



Pacific Invasives Learning Network.

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa

+685 21929

Fax: +685 20231

www.sprep.org

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

SOUNDBITES

OCTOBER 2011

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 online: <http://www.sprep.org/piln>

PILN NETWORK MEETING IS CONFIRMED FOR MARCH 21-28TH 2012 AT KIRITIMATI ATOLL, KIRIBATI.

Please take note that our next PILN Network meeting is scheduled for March 21-28th, 2012. This will be held in Kiritimati Atoll, Kiribati. Further details will be forwarded to all PILN teams and interested person. Please register your interest with me. We strongly encourage partners to get involve! This is a great opportunity to reach out to all invasive species workers at the ground-level. An opportunity also to showcase some of your products/tools and other useful information to the rest of the Pacific. Should you have a query – please contact me: posas@sprep.org.

PILN Teams and Country Updates

American Samoa

***Ifilele* giveaways to help restore culture and native biodiversity**

The National Parks Service of American Samoa in partnership with the Office of Samoa Affairs and the American Samoa Community College's Community National Resources gave away 2000 *Ifilele* (*Intsia bijuga*) seedlings to the 54 village mayor (*pulenu'u*). This was part of an effort to encourage the planting of more native trees. American Samoa has been plagued with introduced invasive species including strawberry guava, *tamaligi* and rubber trees squeezing out some of the native species.

The *Ifilele* tree is prized for its rich colour, strength, high density, low shrinkage and high durability for use in traditional crafts. It grows to 30 metres tall and up-to 250 metre elevation. Excessive logging and exploitation of the tree has led to it becoming rare. The largest population is fortunately protected in the National Park of American Samoa.

"In this effort we are encouraging the conservation of small *ifilele* to every household in American Samoa, as this will provide a good source of seeds for the future", says Tavita Togia of the National Parks Service. He adds, "We also would like to raise the awareness of the people on the importance of this tree for our cultural heritage".

To obtain seedlings please call the National Parks Service of American Samoa or the American Samoa Community College's Land Grant Office.

Fiji

FIST discusses American Iguana invasion

The Fiji Invasive Species Taskforce met on October 7th, at the IUCN-Oceania office in Suva to discuss updates on invasive species. The meeting was chaired by Dr Visoni Timote of the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji and saw 15 participants.

The emergency response to the American Iguana invasion was summarized by Nunia Thomas from MareqetiViti who noted that the iguana appears to have spread further west since it was first detected.

Another important objective of the meeting was to discuss a submission for the taskforce to be officially recognized by the National Environment Council, which will enhance the role FIST plays in addressing invasive species in the country.

Fiji is taking the invasive species threat seriously and it has invested through the purchase of a Fiji surveillance boat (Biosecurity 1), glass-house at the Koronivia Research Station and revising its fees and charges to ensure that they are able to adequately fund their services. Tourism is an important contributing money earner for Fiji and the risks posed by unwanted hitchhikers to tourists yachts and ships threaten island groups such as Yasawas and the Mamanucas.

Guam

University of Guam gets \$1 million to stop invasive species



The brown tree snake has led to reduce population of native birds on Guam

The University of Guam earned a \$1 million cooperative agreement to help stop invasive species from coming into Guam.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Marianas issued the \$1 million Cooperative Agreement between the Department of Navy and the University on Sept. 29, according to a Navy press release.

The goal of the agreement is to conduct peer review of the Micronesia Bio-security Plan and develop a plan to protect the island's ecosystem.

For decades, environmentalists and biologists have worked either to eradicate invasive species or correct the havoc they've wreaked - including rebuilding the ko'ko' (Guam rail) population that neared extinction. The bird's disappearance is blamed on the brown tree snake, which is not native to Guam.

"This long-term strategy incorporates two components," said Jenn Farley, NAVFAC Marianas Natural Resources Specialist.

"The MBP will analyze risks of various pathways, organisms, and species associated with the importation to, and exportation from Guam to other areas of Micronesia; the (strategic implementation

plan) is a multi-tiered implementation plan which prescribes corrective actions for invasive species, pathways, and organisms that are identified as posing risks."

