

PILN SOUNDBITES - MARCH 2011



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



Pacific Invasives Learning Network

Contents:

PILN Teams - Updates:

• Fiji • French Polynesia • Guam • Hawaii • Kosrae • Pohnpei

News from the Pacific Invasives Partnership:

• GEF-PAS Invasive species inception workshop for Tonga • IUCN • Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council • Pacific Invasives Initiative • Global Invasive Species Programme • SPC collaborations with Japan to support Pacific forests • SPREP • Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) • Vacancies, Scholarships & Consultancies

PestNet Alert Snippets

• How to catch a snake or two • Black Sigatoka infects Martinique

Meeting, Conference & Training Announcements:

Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council Meeting • PII – How to eradicate rodents and cats from Islands • 11th World congress on parasitic plants • 22nd Pacific Science Congress • 15th Australasian Vertebrate Pest Conference • NZ Biosecurity Institute Conference • 5th International Marine Debris Conference • 2011 International Biodiversity Conference • XIII International symposium on biological control of weeds • 16th NSW Weeds Conference • 2011 International Biodiversity Conference • 7th International Conference on Marine Bioinvasions • 11th International conference on the ecology and management of alien plant invasions • 10th International NCCR climate summer school 'climate change, extremes and ecosystem services' • 22nd SPREP Meeting • 8th European Vertebrate Pest Management Conference • Global R&D Forum and Exhibition on Ballast Water Management • BIOLIEF 2011 – 2nd World conference on biological invasion and ecosystem functioning • 25th International Congress for Conservation Biology • Global Resistance Challenge 2013

Funding Opportunities:

• Conservation Leadership Programme • SeaWorld Busch Gardens Conservation Fund • UNESCO: Pacific Youth Visioning for Island Living 2010 Small Grants • Rapid Response Facility

Invasives News and Interesting Links/Websites:

• Caribbean talk lion-fish and invasive species • Insect invasion leaves calling card • US adds bighead carp to ban list • Botanic gardens help spread invasive plants • Mass extinction of scientists who study species • Major mouse outbreak downunder • Feral pig population explodes after wet summer • African Great Lake Tanganyika under threat by invasive species • Moth alert for prickly pear • Invasive water-lily in Australia's Lake Burley Griffin • Smithsonian scientists work on invasion species prevention • Reptiles invade the Turks & Caicos Islands • Finland publishes National Strategy for Invasive Alien Species • Successful end to the removal of invasive seaweeds project in Hawaii • Invasive species videos now available • Northern Ireland seeks views on draft invasive alien species strategy • Taskforce formed to address Oriental weatherloach as it threatens the Murray River

New Publications:

A selection of the latest scientific articles, newsletters and books on invasive species.

Contributions for our April Soundbites are now needed!

Network News

PILN SOUNDBITES is the monthly newsletter of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network: a participant-driven island network, reporting on news of PILN Country Teams and the Pacific Invasives Partnership. Past issues are available from our webpage: www.sprep.org/piln. Do share this issue with your colleagues and networks. Please send comments and feedback to the PILN Coordinator: posas@sprep.org.

PILN Teams - Updates:

Fiji

FIST 2nd Meeting

Fiji Invasive Species Taskforce held a meeting on the 18th March, the first meeting following the National consultation for the NBSAP held last month. The meeting provided the opportunity to discuss what has occurred over the last few years and to explore opportunities for collaboration in the future. It was agreed after the meeting that the formalising of the taskforce will be proposed at the next meeting of the National Environment Council

Fiji and Brown Tree Snakes.

Dr James Stanford, the Brown Tree Snake expert, working for USGS based in Guam, visited Fiji and met with various members of the Fiji Invasive Species Taskforce. The Brown Tree Snake is a serious pest that was introduced into Guam during the 2nd World War. Its invasiveness has caused extinctions to many native birds on the island and threatened many more of the islands unique fauna.

The opening up of direct flight connections between Guam and Fiji exposes Fiji's biodiversity to Brown Tree Snakes. The already devastated bird population of Fiji from mongoose, cats and other invasive species, will become even more threatened given the ability of Brown Tree Snakes to troll canopies and other bird-nesting sites. Dr James Stanford's visit was an exploratory one to gauge the interest of Fiji stakeholders and to explore future collaborations. The FIST meeting held last month highlighted Brown Tree Snake as an area that they would like to work on to ensure that Fiji's biodiversity is protected. This coincides with a project by Birdlife International-Pacific programme to focus on Brown Tree Snake.

Ballast Water Management awareness raising seminar

A special awareness raising seminar on ballast water management is being planned on the 19 May 2011 by SPREP and IMO for Fiji. The seminar was a request made during the Fiji Invasive Species Taskforce meeting held as part of the Fiji stakeholders' consultation for the review of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan in late February. Anthony Talouli, Marine Pollution Adviser is organizing this activity in the hope of trying to raise local awareness on the threat to local marine ecosystem posed by animals and plants introduced via ships. For further details and to obtain a copy of the programme, please contact Anthony Talouli on anthonyt@sprep.org.

French Polynesia

From Dr Jean-Yves Meyer: We had our 'Moorea Biocode' annual meeting at UC Berkeley early this March. You may have a look at my power-point presentation showing how important the alien vascular flora of Moorea is compared to the native flora (and how it was under-estimated before we started the program). [*the power-point presentation is a big file – if interested in obtaining a copy please contact Dr Jean-Yves directly*].

