



Pacific Invasives Learning Network.

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PILN Teams:

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



PACIFIC INVASIVES LEARNING NETWORK

SOUNDBITES

MAY 2012

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 Teams and Country Updates

i-STOP [POHNPEI, FSM]

Invasive Species Taskforce of Pohnpei (i-STOP) met on 16 May, 2012 at NRC. The meeting discussed Pohnpei's representative to the upcoming Invasives Bird Training to be held in Samoa in July, the chain-of-love, mile-a-minute control and other invasive species. Details of the meeting, including minutes can be obtained by contacting the i-STOP Chairman, Gibson Santos, or the Secretary – Konrad Englberger.

GUAM



Boa apprehended

A boa constrictor was reported and picked up from a member of the public on Sunday, May 13 on Guam. It is a healthy male and approximately 6 feet long. It was found in the yard by people working on their house and it was reported to the police. It is a common pet store species and has scars on its snout indicating that it is probably an escaped or released pet.

Source: Diane Vice who's new hobby is snake wrangling.

Western fence lizard found inside a container



A local freight forwarding company contacted the Guam Wildlife Service office late last week to report the discovery of a lizard inside a 40' container that had recently arrived from Long Beach. Contents included

primarily construction supplies and material. An employee spotted the lizard, and recognizing it as novel, captured the lizard and called the Wildlife Service. It has been identified as an adult (probable a female) Western Fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*). There is a prior record of this species arriving on Guam, from the early 1990's.

Source: Daniel Vice, Assistant State Director

SAMOA

NZ Defence Force assisted with the Savaii biodiversity survey

The New Zealand Defence Force helicopters provided support for the biological survey of Mt Silisili, the highest peak on Savaii Island a week prior to Samoa's celebrations of its 50th independence anniversary. The helicopters also made a trip to Nu'ulua Island for rat and other invasive species monitoring, since a rat control programme was initiated in 2009. Attempts to reach the island via boat were not possible due to rough seas. Both surveys are being coordinated by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, with support from SPREP and other partners.

Biosecurity officers from the Cooks learning in Samoa

A biosecurity official from Rarotonga, Mr Tetupu Apera, spent a week at the Quarantine office as part of an exploratory and learning mission in view of a proposal to send cargo to remote islands of the Cook Islands. Mr Apera observed the inspection procedures and clearance of general cargo by the Samoa Quarantine Service. *[source: Samoa Quarantine e-News, Issue 4]*

HAWAII

Mongoose caught!

The Kauai Invasive Species Committee (KISC) caught their first mongoose from Marriott Kauai Lagoons. The mongoose was found in one of the traps laid out after a sighting was reported. More reported sightings were received and traps were deployed to various places around the Harbour. Citizens' reporting the sightings was acknowledged for the rapid response and capture of the animal. This strongly emphasises the role of the public in thwarting the spread of dangerous invasive species. Kauai is the only island where mongoose was not intentionally introduced, which is why it has been successful in building populations of ground-nesting birds like nene. Mongooses eat eggs and chicks, so they can have a devastating effect on wildlife, domestic fowl and game cocks. Mongooses were brought to Hawaii by the Sugar Industry in 1883 in a failed attempt to control rats in the sugar cane fields. They prey on turtle eggs, birds and other animals, and they can also carry deadly diseases like leptospirosis. Mongooses have no natural predators in the Islands to keep their numbers in check.

Pacific Invasives Partnership News:

Economic analyses of Invasive Species in the Pacific Training

A training course on economic analyses of Invasive Species in the Pacific Islands was held at the University of the South Pacific (USP) from 14-16 May, 2012. The training course was conducted by NZ Landcare Research, with assistance from the Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII) and USP. Twenty participants from six countries attended the training. The purpose of the training was to build capacity on the economics of invasives and develop a series of economic analyses that will assist governments and other organisations to allocate funds for invasive species management.



Contact Adam Daigneault (daigneault@landcareresearch.co.nz) for more info.