The bio-security plan is being developed as a comprehensive regional approach, the release states. The development of the strategic plan will be based on results of the bio-security plan research components and subsequent independent peer review and recommendations.

"This project is critically important for the region and will become a model for invasive species planning," said UOG Assistant Vice President John Peterson.

"Working with our partners throughout the region, we will develop a strategic implementation plan and processes that will help defend against invasive species."

A kickoff meeting between the parties to the cooperative agreement is expected to be held in two weeks, and draft work plans are due within 30 days of the agreement. All work is expected to be completed around springtime of 2013 [source: Guampdn.com]

Guam's 20 most widespread invasive plants



Bidens alba the most widespread weed in Guam

A recent study by Gadi Reddy (University of Guam) reported on the 20 most widespread invasive plants of Guam. Published in the University of Guam's journal *Micronesica*, Reddy surveyed five different habitats throughout the 20 municipalities of Guam. The weediest of all the plants was *Bidens alba* or Bur-Marigolds found in all the habitats and municipalities. It was estimated that over 37 per cent of Guam is covered by this weed. Other widespread species include *Panicum maximum*, *Stachytarpheta jamaicensis*, *Antigonon leptopus*, *Paspalum paniculatum*, *Miscanthus floridulus*, *Euphorbia*

heterophylla, *Chromolaena odorata*, *Mikania micrantha* and *Chamaesyce hirta*. Of the five habitats, the roadside had the most number of invasive plants, containing twice as many species as

forests, residential, agriculture and vacant lot. The study also noted six grasses amongst the 20 widespread invasive species and that they represent a threat to native species of Guam. Reddy advocated the need for strategic planning to control these 20 widespread invasive plant species through and integrated pest management. Undertaking research on biocontrol, the involvement of the Guam Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division and sufficient funding for controlling top-priority invasive species were further called for. The use of Glyphosate/Roundup 2-4-D, dicamba and triclopyr to control the weed were also advocated for, however, these chemicals need to be registered with the US Environmental Protection Agency. Public education about the danger of introducing weeds and the need to use native plants were recommended. Training for foresters, land managers, extension agents, quarantine officers and other interested individuals and organizations to recognize, exclude, eradicate and control invasive species with the goal of fostering cooperation and joint action against invasive species. Continued monitoring of these invasive species and further management measures are required.

Hawaii.

New ant invasion a warning for biosecurity

A recently published study reported on a population of the odorous house ant (*Tapinoma sessile*) native to North America, found high on Maui island, Hawaii. The study by Buczkowski and Krushelnycky published on the Myrmecological News online confirms the present of this species outside its native range. A 17 hectare area is said to be infested by the nests of this ant, which could all belong to one super-colony. Hawaii's ant fauna are all introduced with some like the Little Fire Ants being one of the serious invaders. Further details of this study can be found in the Scientific Articles of our PILN Soundbites.

Hearing to safeguard Hawaii's ecosystem and agriculture against invasive species

A hearing was held on 27 October at the HDOA Plant Quarantine Conference room to discuss safeguarding Hawaii's Ecosystem and Agriculture against Invasive Species. The hearing was held by the Senate Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the Dist. of Columbia (a Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Dept. of Homeland Security and Govt. Affairs). The hearing focused around the proposed amendments to Title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, to find ways to better integrate agriculture inspection (invasive species prevention) as part of DHS' (and CBP's) mission.

Hawaii Sen. Daniel Akaka proposed the amendment to the federal legislation that would increase the nation's — and Hawaii's — defenses against invasive species.

"Invasive species could permanently devastate Hawaii's fragile ecosystem, and in the process, destroy our state's economy and character," Akaka said at the hearing, where Gov. Neil Abercrombie and state officials briefed the senator on the poor state of Hawaii's border inspection measures.

George Phocas, in charge of law enforcement for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Hawaii, testified that out of the 400 species that are listed as threatened or endangered under federal law, at least 374 are found in Hawaii, and that invasive species are a main culprit. Akaka's bill would beef up agricultural inspections conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol. [source: Christy Martin – CGAPS and Honolulu Civil Beat].

Marshall Islands

GEF-PAS Invasive Species Inception Workshop planned

Marshall Islands will hold its inception workshop for the GEF-PAS invasive species project on November 30. Dr Alan Tye will work with Warwick Harris from the Office of Environment Planning and Policy Coordination in running of the workshop.