Also Dr Jean-Yves and colleague, Marie Fourdrigniez, have published an article in *Biological Conservation* titled: Conservation benefits of biological control: the recovery of a threatened plant subsequent to the introduction of a pathogen to contain an invasive tree species. Please contact Dr Jean-Yves for further information - jean-yves.meyer@recherche.gov.pf

Guam

Brown Tree Snake Rapid Response Training

Over a period of three weeks in February and March of 2011, nine full time and several additional part-time individuals participated in the recently completed Brown Tree Snake Rapid Response Team training courses facilitated by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) on the islands of Guam and Rota. Full time attendees included two staff from Big Island, one from Kauai, two from Maui, one from Oahu, one from Rota in the Northern Mariana Islands, and two from Pohnpei State, Federated States of Micronesia. Additionally invasive species community members from Guam attended on a part-time basis, including staff from USGS and Department of Defence (DOD). Newly trained team members and their agencies will support invasive response actions in their home jurisdictions and can request assistance from the regional coordination office. Additional trainings can be programmed for later this fiscal year and are held on an as requested basis. If your group

is concerned with alien snake invasive threats and/or is looking for response capacity building, contact James Stanford for further information (james_stanford@usgs.gov).

Upcoming events for Guam (and may be of interest to others):

- Brown Tree Snake Technical Working Group Meeting: 12-15 April Guam: http://guaminsects.net/anr/sites/default/files/BTS-TWG_Announcement.pdf
- 2nd Regional Conference on Island Sustainability 19-20 April 2011 University of Guam: <http://www.uog.edu/dynamicdata/islandsustainabilityconference.aspx?siteid=1&p=621>
- Hawaii Conservation Conference 2-4 August 2011, Honolulu, Hawaii: http://hawaiiconservatin.org/activities/hawaii_conservation_conference

[More events can be found from page 6, or on our PILN website (<http://www.sprep.org/piln/Calendar.htm>).]

Hawaii

Restoring reef – innovating solutions help coral reefs recover from invasive alien seaweeds



KANE'OHE BAY, O'AHU -- Biologists from the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) Aquatic Invasive Species Team are finding successful results from the latest revolutionary attempt to control invasive alien seaweeds and protect coral reefs in Kāne'ōhe Bay. Over the past few years, biologists have used an underwater vacuum dubbed the "Super Sucker" to manually remove hundreds of thousands of pounds of invasive seaweed from the reef. However, studies have shown that the fast-growing seaweed returns to smothering levels within six months.

DAR biologists then turned to nature, using native collector sea urchins (*Tripneustes gratilla*) to keep algae grazed down. These urchins once were abundant in Kāne'ōhe Bay, but are not commonly seen today. To show that collector urchins could be a sustainable, natural way to control invasive seaweed in Kāne'ōhe Bay, DAR biologists transplanted -- urchins taken from artificial reefs around O'ahu and placed them on a patch reef in the bay. Today, the urchins on that reef continue to keep the seaweed to non-damaging levels.



The next phase of this program was to captive breed and raise native collector urchins. The 'Anuenue Fisheries Research Center at Sand Island was retrofitted to raise sea urchins, and the first brood was successfully raised. This month DAR scientists began placing the young urchins in Kane'ōhe bay where they will be monitored and protected over time with assistance from the community.

It's hoped that this program can be expanded to other areas of the state to help restore the health of other patch reefs that are suffering under significant alien

algae invasion.

Kosrae

From Leon Sigráh, Invasive Species Coordinator: Kosrae continues with its normal field activities. Some significant progress is seen with our eradication program on the *Leucaena* spp. and *Clerodendrum quadriloculare* around the island. We carried out a successful awareness program targeting gender on Women's Day and also did some field expeditions to youth groups to highlight the importance of invasive species. Kosrae team has a few workshops and training opportunities coming up, which it hopes to take advantage of. For more information please contact Leon Sigráh - leonsigrah@yahoo.com.

Pohnpei: Invasive Species Taskforce Of Pohnpei – (i-STOP)

In January 2011 the Invasive Species Taskforce of Pohnpei Strategic Action Plan (SAP) was finalized.

Since February 2011, Pohnpei State Government contracted Konrad Englberger as Invasive Species Coordinator for the Pohnpei State. The contract will initially be for 6 months with a possibility to extend. Also in February 2011, Pohnpei Forestry, Division of Lands and Natural Resources employed Mr. Gurney Amor as a technician for Invasive Species activities. Gurney's funding comes from US Forestry Service. During February 2011, Mr Gurney Amor and Mr Alden Salvador from EPA attended a three week Brown Tree Snake emergency response training in Guam.

A new poster was designed entitled: “MA KOMW MAHHSANIADA SOANGEN TUHKE DE DIHPW PWUKAT A KOMW KALANGAN REPOHTKI” “REPORT IT IF YOU SEE IT THANK YOU). The poster will be out from the printer in Guam in early April. It was funded under a CEPF project. T-shirts and printing of more booklets of Invasive Weeds in Pohnpei are waiting for funding.



After 6–8 years of controlling the Mile-a minute vine (*Mikania micrantha*) on 6 sites, surveys undertaken from January and February 2011 found three new sites with more than one acre in size. On those three sites, the Mile-a-minute vine must have been present for several years and seed banks have been established. It will take several years to eradicate the Mile-a-minute vine from these new areas.

