



# Florida EPPC

## *Message from the Chair*

Another FLEPPC Symposium has come and gone, and what a good one it was!

“Congratulations” and “Thank You” to all those who were able to attend and make the 22<sup>nd</sup> Symposium such a success, and commiserations to those of you who could not make it...we hope to see you next year in Jacksonville.

Although with such good weather it might have seemed difficult to stay in the hotel meeting room on Cocoa Beach (special thanks to Mike Bodle – local arrangements), the captivating program held the crowd throughout the Symposium, and the outdoor social and banquet (rocking with *The Weeds*) made the most of the fine location. David Lodge (University of Notre Dame) provided an excellent, thought-provoking keynote address concerning the assessment of invasion risks. In addition to the usual variety of interesting papers and posters, there was a risk assessment panel session and several workshops. These included one on Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs – an important new development in Florida)



*The weather at the 2007 Symposium on Cocoa Beach was perfect for daytime field trips, evening socials and rocking with the Weeds after dark.*



lead by guest speaker Jim Olivarez (USDA Forest Service) and Kathy O'Reilly-Doyle, and another that included all sorts of technical gizmos and a fascinating, small-scale, autonomous aircraft! Reports back from

all the half-day field trips were highly favorable, whether it was pepper-bustin' and rocket history at Cape Canaveral Air Force Base, invasive plant management at Sebastian Inlet and Indian River Lagoon Preserve State Parks, or vegetation inventory techniques in Lori Wilson County Park. Many people contributed to all the Symposium activities and to them all, a great debt of thanks is owed.

Gratitude to LeRoy Rodgers, who stepped in at the last minute to organize the program, was

## Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council

### OFFICERS

Alison Fox, Chair  
amfox@ifas.ufl.edu

Dan Clark, Chair-Elect  
daniel\_clark@nps.gov

Dianne Owen, Secretary  
dowen@fau.edu

Ellen Donlan  
Treasurer  
edonlan@sfwmd.org

Karen Brown,  
Editor, Wildland Weeds  
kpbrown@ifas.ufl.edu

### DIRECTORS

Alison Higgins  
ahiggins@tnc.org

Alyssa Jacobs  
ajacobs@semtribe.com

Bill Overholt  
waoverholt@ifas.ufl.edu

Jennifer Possley  
jpossley@farichildgarden.org

Gary Nichols  
gnichols@sjrwmd.com

Jonathan Taylor  
jonathan\_e\_taylor@nps.gov

Sandra Vardaman  
smvardaman@alachua.fl.us

Donna Watkins  
donna.watkins@dep.state.fl.us

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**By-Laws**  
Donna Watkins

**Biological Control**  
Bob Doren  
Bob\_doren@NPS.gov

**Control and Evaluation**  
Michael Meisenberg  
mjmeisenberg@ifas.ufl.edu

**Education**  
Chris Lockhart  
Chris.lockhart@habitatspecialists.com

**Finance**  
Scott Ditmarsen  
scditmarsen@dow.com

**FNGA/FLEPPC Liasons**  
Doria Gordon  
Dgordon@tnc.org

**Legislative**  
Matthew King  
Mking@co.palm-beach.fl.us

**Local Arrangements**  
Mike Bodle  
mbodle@sfwmd.gov

**Merchandise**  
Tony Pernas  
Tony\_Pernas@nps.gov

**Nominations**  
Jim Burney  
burney@avcaquatic.com

**Outreach**  
Katy Roberts  
Kroberts@ij.net

**Plant List**  
Keith Bradley

**Research**  
John Volin  
jvolin@fau.edu

**Symposium Program**  
LeRoy Rogers  
lrogers@sfwmd.org

**Vendors**  
Todd Olson  
Todd@avcaquatic.com

**Webmaster**  
Tony Pernas

### TASK FORCE CHAIRS

**Australian Pine**  
Tony Pernas

**Brazilian Pepper**  
Jim Cuda  
jcuda@ifas.ufl.edu

**Carrotwood**  
Chris Lockhart

**Chinese Tallow**  
Drew Leslie  
Drew.leslie@dep.state.fl.us

**Dioscorea**  
Bill Overholt  
waoverholt@mail.ifas.ufl.edu

**Grasses**  
Greg MacDonald  
gemac.mail.ifas.ufl.edu

**Lygodium**  
LeRoy Rodgers/  
Kris Serbesoff-King  
Kserbesoffking@tnc.org

**Skunkvine**  
Brian Nelson  
Brian.Nelson@swfwmd.state.fl.us

**Melaleuca**  
FrancoisLaroche  
Flaroche@sfwmd.gov

translated into the FLEPPC Member of the Year Award, and the opportunity to Chair the Symposium Program Committee again in 2008, but this time with a whole year to prepare! Recipients of the FLEPPC Advocate of the Year (non-member) Award were Jim Krakowski (retired) and Layne Hamilton (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) who were nominated by Dennis Giardina in recognition of their roles in creating and expanding the popular annual Exotic Species Workshop for Southwest Florida.

We are also very appreciative of the Symposium sponsors (BASF, Brewer International, Dow AgroSciences, and UAP) and vendors who not only provided interesting booths, but who also donated funds for refreshment breaks and an exciting variety of door prizes. Mike Bodle kindly donated a large selection of weird and wonderful books for the silent auction and the significant funds raised by this and the raffle, for which the donated prizes were a digital range-finder and a GPS unit, will go towards FLEPPC Education activities. The winners of the Kathy Craddock Burks Education and Outreach Grants and the Julia Morton Invasive Plant Research Grants were announced and we look forward to hearing from those winners next year either in *Wildland Weeds* or at the 2008 symposium in Jacksonville. in 2008.

This Symposium also saw the roll-out of the new online FLEPPC database format at: <http://www.fleppc.org/EDDMapS/>, which is based on the SE-EPPC Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System. This is so cool! Chuck Barger and Sarah Braun talked us through the new system that includes all sorts of maps, a much improved reporting page, and many more

exciting features. Please take a look and resolve to report as many new sites of invasive species as you can this year. This is a very important resource particularly for tracking “newer” species that are increasing in abundance, but it needs everyone’s participation to keep the records up-to-date.

In the FLEPPC year ahead, look for the 2007 FLEPPC Invasive Plant List in the Fall issue of *Wildland Weeds*, and soon we’ll be putting out a request for old newsletters and symposium programs as we try to build a FLEPPC Archive. We will continue to track and comment on legislative issues



*LeRoy Rodgers, who took on the challenging task of Program Chair, was honored as Member of the Year.*



*Newcomers and longtime FLEPPC members got to know one another during the evening socials.*



*Newly appointed Board member Bill Overholt will replace Cheryl McCormick for the coming year.*

that are particularly relevant to the mission of FLEPPC, knowing, for example, that proposals to plant large areas in Florida for biofuel with *Arundo donax* or for windbreaks with *Casuarina cunninghamiana* are likely to resurface.



With regard to our own rule-making, all of the proposed amendments to the FLEPPC Bylaws were approved at the general business meeting. The membership also voted to approve the nominated slate of new officers and directors. So with thanks to outgoing Past-Chair Jim Burney and Directors Scott Ditmarsen, Jon Lane, Paul Pratt, and Tony Pernas, it is my pleasure to welcome to the FLEPPC Board: Chair-Elect Dan Clark, and Directors Alyssa Jacobs, Jennifer Possley, Jonathan Taylor, and Sandra Vardaman. They will find that there is plenty more to be done in FLEPPC and the next crack of the whip will be at the Board of Directors meeting on July 11<sup>th</sup> in Cedar Key! I wish everyone a safe and productive summer.

*Alison Fox*

**Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting  
April 30, 2007  
Cocoa Beach**

*These minutes will be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval at the meeting scheduled for July 11, 2007.*

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by Alison Fox, Chair. Minutes were taken by Dianne Owen, Secretary.

The following Officers and Directors, constituting a quorum of the Board of Directors, were present: Karen Brown, Jim Burney, Scott Ditmarsen, Ellen Donlan, Alison Fox, Alison Higgins, Dianne Owen, Tony Pernas, Paul Pratt, Donna Watkins. Also attending were: Mike Bodle, Keith Bradley, Jim Cuda, Dan Clark, Doria Gordon, Adam Grayson, Alyssa Jacobs, Matt King, Ken Langeland, Mike Meisenburg, Steve Montgomery, Gil Nelson, Todd Olson, Bill Overholt, Jennifer Possley, Katy Roberts, LeRoy Rodgers, Leesa Souto, Dan Thayer, Kris Serbessoff-King, Jonathan Taylor.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA**

#### **Approval of Previous Minutes**

Minutes of the previous Board of Directors Meeting of January 23, 2007 were distributed to the Board. Upon motion made by Karen Brown and seconded by Donna Watkins, the previous minutes were unanimously approved as written.