Pacific Invasives Plants Management Training

The Pacific Invasive Plant Management Training was held at the SPREP compound, Samoa from 15-25 May, 2012. The training was led by PII in collaboration with the NZ Department of Conservation, the Samoan Government – Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MNRE), PILN and SPREP. Fourteen participants from four countries attended the training, which utilises the PII 6 stage project process. The ten day training included a field trip to Mt Vaea Reserve, a project site for MNRE to re-habilitate the forest area from invasive species.

Islands need action NOW!

“Islands need action Now.” This was the passionate message by the Honourable Ronny Jumeau, the roving ambassador for Climate Change and Small Island Developing States issues of Seychelles, at the opening of the in-depth review of the programme of work on island biodiversity at SBSTTA 16 in Montreal, Canada. Honourable Jumeau noted the challenges facing island biodiversity are massive and increasing, and that commitments made by islanders often belie their size. He called for action now with a united approach, warning that if we don’t – then we will fail.

Phoenix Islands highlight invasive species management

Nenenteiti Teariki-Ruatu, speaking on behalf of the Phoenix Island Protected Area (PIPA), at the in-depth review of the programme of work on islands biodiversity at SBSTTA 16, highlighted that PIPA has reduced and reversed trends in the rate of loss and degradation of natural habitat with island restoration programmes (four of eight islands have had key invasive species removed). PIPA has invested in biosecurity planning and implementation to prevent further invasive species introductions.

GLISPA – Invasive Species Working Group

Oliver Langrand (Island Conservation) will co-chair the GLISPA Invasive Species Working Group focused on reducing the threat of invasive species.

Small Islands, Big Difference Campaign launched at SBSTTA 16

Island Conservation and partners launched a global campaign, Small Islands, Big Difference, at a side event held on May 1, 2012 during the SBSTTA-16 meeting. The campaign is intended to prevent the extinction of vulnerable native species and support human livelihoods on islands by removing invasive alien vertebrates.

More than fifty participants from around the world attended the event, which was opened by Dr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary of the CBD—a long-time leader in invasive alien species issues both in Brazil and South America. Executive Secretary Dias said, “Islands constitute a subset of the world that deserves special attention.” Bill Waldman, Executive Director of Island Conservation, welcomed the audience and invited their active participation. Seychelle’s Ambassador for Climate Change and Small Island Developing States, Ronald Jumeau, also spoke at the event, expressing his support for the campaign and describing achievements to address invasive alien species in his own country and in the Western Indian Ocean.

Small Islands, Big Difference will continue to develop in preparation for the CBD’s 11th Conference of Parties to be held in Hyderabad, India in October 2012. The Island Conservation will join with the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) and world leaders to promote the campaign and empower on-the-ground solutions through an Island Summit.

Vacancies and Opportunities:

Biologist (Invasive Species) – US Fish & Wildlife Service (Saipan, CNMI)

The Biologist (Invasive Species) position works for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office on the island of Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The incumbent works with issues related to the interdiction, management, and control of the brown treesnake (BTS) in the CNMI and will work closely with the Government of CNMI BTS Program. This is a TERM position not-to-exceed 13 months, but may be extended without further competition for a total appointment not-to-exceed four

years. Individuals with a broad range of natural resource management experience are encouraged to apply. This vacancy announcement is open to all qualified applicants and will close on 13 June.

Earl Campbell, Ph.D. earl.campbell@fws.gov or see website:

<http://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/viewdetails/316795000>

Upcoming meeting, conference and training announcements:

These announcements are for activities taking place in 2012. If you would like to share an announcement with the Network, please send details to PILN Coordinator. More events can be found on our PILN webpage.

APRIL-JUNE EVENTS

8 June – SPREP 20th Anniversary Open Day (Apia, Samoa)

13-17 June: International Symposium on Invasive Plants and Global Change – Urumqi, China. Visit website: <http://lcbatunr.wordpress.com/2012/02/05/preliminary-announcement-international-symposium-on-invasive-plants-and-global-change/> 18-21 June: Pacific Invasives Partnership Annual Meeting. Contact Souad Boudjelas or Alan Tye for further information.