In January 2011 a survey was conducted on Joy Island, where thousands of Octopus trees (*Schefflera actinophylla*) were found in 2007. Visits in 2009, 2010 and the recent January this year, found no Octopus tree. It can be concluded that *Schefflera actinophylla* has been eradicated from Joy Islands.

Activities on the eradication of False Sakau (*Piper auritum*), Chain-of-love (*Antigonon leptopus*), Ivy gourd (*Coccinia grandis*), Bengel trumpet vine (*Thunbergia grandiflora*), Lolo pepper (*Piper lolot*) and Honolulu rose (*Clerodendrum chinense*) continued.

During January and February iSTOP sub-committee meetings were held to draft “The Invasive Species Control Plan”. Once the plan is completed and adopted by all stakeholders iSTOP will become a formal entity.

At the end of March a radio panel discussion on invasive species was recorded and broadcasted on Radio FSM.

Pacific Invasives Partnership News:

GEF-Pacific Alliance for Sustainability - Invasive species inception workshop for Tonga

Tonga held its inception workshop on 12 March to discuss the GEF-PAS Invasive Species project. Led by the Environment Department of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, the meeting was attended by staff from Quarantine, Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Ports Authority and the local non-governmental organization – Tongan Trust. The meeting confirmed the Tongan Technical Working Group that will function as the Invasive Species team for Tonga. The planning document on how Tonga will execute its eight activities in the project was also endorsed by the meeting participants, as well as the Procurement Plan.

The GEF-PAS Invasive Species project is a multi-country (10 countries) project, with the aim of undertaking various national activities in contribution to the implementation of the Pacific Islands Invasive Species Guidelines. UNEP is the Implementing agency and SPREP is the Executing Agency. A GEF-PAS Project Coordinator will also be hired to assist with managing the project and a related GEF-PAS project on Integrated Island Biodiversity.

IUCN

IUCN is pleased to announce the recruitment of Melle Christelle Monvoisin as the new Programme Officer on Islands and Invasive Alien Species to support its work on impact of invasives on islands and ecosystem services. Christelle is starting by reviewing the existing work and will need your help in building her knowledge in: Ecosystems Services on islands; Invasive species and their impact on island's ecosystem services; Economics of biological invasion; What is already done in terms of governance in the context of invasive species on islands; Collection and analysis of existing literature on economic costs (and benefits) of biological invasions – especially on islands.

Christelle can be reached on email at christelle.monvoisin@iucn.org and on the phone at +41 22 999 0182, and we very much look forward to working with you to enhance IUCN's impact and reach on island conservation and sustainable development.

Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council

Micronesian Regional Invasive Species Council will be meeting on Guam during the week of 4 April to follow up on several agenda items, including the development of a new 5-year strategic action plan for RISC. The RISC council serves the regional chief executives and the citizens of Micronesia and currently includes council members for the following jurisdictions: Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Federated States of Micronesia, Chuuk State, Kosrae State, Pohnpei State, and Yap State. Input on the planning process can be provided directly to council members for each jurisdiction.

Leading up to the RISC meeting, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has circulated a questionnaire which will help in the development of the Strategic Action Plan. The questionnaire is open to external partners. Please submit the completed questionnaire to Mae M. Bruton Adams at madams@tnc.org and/or Trina Leberer at tleberer@tnc.org.

Pacific Invasives Initiative

The PII News March 2011 is now out. Please contact the PII team on pji@auckland.ac.nz for a copy. In this issue you will read the update of the upcoming PII Resource Kit for rodent and cat eradication training course to be held in Fiji next month. Also included in the issue are the restoration of Monuriki Island in Fiji from invasive goats and the conservation of Tahiti and Fatu Hiva monarchs. There are many more interesting items for your reading pleasure.

Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) [from Sarah Simons]



In the aftermath of the global economic recession, as many of you are aware, GISP experienced some really difficult times financially and, despite our best efforts, I regret to inform you that the Secretariat of GISP will close down on 31st March 2011, so sadly, this is also my last day as Executive Director of GISP. The GISP Partnership will effectively enter a dormant phase, pending clarification on future funding, and any remaining activities will be undertaken by CABI; an intergovernmental organisation, a founding partner of GISP and a global leader in the prevention and management of invasive species.

Following its launch in 1997, the GISP Brand became synonymous with the global struggle to prevent, eradicate and manage invasive species through its outstanding publications, widely-acclaimed training courses and through recognition as being the authoritative voice on invasive species policy by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Sadly, despite these accomplishments, GISP was unable to attract adequate investment from donors or new partners. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge the valuable roles that have been played by GISP's current partner organisations; CABI, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Secretariat of the CBD (SCBD), who have continued to provide GISP with solid financial and strategic support during this challenging period.

While this is the end of an era for the Secretariat of GISP, I hope I'll be able to continue interacting with many of you as we continue our struggle to influence invasive species policy globally, and in the interim, I can be contacted on s.simons@cabi.org. So, all that remains is for me to express my sincere thanks to the donors, partners and/or individuals who have, in one way or another, contributed to enormous success of GISP during the past 14 years. I'd like to believe that somehow, the GISP Team made a difference to public perceptions of invasive species and catalysed a whole suite of international, regional and national policies and projects, which will go some way towards addressing this enormous (US\$ 1.4 trillion) and ever-increasing, global challenge!

Kind regards

Sarah Simons, PhD – Executive Director

Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP)

Thank you Sarah and on behalf of our PILN teams – I thank you and GISP for your support to the Pacific Islands over the years. You were truly inspirational and a friend to all the island delegates that attended the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan last year. We wish you all the best with your future endeavours and hope that we will continue to work together in addressing invasive species. Best wishes.