#### **Correspondence – Alison Fox**

Alison Fox reported that the FLEPPC submitted the application, completed by Jim Cuda and colleagues at the University of Florida, for inclusion of *Arundo donax* on the Florida Noxious Weed list. She distributed the cover letter, which cites several reasons why listing of *Arundo donax* should be done as soon as possible. Alison will also look into what could be done to speed up the listing process. *Arundo donax* is being considered for large-scale planting to provide biofuel.

#### **Treasurer's Report – Ellen Donlan**

Ellen distributed the Account Balances and Cash Flow report for the quarter ending 3/31/07. The cash balance in checking and savings is \$56,600.04. Cash outflow exceeded inflow by \$6,606, but only \$574 of 2007 Symposium fees had been collected by the end of the quarter.

Ellen requested clarification from the Board as to how certain FLEPPC expenses should be categorized. She informed the Board that an additional budget allocation of \$250 for FLEPPC's normal business operating expenses was needed. Upon motion made by Jim Burney and seconded by Alison Higgins, the Board unanimously approved the addition of \$250 to the Business Expense budget for FY 2006-2007. Ellen will also be obtaining a current sales tax exemption certificate for use by authorized individuals making FLEPPC purchases.

#### **Editor' Report - Karen Brown**

Karen reported that the last issue of *Wildland Weeds* made a profit of \$3,300. However, several advertisements, to-

taling about \$3,000, have been cancelled. Karen is working to find new advertising sources and hopes that it will not be necessary to scale back future issues.

Karen also said that *Wildland Weeds*, which is published jointly by FL-EPPC and SE-EPPC, has had numerous articles in the past two years that focused on issues outside of Florida, and that she will continue to encourage other SE-EPPC members to submit articles.

#### **Secretary's Report - Dianne Owen**

The newsletter with the minutes of the Jan 23, 2007 Board of Director's meeting, was sent by email on 2/26/07. Hardcopy newsletters (approximately 50) were sent to members with missing email addresses or returned emails, with a request to provide a correct email address. The newsletter also listed the new Board nominees and included the proposed changes to the Bylaws, both of which were approved by the Board and must be approved by the general membership at the Annual Business Meeting. A pullout hardcopy version of the proposed Bylaws changes was also sent to all members, along with Symposium field trip information, after it was realized that the strikeouts of deleted items in the Bylaws did not print properly in the version that was sent with the newsletter. There were 159 pre-registrations for the Symposium.

Upon motion made by Donna Watkins and seconded by Scott Ditmarsen, the Officers' Reports were approved unanimously.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures – Alison Fox / DonnaWatkins**

Alison has prepared a Powerpoint presentation about the Board-approved changes to the Bylaws for the Annual Business Meeting on Thursday, 5/3/07. In addition, all current FLEPPC members have received email and hardcopies of the proposed amendments.

The revised SOPs will be the subject of a presentation on 5/3 and will be posted on the FLEPPC web site. Donna Watkins reported that input is still being sought from committee chairs for the checklists that will be part of the SOPs distributed to the Board.

#### **Control and Evaluation –Michael Meisenburg / Scott Ditmarsen**

Proposed SOPs for this committee have been drafted but have not yet been approved by the committee. Scott said the role and function of the committee must be clearly defined to ensure that the committee receives input from the Board but that it will not be necessary for the Board to micromanage and approve individual projects. The committee has implemented a Brazilian pepper demonstration project at Cape Canaveral Air Force Stations and a field trip to tour the site will be offered during the Symposium.

