2011. Ecological aspects of biosecurity surveillance design for the detection of multiple invasive animal species. *Biological Invasions* 13: 803-818.

*Freshwater Biology* – new special issues on Biology: Emerging Freshwater Diseases. This Special Issue fills the gap by providing a modern overview of the emergence of disease in fresh waters across a diverse range of organisms, from phytoplankton to humans.

This issue is essential reading for all freshwater biologists, as well as for anyone interested in disease ecology, biological invasions or the conservation and management of fresh waters.

- Okamura, B., & Feist, S.W. 2011. Emerging diseases in freshwater systems. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 627–637. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2011.02578.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2011.02578.x/pdf>
- Johnson, P.T.J., & Paull, S.H. 2011. The ecology and emergence of diseases in fresh waters. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 638–657. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02546.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02546.x/pdf>
- Thrush, M.A., Murray, A.G., Brun, E., Wallace, S., & Peeler, E.J. 2011. The application of risk and disease modelling to emerging freshwater diseases in wild aquatic animals. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 658–675. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02549.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02549.x/pdf>

- Poulin, R., Paterson, R.A., Townsend, C.R., Tompkins, D.M., & Kelly, D.W. 2011. Biological invasions and the dynamics of endemic diseases in freshwater ecosystems. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 676–688. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02425.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02425.x/pdf>
- Penczykowski, R.M., Forde, S.E., & Duffy, M.A. 2011. Rapid evolution as a possible constraint on emerging infectious diseases. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 689–704. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02499.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02499.x/pdf>
- Peeler, E.J., Feist, S.W. 2011. Human intervention in freshwater ecosystems drives disease emergence. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 705–716. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2011.02572.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2011.02572.x/pdf>
- LV, Shan., Zhang, Y., Steinmann, P., Yang, G.-J., Yang, K., Zhou, X.-N., & Utzinger, J. 2011. The emergence of angiostrongyliasis in the People's Republic of China: the interplay between invasive snails, climate change and transmission dynamics. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 717–734. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2011.02579.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2011.02579.x/pdf>
- Okamura, B., Hartikainen, H., Schmidt-Posthaus, H., & Wahli, T. 2011. Life cycle complexity, environmental change and the emerging status of salmonid proliferative kidney disease. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 735–753. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02465.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02465.x/pdf>
- Ibelings, B.W., Gsell, A.S., Mooij, W.M., Van Donk, E., Van Den Wyngaert, S., & De Senerpontdomis, L.N. 2011. Chytrid infections and diatom spring blooms: paradoxical effects of climate warming on fungal epidemics in lakes. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 754–766. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02565.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02565.x/pdf>
- Paull, S.H., & Johnson, P.T.J. 2011. High temperature enhances host pathology in a snail–trematode system: possible consequences of climate change for the emergence of disease. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 767–778. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02547.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02547.x/pdf>
- Horak, P., & Kolarova, L. 2011. Snails, waterfowl and cercarial dermatitis. *Freshwater Biology*, 56: 779–790. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02545.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2427.2010.02545.x/pdf>

#### Newsletters

The Sea Around Us Project Newsletter. Issue 63 – January/February 2011. The Sea Around Us Project newsletter is published by the Fisheries Centre at the University of British Columbia. Six issues of this newsletter are published annually. Subscriptions are free of charge. One of the articles in this issue is on the invasive Indo-Pacific Lionfish in the Caribbean, providing an opportunity for collaboration, creativity and growth in marine conservation. (email [SeaNotes@fisheries.ubc.ca](mailto:SeaNotes@fisheries.ubc.ca) for a copy of the newsletter).

SAPIA News (Southern African Plant Invaders Atlas) April, 2011. No. 19 issue is out focusing on *Rubus* species.

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