SPC collaborates with Japan to support Pacific forests

SPC's hosting of Dr Hitofumi Abe, a forestry expert from Japan, is proving to be ideal timing as SPC focuses on a joint country strategy with Papua New Guinea. Dr Abe is attached to the Land Resources Division in Suva, Fiji and will focus on forest monitoring, using remote sensing technologies as part of the REDD-readiness programme, protected area management, conservation and management of forest genetic resources and management of invasive plant species.

SPREP

The Pacific Environment Information Network Newsfeed is now out. The Newsfeed harvests a range of environmental news relevant to the Pacific Islands. You can follow this newsfeed on [Facebook](#) or contact Miraneta (miraneta@sprep.org) for more information.

Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) update

GLISPA held its steering committee meeting from Feb 22-23 in Washington, which reaffirmed its commitment to the GLISPA Strategy 2010-2012 focusing on ecosystem-based adaptation and mitigation, and invasive species. Other key documents available from GLISPA include the:

- Roadmap for in-depth review of the programme of work on Island Biodiversity
- Request for Comments on the Caribbean Challenge Log Frame
- Second PreCom for UN Conference on Sustainable Development
- Reminder to join SIDS-L (<http://sids-l.issd.org>)
- Earth Day Network Global Days of Conversation (<http://www.earthday.org/campaign/global-day-conversation>)
- Coral Triangle Initiative – save turtles by using responsible fishing gear
- Caribbean Challenge – Grenadines Network of Marine Protected Areas

Vacancies, Scholarships & Consultancies:

Chief Executive Director. Falklands Conservation, Stanley, Falkland Islands. Salary: 35,000 per annum. Deadline 10th April, 2011. The post requires a dynamic and outgoing personality and the successful candidate will clearly demonstrate the ability to promote Falklands Conservation in the Falkland Islands and abroad. The post is indeterminate, upon satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period, and subject to renewal of work permits by the Falklands Islands Customs and Immigration Department at two-yearly intervals. For a detailed job description and application form please contact sarah.brennan@falklands-nature.demon.co.uk or visit our website at <http://www.falklandsconservation.com>

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 (filipej@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.iie.org/cies.

ACP Multilateral Environmental Agreement – mid-term review consultant – SPREP. SPREP is calling for tenders from qualified and experienced project evaluation experts who can offer their services to carry out a mid-term review of the EC funded project Capacity Building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements in African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries. Deadline for submission, Friday 8 April, 2011. Contact Dr Jill Key – jillk@sprep.org for further details.

PestNet Alert Snippets:

How to catch a snake or two!

From Paul Pendlebury (UK) via Alien-List

I catch snakes / reptiles/ amphibians on a day to day basis and I have wondered if the Floridian snake catchers have tried concrete pipes as refugia as the concrete has thermic properties whilst plastic pipes don't, these pipes would be the nearest to natural hiding places that in the wild snakes would look for. It may be useful to pass on this suggestion to expediate the catching of these animals in the wild.

Black Sigatoka infects Martinique

The disease better known as black sigatoka continues its progression through the Caribbean region. Martinique was one of the few islands still free of black leaf streak disease (BLSD) when the air-borne fungus was detected in September 2010 on plantain in the southwestern part. The disease was confirmed both by observation of the anamorph form of the pathogen and by molecular analysis.

Meeting, conference and training announcements:

Contribute your meeting dates to our PILN Calendar available on our webpage (<http://www.sprep.org/PILN/Calendar.htm>)

Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council Meeting

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

PII - How to eradicate rodents and cats from Islands

Dates: 11-15th April, 2011. Location: Nadi, Fiji. Details and more information: n.doherty@auckland.ac.nz

11th World Congress on parasitic plants

Date: 7-12 June, 2011. Venue: Martina Franca, Italy. The Congress will bring together scientists representing a wide spectrum of disciplines, research approaches, and geographical representation of parasitic plant research. Assembling specialists with different perspectives, this congress will focus around the common theme of plant parasitism and provide a stimulating environment for learning and exchanging of ideas. The Congress will include presentations at the cutting edge of parasitic plant research and management of parasitic weeds. Contact: ipps2011@area.ba.cnr.it

22nd Pacific Science Congress – special session on invasive species

Date: 14-18 June 2011. Location: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Details: www.pacificscience.org/congress2011.html

A special session titled DNA barcoding of Pacific Invasive and Pest Species will be held as part of the 22nd Pacific Science Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The special session recognises that as global trade and tourism increase, invasive alien species and agricultural pests represent an increasing threat to native Pacific biodiversity. DNA barcoding is an emerging global standard for identifying species using a short standardized gene sequence. DNA barcodes of pest species in quarantine have already been assembled under a number of global initiatives. The symposium will include presentations on DNA barcoding and its application to invasive alien species and agricultural pests, presentations by national quarantine and environmental agencies and discussions of strategies, priorities and opportunities for international collaboration.