Sharks are safe in the Marshalls

The Marshall Islands government has created the world's largest shark sanctuary, covering nearly two million sq km (750,000 sq miles) of ocean. The Pacific republic will ban trade in shark products and commercial shark fishing throughout its waters. Tourism, including diving, is a staple of the Marshall Islands archipelago, which is home to just 68,000 people. Sharks and their near relatives such as rays are seriously threatened by issues such as habitat loss and fishing. About a third of ocean-going sharks are on the internationally-recognised Red List of Threatened Species.

"In passing this [shark protection] bill, there is no greater statement we can make about the importance of sharks to our culture, environment and economy," said Senator Tony deBrum, who co-sponsored the bill through the Marshallese parliament.

"Ours may be a small island nation, but our waters are now the biggest place sharks are protected."

To put the sanctuary in context, it covers roughly the same area as Indonesia, Mexico or Saudi Arabia, and is about eight times bigger than the UK. The move will extend the area of ocean in which sharks are protected from about 2.7 million sq km to 4.6 million sq km (1.0 to 1.8 million sq miles). [source: Richard Black, BBC News]

New Zealand

Government announce pest control project

The Government and the Green Party announced a \$4 million pilot project that aims to protect NZ's forest and native species with better pest control. A new trap for possums, stoats and rats will be trialled by the Department of Conservation and if it works as planned, will reduce the cost of pest control and the reliance on poisons. The trap will be the first large scale test of new traps that can re-set themselves. This will reduce the cost of regular visit to traps. The Department is planning to purchase approximately 10,000 of the new style traps which can kill up to 12 pests between visits by landowners, trappers or volunteers. The Department spends approximately \$20 million each year on control of possums and other ground-based pests. If it is proven successful it will hopefully reduce the use of poisons including 1080. The \$4 million funding will be spread over the next three years with the first traps to be deployed towards the end of the year.

Palau

Kayangel rodent eradication implementation update

The Kayangel rodent eradication project is led by the Palau Conservation Society in collaboration with communities and BirdLife International. The project also oversees the trapping of feral cat and the spaying and neutering of pet cats and dogs. The rodent eradication operation took place in August-September 2011 starting with hand-broadcasting of rodenticide pellets. The participation of communities was seen as a contributing factor to the success of the project. Kayangel rats have been an inhibiting factor for communities in their farming

practices. With the rats being severely targeted, the communities are already planning to plant crops including corn, tapioca, cucumbers and others. They are already reporting an improved yield in banana and coconuts with no-rat damage. Communities are also putting up their hands to participate in biosecurity measures, such as inspecting incoming boats. [source: Ngerel a Biib – Palau Conservation Society Newsletter – 3rd Quarter 2011. No. 50]

Samoa

Samoa National Invasive Species Task-Team – 3rd Meeting

The Samoan National Invasive Species Task Team (SNITT) held their 3rd meeting on 25 October, 2012. The meeting allowed agencies and individuals to be updated on invasive species effort. Some of the key topics that were discussed include:

- Mynah project – public awareness continues to take place in rural areas. Part of the public awareness includes advising the public on the method used for catching the mynahs. Over 7500 birds have so far been removed.
- *Merremia* project – a new technique to inject the *Merremia* vines will be introduced to the staff of Parks and Forestry by Dr Alan Tye. A date for this exercise will be advised in the near future.
- Aleipata Islands Rat Eradication Project – the project is nearing completion and some of the outstanding activities include having a debriefing session with the villagers. There is also a need for more rat-tail samples for genetic analysis. A video-documentary is also underway and it is hoped that this will be completed by the end of 2011.
- Ballast Water Management – public seminar is currently on the cards and Mr Anthony Talouli (SPREP’s Marine Pollution Advisor) is coordinating this with the Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure.
- Convention on Biological Diversity – 15th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) will be held in Montreal, Canada from 7-11 November. Samoa will be attending this meeting, which also discusses issues relating to invasive alien species. At SBSTTA 15 a special agenda item will discuss the introduction of invasive species through pets, aquarium trade, live baits and live food and it is important for Samoa to develop a national position to bring to these discussions. SNITT was seen as the advisory body to provide this advice to the Government. There will also be side-events focusing on invasive species, such as the Invasive Species Kiosk and Samoa and other Pacific Island Countries are encouraged to seek help from technical experts present at the meeting.