18-21 June: Pacific Invasives Partnership Annual Meeting (Suva, Fiji)

22 June: Fiji Invasive Species Taskforce (2nd Meeting – Suva, Fiji)

25-29 June: Pacific Plant Protection Organisation Meeting (Suva, Fiji)

26-28 June: Biological invasions during the first IS Rivers Congress in Lyon (France)

26-28 June: From Charlie Nagamine: Greetings, I scheduled a "Pesticide Risk Reduction Education" short course for:

- Lanai (Koele) | * Registration deadline: June 5 | * Fee for registration: \$100 / person | * Fee for study packet (if you need one): \$35 / packet.

The classroom is small so the official announcement says, "For people who apply pesticides on Lanai." Also, I want to talk to the trainees who want to register so the official announcement also says, "Sign up by contacting the instructor." Please refer inquiries to me (cynagami@hawaii.edu, 808-956-6007) and/or to this webpage:

<<http://pestworld.stjohn.hawaii.edu/pat/schedule.html>>

Invasive news and interesting links and websites

Rabbits vectors for kiwifruit disease

NZ Government research has revealed rabbits are capable of spreading the kiwifruit-destroying Psa-V. Testing by Plant and Food Research also suggests the bacterial disease can be spread by orchard equipment, after positive samples were taken from the tyres of a quad bike and trailer. Researchers took swabs from the feet of eight rabbits shot in kiwifruit blocks and found that half tested positive for Psa-V. The sampling, undertaken during wet conditions favourable to the bacteria, aimed to confirm whether Psa-V could lodge on clothing, tools and vehicles.

But while rabbits could spread Psa-V, wind and rain was likely to spread it further. John Burke of the industry-established company Kiwifruit Vine Health said orchard hygiene remained crucial to growers - especially those starting afresh with the more resistant G3 variety of gold kiwifruit.

Recently, a new study had shown Psa-V originated in China. Scientists used DNA sequencing technology to examine links between the Psa bacteria and a disease which afflicted orchards in China and Japan in the 1980s. Their findings, published in the journal PLoS ONE, showed the bacteria from China and New Zealand were almost identical. Psa-V has spread to 1184 New Zealand orchards since it was discovered in the Bay of Plenty region in November 2010. Damage estimates released this week put its cost to the New Zealand kiwifruit industry at more than 1400 jobs lost over the next three years. Combating the disease is also expected to cost between \$310 million and \$410 million over the next five years, with the long term bill rising to between \$740 million and \$885 million.

Asian tiger shrimp rises to the count

The recent rise in sightings of non-native Asian tiger shrimp off the US Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts has government scientists working to determine the cause of the increase and possible consequences for native fish and seafood in those waters. How it got from its native range in the Indo-Pacific to the Americas is not known, although it is suspected that it may have been via aquaculture, ballast water or ocean currents from neighbouring places. The first lot of specimens were collected in 1988 off the coasts of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida attributed to an accidental release from an aquaculture facility in South Carolina. Scientists are still not sure if the shrimp has become established as mostly juveniles have been collected. DNA testing will allow scientists to determine the shrimp's origins.

Australia national weeds of significance increases

Twelve weeds found in Western Australia have been added to Australia's Weeds of National Significance (WoNS), bringing the total to 32 weeds. Some of the weeds include gamba grass, bellyache bush, silverleaf nightshade, water hyacinth, African boxthorn, asparagus weed and fireweed. The new weeds were selected based on factors such as invasiveness, impact, socio-economic and environmental values and potential for spread.

Invasive species awareness video from the Bahamas

From the Carib-IAS-Threat list

A great video clip on invasive species in the Bahamas (voice does not match the video but well done!)

Learn why invasive plant and animal species such as the Australian Pine, the Lionfish, the Melaleuca Tree and the Brazilian Pepper Tree are bad for the Bahamian environment:

<http://www.greenantilles.com/2012/05/17/4744/>

Little Fire Ants – hope for a control

From Cas Vanderwoude

After working on a remedy for the little fire ants for many years, researchers have come up with three things needed to allow everyday people to control Little Fire Ants around the home. These three things are:

- a bait matrix that is easy to make and extremely attractive to Little Fire Ants - the HAL gel bait;
- an active ingredient that was effective, legal and with a wide use pattern – Tango ® is a methoprene concentrate that can be used in nurseries, food crops, orchards and around homes. The label allows it to be used in a bait matrix of the user's choice.
- a cheap and effective way of spreading a gel bait (especially into trees). After testing a bunch of stuff, we discovered that good quality spray bottles work really well! They only cost \$6-8 so everyone can afford to go out and buy one.