#### **Education - Leesa Souto / Chris Lockhart**

Leesa distributed the list of Education and Outreach Grant Awardees for 2006-2007. Of six proposals received, the committee selected five for total funding of \$3,862. The funded proposals were 1) *Seeds of Change*, funding for a second year of a community-based program for education, outreach and stewardship on the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge in Boynton Beach, 2) *Palm Beach County Master Gardener Exotic Pest Plant Training*, funding to enhance the training of 25 master gardeners in non-native invasive plant identification, control and prevention, 3) *The City of Deerfield Goes Native*, funding to help offset the cost of reproducing the bilingual guidebook "Go Native!: a pocket guide to choosing Florida natives over commonly found exotics," 4) *Lettuce Lake Visitors Center Invasive Species Display*, funding for the cost of display materials, 5) *Gainesville Air Potato Round-Up*, FLEPPC has been a regular sponsor of this annual educational event during which invasive plants are removed from city land. An additional project is being considered for up to \$1,000 funding for a middle school project dependent upon further discussions with the teachers

A new co-chair is needed for this committee, as Leesa is stepping down. Leesa will continue to work on a Social Marketing Initiative Proposal to present to the Board. Chris Lockhart will continue as a committee co-chair.

#### **Finance – Scott Ditmarsen**

Ellen reported that she has identified several tasks to be addressed by the Finance Committee: 1) Analyze the financial needs and goals of the FLEPPC with a view toward justification of expenditures; 2) Develop a budget based on the needs identified; 3) Present the budget to the FLEPPC Board and membership. The Finance Committee is scheduled to meet again prior to the next Board meeting. Committee chairs will be asked to provide budget requests, with detailed expense justifications, for FY 2007-2008. The Finance Committee will also look into questions about the rates for processing of credit card payments.

#### **Plant Industry Liaison – Doria Gordon**

Doria reported on several issue of concern to the Plant Industry:

The Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA) is opposed to the proposed legislation to allow *Casuarina cunninghamiana* planting as wind-breaks in citrus and has made their opposition clear to FDACS and in their lobbying activities with the Legislature.

FNGLA and the Tampa Bay Wholesale Growers (TBWG) want to use the IFAS Assessment results to work with their members to reduce the use of species that will not be recommended by IFAS Extension. They are sending a letter to their members informing them that 7.8% of the 563 species that have been assessed (plus 44 that have not been assessed because they are prohibited by law in Florida) have the conclusion "invasive - not recommended" for at least one of the 3 zones in which Florida is divided (see attached table). All but one of the species with this conclu-

sion is currently commercially available. Members will be asked about the economic impact on their operations of ceasing to produce / sell these species within the specified zone(s). They will also be asked whether it is possible to make species available only in specific zones by changing distribution methods. FNGLA will forward a copy of the letter to FLEPPC. FNGLA and TBWG will also urge the IFAS Extension and Research Deans to fund a permanent staff line to continue to run and update the IFAS Assessment for species.

Industry representatives were impressed with the results of the test of the Australian Weed Risk Assessment (WRA) in Florida. They believe that the ability to identify those species that are unlikely to become invasive with high precision is critical, and can accept a lower precision in identification of species that are likely to be invasive as long as protocols for further testing of those species are developed. The entity proposing introduction of the species should cover the costs of implementing any further testing, but the test itself should be conducted by the USDA or a research institution. They are supportive of further research to examine the potential impacts of implementing the WRA on the nursery industry.

After hearing about the potential impacts of laurel wilt (non-native fungus carried by invasive non-native ambrosia beetle) on species within the Lauraceae, and the potential for movement of the wilt on horticultural and agricultural (avocado) species, FNGLA requested information from the Division of Plant Industry that could be distributed to members through their GreenLine publication.

#### **Legislative – Matt King**

The National EPPC Policy Committee has drafted two letters in support of Public Law 108-412, the Noxious Weed Control & Eradication Act and SB-1288, the Natural Resources Protection Cooperative Agreement Act. After approval by the FLEPPC board, the FLEPPC faxed these letters to the Florida delegation along with key members of various legislative committees and letter originals were hand-delivered to Florida's senators and House Representative Allen Boyd by Karen Brown during National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week (NIWAW) in Washington, DC.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) is drafting language to amend State Statue 581.091 to allow for permits for the planting of *Casuarina cunninghamiana* around citrus groves in order to prevent the potential spread of citrus canker. FLEPPC reviewed the proposed language and drafted comments which were sent to FDACS, Florida Department of Environmental Protection and State Representatives Richard Machek & Ralph Poppell. Two concerns addressed in FLEPPC's letters, that the proposed language should not impact any agency efforts to manage or control *Casuarina cunninghamiana*, nor should it prevent the research or release of biocontrol agents for *Casuarina* sp., were addressed by a subsequent revision of the language. While this report was being presented, Doria Gordon received news that the *C. cunninghamiana* amendment had been removed (and was not reinstated during this legislative session). It appeared that this removal was based on the procedural reason that the amendment had not been through the appropriate committee reviews.