Eradicating rattan from Samoa



Talie Foliga showing what a young rattan palm looks like

The Asian and Australia native rattan palm or Lawyer’s Vine (*Calamus muelleri*) was the target of an eradication activity held on the 28 October, 2011 near the popular Papase’ea Sliding Rocks. Ten volunteers were led by Talie Foliga and James Atherton to a 2-hectare private property to try and remove rattan seedlings. The rattan palm was introduced by FAO and the Forestry Division in the early 1990’s for the furniture industry. It was planted in three main locations, Vailima, Papase’ea and Togitogiga. Upon advised that it has invasive potential, the plants were then destroyed in 1998. Efforts to eradicate this plant started again in April 2006 at Papase’ea, and a team of volunteers has been surveying the property to remove the seedlings. The last eradication effort uprooted 246 small rattan seedlings in just over an hour, or approximately 24 plants per person. The next eradication effort will take place in April 2012.

Samoa Quarantine runs poster competition



The Samoa Quarantine Service is holding a school poster competition with the slogan – Protect Samoa from Pests and Diseases.

Budding artists are vying for a price of \$1000 tala for 1st Prize, \$700 tala for the 2nd and \$500 tala for the 3rd prize. Entries are due by the 30th November. For further information contact awareness@samoaquarantine.gov.ws.

Quarantine awareness raising at the Agriculture Show



The Samoa Quarantine Service held a public display booth at the Agriculture Show from 12-13 October. The event attracted farmers from all around Samoa eager to showcase their products provided the opportunity for the Samoa Quarantine Service to educate the public on important biosecurity issues including legislation.

A quarantine official explains why honey is a prohibited item under the Customs Act [image and source: Samoa Quarantine Service Newsletter]

Pacific Invasives Partnership News:

BirdLife Pacific Partnership

The BirdLife Pacific Partnership e-newsletter is now available. The issue covers:

- Rat eradication success in New Caledonia
- Boost for eco-tourism in the Cook Islands
- Ecology of the Mao in Samoa
- Aussie eyrie internet hit
- Fijians for Fijian Forests – linking livelihoods and landscapes
- BirdLife speaks out on New Zealand seabird by-catch
- Putting Kagu on the Map
- NatureFiji –MareqetiViti on the high seas
- Stamps raise funds for threatened Henderson Petrel
- Launch of BirdLife's new Local Empowerment Programmeand much more!

Read all about it on the BirdLife website: <http://us2.campaign-archive1.com/?u=584101b15c6ebc4f52b6af389&id=c4ba1a9917&e=7a00ff6252>. Or contact birds@birdlifepacific.org.fj

CBD – Subsidiary Body for Scientific Technical and Technological Advice 15

Pacific Island Countries prepare for invasive species at SBSTTA 15

Five Pacific Island Countries who are parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will attend the SBSTTA 15 meeting held in Montreal, Canada from 7-11 November. Perhaps it will be a cold-experience for the Pacific participants, however, they are armed with regionally agreed positions and national perspectives as they discuss text for recommendation to the next Conference of Parties (COP) to the CBD. Kiribati, who strongly led the Pacific in the invasive species issue at the last COP 10 negotiations, have put up their hands to lead again on this issue. The issue of invasive species for Kiribati, like many Pacific Island Countries is a serious one and considerable efforts have been made to safeguard its islands.

Pacific Island Countries to reap from the invasive alien species expert kiosk at SBSTTA 15

A special invasive species kiosk will be available from 7-9 November during the SBSTTA 15 meeting to provide advice to participants on how to draft national invasive alien species strategies and incorporating invasive alien species to National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans. The Kiosk is free of charge and is available from 1000-1300 on those dates. Experts from non-governmental organizations, inter-governmental organizations will be there to assist. The kiosk is being coordinated by Dr Jamie K. Reaser (former Exec. Director GISP) and Dr Junko Shimura (Secretariat of CBD).