15th Australasian Vertebrate Pest Conference

Date: 20-23 June, 2011. Location: Sydney, Australia. Details: www.avpc.net.au

As part of the conference we will be holding a symposium on the management of vertebrate pests on islands. We are soliciting oral papers (15 minutes total) around this topic – eradication, sustained control, biosecurity and quarantine, detecting and managing survivors, the strategies and tools that worked or failed, management of non-target or environmental problems, etc. The emphasis is for projects in the Australasian region but papers from elsewhere will be considered especially if they demonstrate some general or novel problems or solutions. So, if you have a story to tell from your island and its pests send an abstract to the conference organizers at the above website and a copy to the symposium organizers (Elaine Murphy and John Parkes) at emurphy@doc.govt.nz. **The deadline for abstracts is now March 7th 2011.**

NZ Biosecurity Institute Conference

Date: 6-8 July, 2011. Location: Takapuna, Auckland, New Zealand. Details: www.biosecurity.org.nz.

The theme of the conference is: the Northern Gateway: Tomorrow's pests today. It will focus on Northland and Auckland as the gateway to New Zealand for pests. Find out how they are closing the doors on threats to NZ and fighting what is already there. You will hear great speakers and be able to attend field trips that will showcase the innovative/unique programmes going on around the region.

XIII International symposium on biological control of weeds

Date: 11-16 September 2011. Location: Wakioloa Beach Marriott Resort & Spa, Waikoloa on Hawaii's Big Island. Details: http://uhhconferencecenter.com/xiii_isbcw.html

The International Symposium on Biological Control of Weeds is a quadrennial international gathering of scientists and managers working in biological control of weeds. International cooperation is central to the practice of biocontrol, and this forum provides a critical opportunity for colleagues to reconnect, share experiences, and plan future collaborations. The meeting in Hawaii will provide a unique opportunity to take stock of a century of biocontrol in the Pacific and examine emerging issues, including climate change, that affect invasive plant management across the globe. The extraordinary cultural and natural diversity of Hawaii, and its long history in weed biocontrol, make these islands an ideal site for reflection and discourse on the past, present and future of this field.

16th NSW Weeds Conference

Date: 18-21 July 2011. Location: Pacific Bay Conference Centre, Coffs Harbour, Australia. Details: <http://wired.ivvy.com/event/QK8MZBH4Y/>.

The conference provides a great opportunity to share knowledge, learn about innovative weed management and network with some 300 weed professionals from across the country.

2011 International Biodiversity Conference

Date: 29 July – 4 August, 2011. Location: Banos, Ecuador. Details: <http://www.wsfbioconference.org/>

This is the third conference to be held in mega-biodiverse Ecuador. Abstracts are called for with a deadline of June 1st, 2011. Conference covers issues such as ecological biodiversity research species, species specific research from around the world, biodiversity in a changing climate, biogeography projects and related research, physical impact of volcanism upon biodiversity, GIS and spatial ecology research, innovative environmental education, community programmes. Contact Dr Barry Barker (barker@wildspotsfoundation.org) for further information.

7th International Conference of Marine Bioinvasions

Date: 23-25th August 2011. Location: CosmoCaixa Science Museum, Barcelona, Spain. Details: <http://www.icmb.info/>

Conference title – Advances and Gaps in understanding marine bioinvasions. The Conference will encompass themes such as: development and tests of invasion theory, drivers of invisibility, patterns of invasion and spread at local, regional and global scales, impact of bioinvasions on ecosystem structure and function including the biology and ecology of invasive species, new tools for identification, monitoring, risk assessment and management.

11th International conference on the ecology and management of alien plant invasions

Date: 30 August – 3rd September 2011. Location: University of West Hungary, Szombathely, Hungary. Details: www.emapi.2011.org

Theme of the conference is bridging the gap between scientific knowledge and management practice.

10th International NCCR climate summer school 'climate change, extremes and ecosystem services

Date: 4-9 September 2011. Location: Grindelwald, Switzerland. Details: http://www.nccr-climate.unibe.ch/summer_school/2011/

Young scientists are invited to join leading climate researchers in the Swiss Alpine for keynote lectures, workshops and poster sessions. Topics covered include – ecological implications of climate change, ecosystem services and climate change, food security and global land and water use in changing climate. This opportunity is for young researchers (PhD students and Post-Docs) worldwide. Participation is highly competitive and is limited to 70 places. Registration fee is 1200 CHF includes half board accommodation, excursion and teaching material. Deadline for application is 31 January 2011 and successful applications to be advised in February.

22nd SPREP Meeting

Date: 12-16 September. Location: Apia, Samoa. Details: www.sprep.org

The meeting is for SPREP members only. This year there will be a Pacific Environment Forum with UNEP Executive Director –Mr Achim Steiner.

8th European Vertebrate Pest Management Conference

Date: 26-30 September 2011. Location: Berlin, Germany. Details: www.evpmc.org

Phil Cowen, Landcare Research New Zealand will be convening a symposium on invasive vertebrates focusing on impacts and management of European invasive vertebrates and comparisons between the European situation and other regions of the world. If you are interested in presenting at the symposium, please contact Phil by email – cowanp@landcaresearch.co.nz

Global R&D Forum and Exhibition on Ballast Water Management – *compliance monitoring and enforcement – the next R&D challenge and opportunity*

Date: 26-28 October 2011. Location: Istanbul, Turkey. Details: www.uma.gov.tr

The Forum and Exhibition will bring together the international community engaged in a variety of aspects of ballast water management. The main scope of this year's Forum is Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement (CME) activities and provides an opportunity to share the latest R&D efforts. The Forum will provide an open debate between some of the world's largest maritime organizations involved in shipping, ship building and design, maritime R&D institutes, technology developers, environmental organizations and academia to discuss the cutting edge issues in ballast water management.