Karen Brown reported on the NIWAW meeting in Washington, where she represented both FLEPPC and IFAS. There was a fair amount of discussion of the 2002 Farm Bill, which expires this term and goes back to the 1949 version unless reauthorized. The bill currently funds some invasive species work so they hope to have it reauthorized with funding for invasive species control expanded by 30%. Dr. Ed Knipping of the USDA/ARS said their weed priorities are melaleuca and giant reed (*Arundo donax*) and they are looking into biocontrol of *Arundo*. The Economic Research Service said one third of their research on the economics of invasive species management is on weeds. Their program is called the Program of Research on the Economics of Invasive Species Management (PREISM): <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/InvasiveSpecies/preism.htm>. An interesting aspect of the *Arundo donax* problem was mentioned by Ernest DeFosse (USDA/ARS): it has become a Homeland Security issue because it places at risk Customs and Border Protection officers from the Department of Homeland Security because smugglers hide in dense *Arundo* infestations. Also, prostitution rings operate within dense *Arundo* growths; small caves are built with the reeds within infestations and these are used as rooms for prostitutes. There was a definite focus on the long lag time between biological control research and permission to release otherwise approved agents. This problem was brought to the attention of APHIS several times. One person asked for a "science-based economic benefit/risk assessment of biological control" to speed up releases. There has been an Executive Office emphasis on biofuels as a pathway to more national security. Nelroy Jackson announced that UC-Davis just received a \$20 million grant from Chevron for research on switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) as a biofuel, but it is also considered an invasive species by the Southern Weed Science Society.

#### Local Arrangements - Mike Bodle

Mike reported that the personnel at the Holiday Inn in Cocoa Beach have been very willing to accommodate the FLEPPC's needs, and pricing for the socials and banquet are very reasonable.

There was general agreement that in order to allow adequate time for planning of Symposium activities, particularly the field trips, it is necessary to set the location and time of the Symposia well in advance. Several possibilities were discussed for the 2008 Symposium, including Fort Myers, Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Tampa and Sarasota. Based on a show of hands by all present, it was agreed that the 2008 Symposium would be held in Jacksonville, with Tampa as a likely option for 2009. A specific date for the Symposium will be decided at the next meeting.

#### Outreach - Katy Roberts

Katy distributed a detailed summary of the events where the FLEPPC has been represented during the past year. She estimated that an audience of over 10,400 was reached through these events. This year she would like to resurrect the old display and redo the graphics for both displays that have been needed for some time. With two fabric and two cardboard displays, next year it would be possible to

reach 20,000 or 30,000 people. However, said Katy "I need your help. If there are events in your area please take ownership of the event and request the display. Contact kroberts@ij.net or call me at 727-726-1455." A special announcement will be made in the next newsletter to ask for outreach volunteers to help Katy with this important and time-consuming job.

#### Merchandise - Tony Pernas

Tony reported that hats, t-shirts and Columbia field shirts with the FLEPPC logo and t-shirts with the Symposium logo will be sold at the Symposium. There are also a few Control Freak t-shirts remaining in inventory that will be sold.



Roger Clark and Charir-Elect Dan Clark helped out at the FLEPPC merchandise booth.

#### Plant List - Keith Bradley

Keith reported on the most recent meeting of the committee. *Tradescantia spathacea* (oyster plant) will be moved from Category I to Category II and a decision on whether to move *Ludwigia peruviana* (Peruvian primrosewillow) to the Category I list will be made at the next meeting on June 28. The committee position on supporting proposals for noxious weed listing with DACS will also be discussed at the next meeting. For the 2009 list, the committee wants to develop a ranking system and rework the "to-be-watched" list so that it's not just a catchall list for exotic species that are not on the Category I and II lists.