GISP website back online



least all of GISP's and Reports are once download. We'd like to has written to us during asking for the GISP

re-launched and are delighted to be able to offer this service, albeit limited, once again to GISP's stakeholders. This is a great opportunity and I really encourage everyone who has been asking for copies of GISP's Publications to start downloading! I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Adnan Awad and Martin Cocks of the International Ocean Institute (IOI) – South Africa for kindly stepping in to get GISP's website up and running again, on an in-kind basis! The Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) Annual Report (2010), which following the closure of the GISP Secretariat, also constitutes the final report from the GISP Secretariat can also be downloaded. Read more about GISP Past & Present Inside.



Two Partners of the Global Invasive Species Programme i.e. **CAB International (CABI)**, together with **the International Ocean Institute (South Africa)** are delighted to announce the re-launch of the GISP Website (www.gisp.org).

Sadly, we don't have funds to produce any new GISP Publications or to update

the website on a regular basis but at Publications, Toolkits again available for thank everyone who the past few months Website to be re-



Vacancies, Scholarships & Consultancies:

2012 Greg Urwin Awards

Applications for the 2012 Greg Urwin Awards are now open. The Awards are funded by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and co-administered by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Pacific Leadership Program. The GUAs provide financial and administrative support to the value of \$25,000AUD for scholars and professionals to undertake a three to six month placement with a Pacific regional organisation of relevance to the recipient's professional development and leadership potential. The candidate must show exemplary academic achievement and leadership experience in their field. Applicants must also demonstrate how their chosen placement will provide them with valuable professional experience and exposure to new ideas and networks that will assist them to develop their leadership capacity in the Pacific. This year, the criteria for the Awards has been expanded to expand the number of Pacific Islanders who will be eligible for receive the Award. Applications are sought from individuals who meet the following criteria:

Are Pacific Island nationals.

- Have completed, or are about to complete, a postgraduate qualification (Masters level or higher) from a recognised University;
- Can demonstrate or show potential for leadership in contributing to developmental change in the Pacific.
- Applications are sought from scholars and professionals in a diverse range of fields including the private sector, public sector, civil society, academia and health sector.

At the request of Mr Urwin's family, special consideration will be given to applicants in the health sector who wish to pursue a project related to cancer awareness, treatment and/or research with applications for the Pacific.

Applications close 25 Nov. 2011. More information on www.plp.org.fj or by emailing info@plp.org.fj.

AusAID & EU Post-graduate scholarships in climate change

In 2012, USP through the Pacific Centre for Environment & Sustainable Development (PACE-SD) will offer scholarships in Climate Change through its European Union funded Project and Future Climate Leaders Project. These scholarships are available to citizens of Pacific Island Countries (PICs) for full-time studies, based at USP's Laucala Campus, for Post-graduate Diploma, MSc and PhD Programmes in Climate Change.

Application forms for all programmes (PG Dip, MSc, PhD in Climate Change) can be obtained from your local USP Centre or downloaded from www.usp.ac.fj/student. Completed forms and accompanying documents/transcripts etc should be sent to Ms Vijaya Naiker at Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development, USP Campus at Suva (naiker_v@usp.ac.fj; Ph: +679-3231982). **Completed applications are due by 12 December 2011.**

2012 Conservation Leadership Programme Awards

Deadline: 18th November 2011. The Conservation Leadership Programme is currently soliciting applications for the 2012 Conservation Awards. These awards are aimed at early-career conservationists (no more than five years professional experience in the conservation sector). Successful applicants will:

- develop the knowledge, skills and abilities of team members;
- implement a focused, high-priority conservation project combining research and action; and
- contribute to the long-term success of local conservation efforts.

All applications must be submitted via our online application site

<http://awards.conservationleadershipprogramme.org>.