BIOLIEF 2011 – 2nd World Conference on Biological Invasion and Ecosystem Functioning

Date: 21-24 November 2011. Location: Mar del Plata, Argentina. Details: <http://www.grieta.org.ar/biolief/>

BIOLIEF 2011 will be a forum for the presentation, discussion, and synthesis of research on biological invasions in its broadest sense. The conference will place a particular emphasis on studies concerning the impact of invasive species on ecosystem functioning and/or services, irrespective of taxonomic groups or ecosystem types. However, studies on any other ecological aspect of biological invasions will also be welcome. Topics such as the spread of invasive species into ecosystems, the biogeography and history of species introductions, and the community- or species-level impact of biological invasions will also have an important coverage in the final conference program

25th International Congress for Conservation Biology (please note the change of venue and dates)

Date: 5-9 December, 2011. Location: Auckland, New Zealand. Contact: www.conbio.org/2011 or 2011@conbio.org

The call for proposals for symposia, workshops, and short courses is now open for the 25th International Congress for Conservation Biology. Meeting Theme: Engaging Society in Conservation Biodiversity around the world continues to decline at an ever-increasing pace, yet much of society carries on business as usual. How can conservation biologists engage with society to achieve positive outcomes for conservation without compromising our scientific rigor or integrity? CALL FOR ORAL, SPEED AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS SCB is now accepting abstracts for oral, poster, and speed presentations for the 25th International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB 2011), Engaging Society in Conservation which will be held 5 – 9 December 2011. Please visit:

<http://www.conbio.org/Activities/Meetings/2011/register/abstracts.cfm>. Abstracts must be submitted electronically by 30 April 2011.

Global Resistance Challenge 2013

Date: February 2013. Location: Fremantle, Perth, Western Australia. Contact: Lisa Mayer (lisa.mayer@uwa.edu.au)

The Global Resistance Challenge 2013 conference offers a multidisciplinary forum focused on all aspects of herbicide resistance in crops and weeds and their impact on global food production. Scientific sessions will range from the molecular basis of herbicide resistance evolution through agro-ecology and agronomy to on-farm resistance management. The Global Resistance Challenge 2013 conference will provide a stage for young and established private and public sector researchers, crop consultants and others to present their work in front of a welcoming international audience in the beautiful portside city of Fremantle, Perth, Western Australia. We welcome everyone who wishes to discover the latest advances in herbicide resistance to Perth in February 2013, to experience a magnificent Western Australian late summer.

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. The CLP offers support to young conservationists (35 years and younger) living and working in Africa, Asia, East/ Southeastern Europe, the Middle East, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean. See:

<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. In 2007, the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund launched the Animal Crisis Grants, which provide rapid, much-needed funding to aid wildlife and habitats in peril due to either natural or human-caused events. The Fund reserves up to \$100,000 each year for such 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)

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, which provides details on application procedures, funding criteria, and case studies of past RRF grants.

Invasive news and interesting links and websites

Caribbean talk lion-fish and invasive species

A three-day regional consultation and legal workshop on invasive species opened in Nassau on Monday 21st March 2011. The goal is to develop a Caribbean invasive alien species strategy. The lion-fish that is believed to have been introduced from the western Pacific to the Caribbean Sea was highlighted as a serious threat to the reefs of the region. Read more on: [Bahamas Islands Info](#)

Insect invasion leaves calling card

A University of Alberta-led research team has discovered that insects that bore into trees as long ago as 90 million years, or as recently as last summer, leave a calling card that's rich with information. The information is contained in the resin found within trees and on their bark. Resin is produced in large quantities by a tree when it's under attack by insects. Read more: [Science Daily](#)

US adds bighead carp to ban list

The US government is making it illegal to bring live bighead carp into the U.S. or transport them across state lines. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says it's publishing a rule Tuesday adding the bighead to a list of species banned under the Lacey Act, which is designed to prevent the spread of species harmful to humans or other wildlife. The listing was required under legislation approved by Congress and signed by President Barack Obama in December. Bighead and silver carp have migrated up the Mississippi River and are threatening to invade the Great Lakes, where they could starve out other fish and damage the economy. Silver carp already are on the banned list. Read more: [the Wall Street Journal](#)

Botanic gardens help spread invasive plants

A new study has found that botanic gardens to be responsible for spreading over half of the world's most invasive plants. Philip Hulme of Lincoln University, Christchurch, New Zealand claimed that botanic gardens in global biodiversity hot spots have cultivated and introduced environmental weeds listed by IUCN as the world's worst invasive species. Read more: [Horticulture Week](#)

Mass extinction of scientists who study species

We are currently in a biodiversity crisis. A quarter of all mammals face extinction, and 90 percent of the largest ocean fish are gone. Species are going extinct at rates equalled only five times in the history of life. But the biodiversity crisis we are currently encountering isn't just a loss of species; it's also a loss of knowledge regarding them. Scientists who classify, describe and examine the relationships between organisms are themselves going extinct. The millions of dollars spent globally on technology to catalogue species may actually be pushing out the people we rely upon: taxonomists and systematists. We're like young children frantic to add new baseball cards to our collections, while the actual creators of the baseball cards themselves are vanishing. Read more: [Wired Science](#)

Major mouse outbreak downunder



A mouse plague not seen for over 20 years is threatening farming communities in Australia. Farmers are being warned to be prepared. There are regular localized mouse plagues, but this year might be different. Throughout the grain belts of eastern and southern Australia the conditions have been just right for a major mouse plague. Read more on [ABC Rural](#).