The committee has also been validating records submitted to the FLEPPC plants database; unvalidated records are flagged as such in the database record. One long-term objective of the committee is to encourage more occurrence submissions.

#### Research - John Volin / Dianne Owen

A total of six proposals for the "2007 Julia Morton Invasive Plant Research Grants" were received. The winners of the awards will be announced at the Annual Business Meeting (see sidebar in this newsletter.)

#### Symposium Program - LeRoy Rodgers

A total of 29 talks and 11 posters will be presented at the 2007 Symposium, as well as several afternoon workshops and three field trips. There will also be committee sign-up lists, with the SOPs, on prominent display near the registration desk. A poster will be set up where members can make contributions to the FLEPPC's "historical archive."

For future Symposia, the Symposium Program should have a separate budget that specifies guidelines for Program expenditures. Symposia field trips must also be planned earlier than they have been in past years. This will allow organizers to take full advantage of the opportunities available and ensure that there is time to advertise the field trip so that participants can make reservations well in advance.

**Training** –Ken Langeland / Katy Roberts

Ken reported that CEUs will be awarded for all of the field trips, the workshops and the general sessions. Katy is handling the CEU sign-up and database entry with the help of Donna Watkins. The Natural Areas Certification Training and the certification examination will also be given during the Symposium. To maximize the CEUs offered, the Symposium agenda needs to be set as early as possible. The number of CEUs offered is an important factor for good attendance at the Symposium. Discussion of whether this committee has a role in addition to organizing CEUs at Symposia was tabled until the next meeting.

**Vendor** - Todd Olson

*The Silent Auction was a tremendous success at the Symposium this year.*

Todd reported that a total of 14 vendors have registered for the Symposium, with additional donations for door prizes and raffle prizes. Door prizes will be given during each session. Raffle prizes will include a laser range finder, a handheld GPS and a digital binocular camera. There will also be a silent auction of unique items that have been donated or purchased.

**SE-EPPC Liaison** – Karen Brown

At the last meeting of the SE-EPPC there was discussion of including the Editor of *Wildland Weeds* (currently Karen Brown) as a voting member of the SE-EPPC Board, but this issue was not resolved. The SE-EPPC Board also decided not to order / sell the Pocket Naturalist Guide due to the record-keeping requirements this would entail.

The SE-EPPC will hold its next meeting on June 28-29 in Chattanooga, where there will be a mapping workshop to familiarize participants with the new SE-EPPC online map database.

**Website** - Tony Pernas

Tony reported that the transfer of the FLEPPC web site to the University of Georgia server is complete. The FLEPPC site occurrence database is now linked seamlessly with the SE-EPPC mapping database. Occurrence reports are flagged with an indicator of their validation status. Detailed criteria for validation of records will be determined by the Plant List Committee. The user interface includes a login by email address and the ability to enter photos, specify acreage and other pertinent information. Features such as dropdown plant list menus, email alerts of new invasions and direct upload and download of data files may be added in the future. Tony Pernas and Keith Bradley welcome feedback about the site.

Upon motion made by Donna Watkins and seconded by Alison Higgins, the Committee Reports were accepted unanimously.

**TASK FORCES****Australian Pine** - Tony Pernas

A draft of the Florida management plan for Australian pine will be completed by the end of 2007. The plan will have information on *Casuarina* taxonomy, including evidence from genetic analyses, as well as distribution data and case studies. The plan will also address wildlife utilization and the problem of “emotional attachment” in Australian pine management.

**Brazilian Pepper** - Jim Cuda

The Brazilian pepper task force will meet during the Symposium to discuss the status of implementing the new Brazilian Peppertree Management Plan. In particular, the task force will review what’s working and what isn’t working for Brazilian peppertree management in Florida and will discuss elements to be included in a new brochure that is being developed. Jim has received reports that Brazilian peppertree is expanding its range in northern Florida and the panhandle. Jim has visited a field demonstration project showing competition between Brazilian peppertree and wax myrtle, *Myrica cerifera*, which was established at the Southwest Florida Research and Education Center in Immokalee in August 2006. The purpose of the study is to confirm that the allelopathic wax myrtle can successfully compete with Brazilian peppertree. Quantitative data on survival and growth will be collected later in 2007. Jim also mentioned that studies are being done to investigate the genetics of the peppertree populations in Florida and that hybridization of biotypes has implications for biocontrol.