Plant Pathologist – Northern Marianas College

Post: Plant Pathologist; Salary: USD\$28,803.12-\$51,330.35; Location – Terlaje Campus, Saipan. Closing Date 11 November 2011 or until filled

Entomologist – Northern Marianas College

Post: Entomologist; Salary: USD\$28,803.12-\$51,330.35; Location – Terlaje Campus, Saipan. Closing Date 11 November 2011 or until filled

Meeting, conference and training announcements:

These announcements are for activities taking place in November. More events can be found on our webpage:

<http://www.sprep.org/PILN/Calendar.htm>

1-4

Conservation Conflict Resolution – transforming conflict to create sustainable solutions for people and wildlife

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- 4-day Human Wildlife Conflict Collaboration (HWCC) – November 1-4 2011. Hawaii Kilauea Military Camp, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, The Big Island. Cost \$1200 per person. Deadlines – early registration May 31st; late registration Sept. 30th. This training is useful for those working with communities on conservation. For more information please visit the website: www.humanwildlifeconflict.org or email Francine Madden (Francine@humanwildlifeconflict.org)
- 2-5 Birdlife Pacific Partnership Meeting (Auckland, NEW ZEALAND)
- 5-10 The Wildlife Society 18th Annual Conference (Hawaii, USA). The conference's Plenary Session will focus on ways in which natural-resource agencies can work with a variety of public and private groups to more-effectively conserve North America's unparalleled wildlife resources. In addition, the challenge of invasive species is critical to The Wildlife Society's mission and so a second general session has also been added to specifically address the issue of invasives. <http://wildlifesociety.org/>
- 7-11 CBD – SBSTTA 15 (Montreal, CANADA)
- 7-9 Invasive Alien Species Kiosk (Montreal, CANADA)
- 8-13 APEC (Honolulu, HI)
- 15-17 ***Pesticide Risk Reduction Education***
Short course for Oahu: November 15-17. Pearly City. Registration deadline: October 17. Registration fee: \$100/person. Study packet fee: \$35 (if you need one)
Please refer inquiries to me/and or to our webpage: <http://pestworld.stjohn.hawaii.edu/pat/schedule.html>. If there is any other information, don't hesitate to write to Charles Nagamine: cynagami@hawaii.edu.
Charles Nagamine, Pesticide Risk Reduction Education. Cooperative Extension Service, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources University of Hawaii at Manoa
- 15-18 Brown Tree Snake Technical Committee Meeting (Saipan, CNMI)
- 21-23 Ports Engineering Conference (Suva, FIJI)
- 21-24 BIOLIEF 2011 – 2nd World Conference on Biological Invasion and Ecosystem Functioning (Mar del Plata, ARGENTINA)
- 28-9 Dec UNFCCC COP 17 and CMP 7 (Durban, SOUTH AFRICA)

Island Arks Symposium II

Island Arks Symposium II is national conference on island conservation related issues from tourism to invasive species. The Symposium will be held in Canberra, Australia, in Feb 2012. Abstracts for the Island Arks Symposium II are due by end of November. You can find out more about Island Rescue, and the second Island Arks Symposium (Canberra, February 2012), at this site: <http://islandarks.com.au/islandarks/Symposium.html>

Funding opportunities:

Sound Approach Bird Fund

The Sound Approach Bird Fund offers funding up to \$10,000 to bird conservation projects around the world. Projects must have a significant conservation benefit, making a real impact on the survival of threatened species. Research projects that aim to identify threats to bird populations; projects which aim to eradicate or minimise identified threats; practical projects to protect and assist endangered birds, such as safeguarding sites, habitat restoration, etc.; surveys and other investigative work to assess the status of threatened species and identify new species. The Sound Approach Bird Fund is looking for small, grassroots groups and projects which are difficult to raise funds for. There are no deadlines; applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. We aim to get a decision to you within 2 months of your application. For an application form please email

birdfund@soundapproach.co.uk. We are happy to discuss project ideas before you submit a formal application. For example, if your project does not meet the criteria listed above, but you feel that it may be an exceptional case (e.g. you plan to study a newly described and probably threatened species), we suggest you send a summary of your project first.

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>. **The deadline for proposal submission is November 14th and award winners will be announced in April 2012.**

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 organizations 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 that provides emergency funding of up to USD\$30,00 to address severe and time sensitive threats to endangered biodiversity, primarily within UNESCO natural World Heritage sites. The grants are 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. 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

Rats – severe infestation aboard illegal fishing vessel



A rogue fishing vessel caught in the North Pacific was detained by the US Coast Guard. Aside from having illegal drift nets, shark carcasses, squids and a crew of 22, the ship was also infested by rats.