Photo: Annabelle Homer

Feral pig population explodes after wet summer

Researchers in Australia are reporting an increase in pig populations in Southern Queensland following a very wet summer. Steven Lappidge, Associate Professor at the Invasive Animals Co-operative Research Centre says recent baiting trials near the town of Goondiwindi have attracted pig numbers three times higher than they have ever experienced. He says baiting it the most cost-effective means of controlling pigs. Read more: [ABC Rural](#).

African Great Lake Tanganyika under threat by invasive species

The UN Development Programme and Global Environment Facility Project on Lake Tanganyika will organize a meeting, in collaboration with the Lake Tanganyika Authority and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), to bring together key stakeholders in the monitoring and control of invasive species. The meeting is part of the collaborative efforts by the riparian countries Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Zambia to address the threats of invasive species. As part of the workshop, stakeholders from the four countries will review known invasive species and risks in the basin, and discuss ways to monitor, manage and control existing or possible future invasive species threats.

Moth alert for prickly pear

An invasive species of moth that eats prickly pear cactus is moving across the Gulf Coast toward Texas -- and that's prompting action by the U.S. and Mexican governments. The fear is the tan-colored cactus moth will reach Texas and its

population will explode with plenty of cactus to eat. The moth's larvae eat through the plant's pads, killing it. The moth has spread to Louisiana, and federal agricultural workers have been burning cacti near New Orleans to stop the infestation. So far, the moth hasn't been found farther West. Prickly pear is widely used in Mexican cooking and is so important culturally, it holds a spot in the middle of the national flag. About 205,000 acres of prickly pear in Mexico produce a crop worth \$160 million each year.

Invasive water-lily in Australia's Lake Burley Griffin



The experts from the Australian National Botanic Gardens have discovered an invasive species of Mexican water-lily at Lake Burley Griffin and they dread that it could infiltrate national waterways. The botanical Information Manager, Murray Fagg, also mentioned about this plant flourishing in the Jerrabomberra Wetlands and there was a considerable risk of it spreading into the Murrumbidgee River and the Murray River. Though experts had come to know about this plant at the lake about two years back but they could not formally identify it until there were flowers. Mr. Fagg has decided to pass all the information to government officials which he has gathered on this invasive water plant as a part of a territory flora census. Describing more about the nature of this water plant, water watch coordinator for Molonglo Catchment Group, Stephen Skinner said, 'They have a long tubular stem rooting mechanism that goes right down into the mud and forms a bulky anchor that holds in the mud for a long time. Just chopping off the leaves won't do a thing. You have to dig that anchor out.' In addition, he said that removing this plant would be expensive and time consuming as the fast-growing lily blocks waterways and prevents native vegetation from growing. Source: [Cindy Tweed](#)

Smithsonian scientists work on invasive species prevention

A new model created by Smithsonian scientists will facilitate accurate screening of vessels for dangerous species before they unload. The team's findings are published in the journal Environmental Science & Technology. To help regulators and engineers develop and test such treatment systems, and ultimately enforce these standards, a team of researchers developed a statistical model to see how to count small, scarce organisms in large volumes of water accurately. Read more on [wdio.com](#)

Reptiles invade the Turks & Caicos Islands

Turks and Caicos reptile fauna has gone from ten species to seventeen, no thanks to introduced alien species. These alien species are brought in accidentally via shipping, with some intentionally introduced as pets but later escaped. The introductions of cats and dogs have had a severe impact on the native rock iguanas. While most of the introduced reptiles do not appear to pose an immediate threat to wildlife, researchers are encouraging the public to keep an eye out and to report a species when they are sighted. Contact R. Graham Reynolds of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (rgraham@utk.edu) for more information.

Finland publishes National Strategy for Invasive Alien Species

Finland has published its national strategy for invasive alien species in order to reduce the damage and risks caused by them to the environment and socio-economic well-being of its people. The national strategy aims to be proactive to prevent the entry of new invasive alien species and to stop further spread of existing alien species. Finland has 157 invasive alien species that are considered permanently established and which causes direct or indirect damage. The majority (108 species) are agricultural and forestry species with the remaining aquatic, ornamental plants, indoor pests and land vertebrates. The strategy proposes 16 measures to reduce the harmful impacts of invasive alien species, including harmonizing legislation, establishing a national board to oversee the strategy, building capacity, establishing a national invasive alien species information portal and a system for early warning and monitoring. The strategy has been submitted to the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry. For more information, please contact Jaakko Heikkilä (jaakko.heikkila@mtt.fi)

Successful end to the removal of invasive seaweeds project in Hawaii

Two-point-nine million pound of invasive seaweeds were removed from Maunaloa Bay after the completion of the Great Huki Project, funded by federal stimulus money. After the removal positive signs of native wildlife are returning with sightings of eagle rays and different reef fish. The project gained a lot of community support with schools, businesses and residents volunteering. Read more at [KITV.COM](#).

Invasive species videos now available

Four videos on invasive species in Laurentian Great Lakes of North America are now available for viewing either online: <http://www.wildlifeforever.org/invasive-species/invasive-species-home-theater/> or if you want a DVD copy, please contact John Rothlisberger (jrothlisberger@fs.fed.us).