Jim reported on the status of several Brazilian pepper biocontrol agents:

The seed wasp *Megastigmus transvaalensis*, a naturalized insect from South Africa, was recovered from Brazilian peppertree drupes collected in Cedar Key, Levy Co., in February. Apparently this is a new county record for this species.

At the request of APHIS PPQ, a new petition for the defoliating sawfly, *Heteroperreya hubrichi*, was submitted to TAG in July 2006. In March 2007, the TAG issued a new recommendation that the sawfly NOT be released, reversing TAG’s original position to release the insect that was issued in 1997. However, the recommendation in the TAG summary report was based on information that was contrary to what was provided in the petition. A letter was sent to the TAG Chair and the Chief of the APHIS PPQ permitting office to challenge the TAG’s current recommendation not to release the sawfly.

A recommendation from TAG for release of the shoot and flower attacking thrips, *Pseudophilothrips ichini*, is pending, after a supplemental petition was submitted in August 2006

Host range testing of the defoliating caterpillar *Episimus utilis*, which was introduced into Hawaii for biological control of BP in the 1950s, was completed and a TAG petition will be prepared in 2007. In addition, the F1 Sterile Insect Technique (FISIT) is being investigated as a novel mitigation measure for conducting initial field releases of the caterpillar.

In March, Jim and his colleagues succeeded in infecting Brazilian peppertree potted plants with the fungal patho-

gen, *Septoria* sp., thereby confirming Koch's postulates. Also in March, they received a shipment of Brazilian peppertree weevils from Paraguay. The two weevils, *Apocemidophorus blandus* (Pascoe) and *A. pipitzi* (Faust), were imported under permit to establish a colony for biological control studies and eventually host range testing. They recently confirmed the stem boring habit of the larvae and have successfully reared the stem borer in quarantine.

#### **Dioscorea** - Bill Overholt

The new management plan for Dioscorea is near completion except for the incorporation of case studies. The plan includes new sections on control and legislation contributed by Michael Meisenburg and Matthew King, respectively. Promising work on a beetle from Nepal is being conducted by Bob Pemberton at USDA/ARS in Fort Lauderdale. USDA/APRHIS has approved a permit to introduce two related beetles from Africa into the UF/IFAS quarantine laboratory in Fort Pierce.

#### **Exotic Grasses** – Greg McDonald

The task force will be meeting during the Symposium. The current focus of the committee is on the development of the management plan for Cogon grass. The plan will be posted on the FLEPPC web site when it is completed.

#### **Lygodium** – LeRoy Rodgers/Kris Serbesoff-King

The committee is looking at both *L. japonicum* and *L. microphyllum*. The northern limit of *L. microphyllum* is currently in central Florida, while *L. japonicum* is widespread in the northern portion of the state. Some of the issues the committee is focusing on are integrated pest management, development of a management plan for *L. japonicum* (led by Andi Van Loan), listing of *L. japonicum* as a federal noxious weed as well as in the state of Georgia, and the creation of Regional Cooperative Weed Management Areas.

#### **Melaleuca** – Francois LaRoche

Francois reported that updates to the Melaleuca plan, which was first created in 1989, will be done this year. The successful TAME Melaleuca project ended in 2006.

Upon motion made by Karen Brown and seconded by Paul Pratt, the Task Force reports were accepted unanimously.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Memorial Contribution Standards *ad hoc* committee** – Jim Burney

Jim reported that standards for memorial contributions are being developed and will be reported at the next meeting.

#### **FLEPPC Scholarship Fund *ad hoc* committee** – Tony Perinas

Tony will be working with the Finance Committee to establish guidelines for managing the Scholarship Fund. The proceeds from the Symposium raffle will go to this fund.