The ship was held offshore the Dutch Harbor, Alaska to allow for the eradication of the rats.

The 140-foot Bangun Perkasa was found in early September using illegal drift nets to scoop fish from international waters, about 2600 miles southwest of Kodiak, Alaska.

The US Coast Guard boarded the ship and found evidence of rats on board but was unable to say how many rats onboard. [source: Yereth Rosen, Anchorage, Alaska. Image: US Coast Guard]

2000 birds die as feral cull backfires

More than 2000 birds have died on Macquarie Island since the federal government began a scheme to cull rabbits, cats, rats and mice. The Federal Environment Department's heritage and wildlife division told a Senate estimates hearing today that 2190 birds had died since the eradication program began last year. Department officials said the birds had died after feeding off the corpses of poisoned animals and not from eating the pellets themselves.

Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke said in a statement that the bird deaths were inevitable. "When you do baiting, the fact is you will lose some of the birds you are wanting to protect," he said. "But if you don't do baiting, feral animals like rabbits and rodents will keep wiping everything out."

On the plus side, rabbit numbers are believed to have dropped from a whopping 150,000 to less than 30 since the program was implemented. Mr Burke said the impact on fauna was continually monitored, adding he had moved to tighten the program's regulations in November. He said up to 24 bird species ultimately stood to benefit from the eradication program. [source: The Age]

Marine alga invades Peru



Caulerpa species have become notorious for their invasiveness. Recent reports from Peru indicate that *Caulerpa filiformis* to be spreading rapidly. Monitoring has started and it will be some-time before results are available. For further information please contact Ernesto Pariona Icochea (scientisport@yahoo.com)

Image – Ernesto Pariona Icochea.

New website aids global pest identification

A collaborative federal/state effort (U.S./Colorado) recently introduced **idsource**, a specialized search tool for identifying the global maze of over 1,400 vetted websites that focus on identification of plant pest insects, diseases, and weeds. The objective is to help users rapidly find trustworthy websites for screening, detecting, and identifying one or more species among the multitude that comprise the plant pest universe.

At the website <http://idsource.colostate.edu/cwis438/websites/IDSource/Home.php?WebSiteID=11> users can access the massive database by alphabetical order, by specific class of pest, or by key words. An interactive link is listed for each included item (website) for ease of use, along with the name of the originating organization, the site's contents, the nature of the material included (e.g., fact sheets, screening aid, images), individualized notes about the site, and any user reviews to date. This "gateway to pest identification" was and continues to be, as new sites are added, the joint result of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's Center for Plant Health Science and Technology Program within the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and staff at Colorado State Univ. (U.S.). The original concept for **idsource** arose in 2006, and work was first launched at the Centre for Biological Information Technology at Australia's University of Queensland.

EPPO Plant Quarantine Data Retrieval System

<http://www.eppo.org/DATABASES/pqr/pqr.htm>

PQR is the EPPO database on quarantine pests which provides information on their host plants, geographical distribution, and pathways that are liable to cause spread. After four years of IT development, a completely new version has just been released and can be freely downloaded from the EPPO website (together with instructions on how to install the new software and a user's guide). <http://www.eppo.org/DATABASES/pqr/pqr.htm>

A major revision is that the new PQR interface allows the EPPO Secretariat to revise the database contents whenever necessary (almost in 'real-time'). Therefore it will no longer be necessary to wait for the release of a new version to view updated information. Many new features such as dynamic maps showing the world distribution of quarantine pests, active links to the EPPO Reporting Service articles, and photos have been

incorporated into the new PQR. New tools have also been added in order to allow the users to print and export the results of their searches (e.g. maps, lists of distribution or host plants) according to their particular needs.

For each pest, it is possible to obtain lists of host plants, commodities able to act as pathways in international trade, details of geographical distribution with maps, and pictures. Conversely, it is also possible to interrogate the database to obtain specific lists of pests, by stipulating the host species, the commodity, and the countries of interest. PQR contains general nomenclatural and taxonomic details on pests and hosts

UK government launches tree biosecurity plan

By Mark Kinver

The UK government has said that it will invest £7m to tackle tree diseases, amid fears that millions of trees could be lost unless urgent action is taken. The Tree Health and Plant Biosecurity action plan was launched as scientists confirmed the arrival of a deadly disease in England among urban trees.