Together, the combination of these three things gives a solution to LFA that actually works!

Acknowledgements to Michelle and Brent from Hawaii Ant Lab, Darcy Oishi, Christine Bauske from Pesticides Branch HDOA, Doug van Gundy, and other agencies who provided funding. Check out www.littlefireants.com and follow the links to the fact sheet. Spread the word, tell your friends, and start killing ants.

Aussie icon suffers from introduced grass

The Aussie wombat population in South Australia is suffering liver disease due to their consumption of introduced grasses which have taken over their native food sources. The disease causes the animals to become bald and struggle to walk. A crisis meeting amongst the wildlife groups was held to address this serious threat. The problem is overwhelming that in space of three hours – 274 wombats died according to one of the wildlife rescuers.

Warning over deep-ocean stowaways

Care must be taken not to spread deep-sea creatures around the world during exploration of the remote ocean floor. Scientists using the famous Alvin sub say the vehicle picked up limpets from a depth of almost 3,000m

and inadvertently transferred them alive to another location more than 600 km away. It is surprising because the animals had to cope with huge pressure changes as Alvin conducted its dives. The researchers report the event in the journal *Conservation Biology* [see PILN Soundbites New Publications section]. Spreading organisms artificially beyond their range in this way could have damaging effects on marine ecosystems, they warn, either by introducing competitors or even disease.

New Publications:

Scientific Articles

- James A. Morris Jr., Mary R. Carman (2012) Fragment reattachment, reproductive status, and health indicators of the invasive colonial tunicate *Didemnum vexillum* with implications for dispersal. *Biol Invasions Online First*[™], 23 April 2012
- Stewart, P.Le.C.F., Richard, G., & Bernard, A. 2012. An alternative baiting method of Yellow Crazy Ants (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*) on Christmas Island, Indian Ocean.
- Moore, J.W., Herbst, D.B., Heady, W.N., & Carlson, S.M. 2012. Stream community and ecosystem responses to the boom and bust of an invading snail. *Online First*[™], 15 May 2012. *Biol Invasions* DOI 10.1007/s10530-012-0240-y
- Voight, J. R., Lee, R. W., Reft, A. J. and Bates, A. E. 2012. Scientific Gear as a Vector for Non-Native Species at Deep-Sea Hydrothermal Vents. *Conservation Biology*. doi: 10.1111/j.1523-1739.2012.01864.x
- David Cameron Duffy and Paula Capece, 2012. Biology and Impacts of Pacific Island Invasive Species. 7. The Domestic Cat (*Felis catus*) *Pacific Science* 66(2):173-212. 2012
- M. D. Day, A. Kawi, K. Kurika, C. F. Dewhurst, S. Waisale, J. Saul-Maora, J. Fidelis, J. Bokosou, J. Moxon, W. Orapa, & K. A. D. Senaratne 2012. *Mikania micrantha* Kunth (Asteraceae) (mile-a-minute): its distribution and physical and socioeconomic impacts in Papua New Guinea. *Pacific Science*, 66(2):213-223. 2012 doi: dx.doi.org/10.2984/66.2.8
- Campbell, S., Cook, S., Mortimer, L., Palmer, G., Sinclair, R., & Woolnough, A.P. 2012. To catch a starling: testing the effectiveness of different trap and lure types. *Wildlife Research* 39(3) 183-191 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1071/WR11115>

Books & Newsletters

- Pacific Environment Information Network Newsfeed 39 (<http://www.sprep.org/irc>)
- NatureFiji – MareqetiViti Newsletter 13 – May, 2012 edition is now available (contact NatureFiji – support@naturefiji.org for more information).
- Nias, R.C., & Saunders, A. May 2012. Building on the past to preserve the future –some issues and options for biodiversity conservation on Norfolk Island.

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