#### **Plant Conservation Alliance**

The FLEPPC, with Board approval, has joined the Plant Conservation Alliance. Information about this group can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/plants/>.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **FLEPPC sponsorship of native plant book by Gil Nelson**

Gil Nelson and the non-profit University Press of Florida are seeking financial support for a book on native plants for southern gardens that will include information about invasive exotic plants and organizations, such as EPPCs and IPCs, working to manage them. Gil spoke to the Board about his plans for the book. He believes citizens don't understand how much land managers are working and spending on these problem species and, until they do, we can't expect them to change their gardening habits. He thinks the subject of invasive species is very topical right now so we should seize the opportunity to inform the public. Sponsorship is being sought to help pay for the author's travel, photography, photo and drawing permission fees, interviews, etc as he writes the book. It will also help keep costs down so the publisher can sell the finished book at a reasonable cost (projected cost \$30.00). This is especially necessary for books that aren't expected to have huge volumes of sales (in the national bestseller range) to offset costs of production. Other books of this sort, e.g. Richard Wunderlin's *Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida*, have received sponsorship. Sponsors will be recognized in a list of sponsors, with logos, after the title of the book.

In response to questions raised by Doria Gordon, Gil said that the book would be sensitive to the distinction between invasive and non-invasive exotic plants and that he is aware of the importance of this issue for nursery growers.

Upon motion made by Karen Brown and seconded by Donna Watkins, the Board unanimously approved a \$1,000 sponsorship for the book.

#### **Annual Business Meeting**

Alison Fox outlined the agenda for the Annual Business Meeting to be held on 5/3/07. Ballots and short biographies of the nominees for the Board of Directors for 2007-2009 will be presented prior to the vote by the membership. The proposed Board-approved amendments to the Bylaws will be presented and voted on by the members. Finally, officers will present short reports.

#### **NEXT MEETING and ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be at 10:00 am on July 11, 2007 at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Marina Laboratory in Cedar Key.

Upon motion to adjourn made by Karen Brown and seconded by Paul Pratt, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous decision at 3:00 pm.

*Attachments referenced in the minutes can be obtained by contacting the board member, committee chair or task force chair who presented that agenda item.*

## Meet the newly elected FLEPPC Directors



**Alyssa Jacobs** is an Environmental Scientist with the Seminole Tribe of Florida. In this capacity she has worked to establish a Tribal invasive species management program to build Tribal capacity in managing exotics through establishment and implementation of a management plan, training for Tribal employees, and Tribal education about this issue. She also manages a large-scale wetlands mitigation program on the Big Cypress Reservation that provides enhancements to wetland function through exotics removal.

Alyssa worked with the Conservation Department of the Town of Brookline, Massachusetts, before moving to Florida in 2001, where she earned a master's degree in Environmental Science at Florida Atlantic University and worked as a contractor for the South Florida Water Management District in the Stormwater Treatment Area Research Group.



**Jennifer Possley** is the GIS Lab Coordinator and Field Biologist at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's Research Center in Miami. She has been a Fairchild employee for six years during which time she has mapped, monitored, and conducted research on rare native and non-native flora of Miami-Dade County.

Prior to joining Fairchild's conservation team, Jennifer completed a master's degree in Agronomy at the University of Florida where she studied the ecology of down rose myrtle (*Rhodomyrtus tomentosa*). She also worked as an Americorps member in Big Cypress National Preserve removing invasive species such as melaleuca.



**Jonathan Taylor** has been working in Everglades National Park since 2002 primarily as a steward for the park's Exotic Vegetation Management Program. Recently, he has been assisting with the Hole-in-the-Donut Wetland Restoration Project.

Before coming to Florida in 1999, Jonathan and his wife lived and worked in Haiti. In Miami, he worked at the Southeast Environmental Research Center at Florida International University on understanding the role of phosphorus in the Everglades ecosystem. His academic training was focused on wetland plant ecology; he earned his MS from the Plant Biology Department at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale and he received a BS from the Marine Science Department at the University of South Carolina.



**Sandra Vardaman** is a Senior Planner with the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department, Land Conservation Program. She is responsible for coordinating the acquisition and management of endangered Natural Areas within the county.

Prior to this, Sandra was employed with the Martin County, Florida, Environmentally Sensitive Lands Program. Her primary duties were coordinating natural areas acquisitions and land management. Her career in acquiring and managing natural areas began as a biologist with the Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation Department's Natural Areas Management Team. In addition to her work experience, she served as FLEPPC Secretary in the early 1990's.



Florida EPPC  
P.O. Box 23426  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307