Phytophthora lateralis was recorded in Devon on a Lawson cypress, a popular species in parks and gardens. Ministers hope the plan will tighten biosecurity measures and protect trees.

“If we don't act now, we could end up with a similar situation to the 1970s when more than 30 million trees in the UK died [as a result of] Dutch elm disease,” said Environment Secretary Caroline Spelman as she launched the action plan.

“There are new diseases and new threats now, and we need to do everything we can to protect our precious plants, trees and habitats.

“[The] action plan dedicates £7m to finding ways to combat exotic pests and diseases, as well as introducing stricter controls on plants and cuttings being brought across the UK's borders.”....

Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre releases report on detecting and preventing new incursions

The Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre has just released a report on ‘Detecting and preventing new incursions of exotic animals in Australia’, by Wendy Henderson and Mary Bomford. It contains Australian data collected on incursions at large, smuggling and stowaway interceptions, and thefts and seizures from private keeping. Each identified species has been assessed for its risk of establishing in the wild in Australia. We have highlighted high-risk species we believe should be priorities for future biosecurity action.

The report is available online at <http://www.feral.org.au/?p=49089> . Hard copies (without the photos) are also available - if you are interested in receiving a copy, let me know (wendy.henderson@invasiveanimals.com).

There is also an associated scientific analysis of the data in press in *Wildlife Research*. It shows that reptiles (as a taxon) and stowaways (as a pathway) present the highest risks of new species establishing in the environment. It should be online very soon!

New Publications:

Scientific Articles

Buczowski, G., & Krushelnycky, P. 2011. The odorous house ant, *Tapinoma sessile* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae), as a new temperate-origin invader. *Myrmecological News* 16: 61-66. ISSN 1997-3500 (online print).

Reddy, G.V.P. 2011. Survey of invasive plants on Guam and identification of the 20 most widespread. *Micronesica*. 41(2): 263-274.

Berry, Z. C., Wevill, K. & Curran, T. J. 2011. The invasive weed *Lantana camara* increases fire risk in dry rainforest by altering fuel beds. *Weed Research*, 51: 525–533. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-3180.2011.00869.x

Reiss, A.E., & Woods, R.W. 2011. National Zoo Biosecurity Manual. A cooperative initiative between the Zoo and Aquarium Association, the Australian Wildlife Health Network, the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Australian Zoo Industry. Download from <http://www.zooaquarium.org.au/Publications/default.aspx>

Watling, J.I., Hickman, C.R., & Orrock, J.L. 2011. Invasive shrub alters native forest amphibian communities. *Biological Conservation* **144** (11): 2597-2601.

Campbell, D.J. 2011. Seedling recovery on Hauturu/Little Barrier Island, after eradication of Pacific rats (*Rattus exulans*). *DOC Research & Development Series* 325: 53 p.

Champion, P., James, T., Singers, N., & Bodmin, K. 2011. Garlon® 360 trial for the control of wetland weeds. *Science for Conservation* 311. 34p.

Taylor, D.L., Leung, L.K.P., & Gordon, I.J. 2011. The impact of feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) on an Australian lowland tropical rainforest. *Wildlife Research* 38(5): 437-445.

Books & Newsletters

- Samoa Quarantine e-Newsletter – October 2011
- Palau Conservation Society Newsletter – 3rd Quarter 2011. No. 50.
- SAPIA (Southern African Plant Invaders Atlas) News – October 2011 edition is now out.
- BirdLife Pacific Partnership e-bulletin for October is now available ([http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=584101b15c6ebc4f52b6af389&id=c4ba1a9917&e=\[UNIQID\]](http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=584101b15c6ebc4f52b6af389&id=c4ba1a9917&e=[UNIQID]))).

Contact for PILN SOUNDBITES:

Dr. Posa A. Skelton, PILN Coordinator, SPREP, PO Box 240, Apia, SAMOA. Tel. +685 21929 ext. 276, Fax. +685 20231, posas@sprep.org; www.sprep.org/piln

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