Northern Ireland seeks views on draft Invasive Alien Species Strategy

The Department of Environment Northern Ireland is seeking views on a draft Invasive Alien Species Strategy for Northern Ireland. The vision for the Strategy is that it will establish a coordinated policy and management framework that minimises

the risk of invasive alien species to the economy, environment and society. The Strategy is structured into components which reflect the main challenges for Northern Ireland and are in line with the guiding principles set out by the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Global Invasive Species Programme. Increasing awareness and understanding of the risks and the issues involved in tackling invasive alien species is a central overarching issue. The consultation period closes on 30 September 2011. *More information on Invasivespecies Ireland website: <http://invasivespeciesireland.com/>*

Taskforce formed to address Oriental weatherloach as it threatens the Murray River

A task force has been formed to help deal with a fish species which is threatening the River Murray. The oriental weatherloach was introduced to Australia in the 1980s as an aquarium fish and later used as live bait. Higher Murray flows in recent months have washed the fish into South Australia from upstream. Lara Suitor from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources says the fish was detected recently on the Chowilla floodplain near Renmark. 'They might not necessarily establish themselves very quickly, they sort of have to become adapted to the different environments, but yeah obviously it is a concern that we are finding them in reasonable numbers and yeah they could breed up and be a similar problem as the European carp are now,' she said. 'It's a pretty hardy fish and can go across land for short periods of time. Females lay up to thousands of eggs which makes it a pretty tough competitor for Australia's native fish.'

New Publications:

Scientific

Goodenough, A. E. 2011. Are the ecological impacts of alien species misrepresented? A review of the "native good, alien bad" philosophy. *Community Ecology* 11:13-21

Schlaepfer, M. A., D. F. Sax, and J. D. Olden. 2011. The potential conservation value of non-native species. *Conservation Biology*, in press.

Gurevitch, J. Fox, G.A., Wardle, G.M. Inderjit & Taub, D. Emergent insights from the synthesis of conceptual frameworks for biological invasions. *Ecology Letters* 14: 407-418.

Julie Kennett, Chris McElhinny Phil Gibbons. 201. *Ecological Management & Restoration*. Vol. 12. Issue 1. Pg. 69-71.

Thuesen, P.A., Russell, D.J., Thomson, F.E., Pearce, M.G., Vallance, T.D. & Hogan, A.E. 2011. An evaluation of electrofishing as a control measure for an invasive tilapia (*Oreochromis mossabicus*) population in northern Australia. *Marine and Freshwater Research* 62: 110-118.

Perry, G. & Farmer, M. 2011. Reducing the risk of biological invasion by creating incentives for pet sellers and owners to do the right thing. *Journal of Herpetology*. March 201. Vol. 45 (1): 124-141.

Shiels, A.B., & Drake, D.R. 2011. Are introduced rats (*Rattus rattus*) both seed predators and dispersers in Hawaii? *Biological Invasions* 13: 883-894.

Chimera, C.G., & Drake, D.R. 2011. Could poor seed dispersal contribute to predation by rodents in a Hawaiian dry forest? *Biological Invasions* 13: 1029-1049.

Clements D.R., & DiTommaso, A. 20011. Climate change and weed adaptation: can evolution of invasive plants lead to greater range expansion than forecasted? *Weed Research*.

Free access to Aquatic Invasions – International Journal of Applied Research on Biological Invasions in Aquatic Ecosystems. Read more: on [Aquatic Invasions](#). The upcoming issue currently in press focuses on Quagga Mussels.

Trends in Ecology and Evolution April 211, Vol. 26 No. 4. – Two items of interest: i) an opinion piece by Philip E. Hulme addressing the threat to biodiversity from botanic garden; ii) Letter by Ken Thompson and Mark A. Davis on why research on traits of invasive plants tells us very little.

Newsletters

IPMnet News March 2011 issue is now out. In this edition – FAO launches a new integrated pest management effort in Asia to assist in limiting the spread and implement biological control of the cassava pink mealy-bug (*Phenacoccus manihoti*); US States adopt Driftwatch database to avoid pesticide spray drift problems into unintended areas; Species limits for sterile insect technique. Read more on [IPMnet News](#).

Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network Newsletter Vol. 29, Jan-Feb. 2011 – is now out. The Newsletter covers cane-toads and the launch of the NeoBiota – an open access journal for invasion biology. Also some new publications and future events are included in the Newsletter.

Aliens of Jamayca – March 2011 edition is now out. The Newsletter focuses on non-indigenous species in Jamaica. The issue covers Alien Amongst Us – *Hedychium coronarium*, *Pomacea diffusa*, and invasive species and the Convention on

Biological Diversity. There is also a children's corner to raise awareness on this issue with the young ones. Please contact the Newsletter editor Monique.curtis@nepa.gov.jm for further information or to contribute an item.

Books

UNEP – Global Honey Bee Colony Disorders and other Threats to Insect Pollinators. Contact Division of Early Warning Assessment, UNEP. Email. dewainfo@unep.org; www.unep.org [e-copy can also be obtained from PILN Coordinator]

Invasive and Introduced Plants and Animals. Edited by Ian D. Rotherham and Robert A. Lambert. This book addresses the broader context of invasive and exotic species, in terms of the perceived threats and environmental concerns which surround alien species and ecological invasions. As a result of unprecedented scales of environmental change, combined with rapid globalisation, the mixing of cultures and diversity, and fears over biosecurity and bioterrorism, the known impacts of particular invasions have been catastrophic. Including a wide range of case studies from around the world, this book raises critical issues to stimulate a much wider debate.

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