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The Pacific environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.



PACIFIC INVASIVES LEARNING NETWORK

SOUNDBITES | NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2014

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The monthly electronic newsletter of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) – reporting on invasive news from PILN teams and the Pacific Invasives Partnership. Past issues are available online: <http://www.sprep.org/piln>

WELCOME TO YOUR NOVEMBER-DECEMBER PILN SOUNDBITES



Bonjour Invasive Battlers and Friends,

Another busy couple of months and yet this is the last Soundbite for 2014. It has been a wonderful and busy year. So many achievements and events for the year. The Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting beautifully hosted by the Palau President and the people of Palau stands out as a great highlight for the Pacific invasives movement where commitments and pledges toward fighting invasive species came directly from the leaders. The World Parks Congress, an event that is held once every 10 years, became a Pacific event with Pacific's traditional canoes and leaders leading the way to a high-impact, visually stunning and musical participation of our communities and organisations.

We draw the year to a conclusion and I echo the sentiment of SPREP's Director General and staff in wishing you and your families a wonderful Christmas break and here's hoping for a safe and happy New Year. Thank you for your support of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network for this year and we look forward to even bigger and better things in 2015.

Best wishes from your Invasive Species team at SPREP.

PILN TEAMS & COUNTRY UPDATES

American Samoa: Oh those mynas!

Communities in American Samoa are starting to speak up about those darn mynas. The noisy birds appear to be found everywhere, especially in urban and family areas. The birds originally introduced for controlling of beetles and other pest insects, became established and flourished. Efforts to control them are ongoing in some parts of the Pacific.

Fiji. Fiji Invasive Species Taskforce Update.

The Fiji Invasive Species Taskforce held a meeting on the November 7th at the Department of Environment's conference room. Details and outcome of the meeting can be obtained from Tavenisa Luisa (DOE Secretariat - tavenisas.luisa@environment.gov.fj).

French Polynesia

The Board members and the scientific and technical team of the SOP Manu are very pleased to wish you a Happy New Year 2015 ! We are all very conscious that the work must go on, specially for our critically endangered species :

- Tahiti Monarch – *Pomarea nigra* (Sparman, 1786) - *'Omama'o*
- Marquesas Kingfisher – *Todiramphus godeffroyi* (Finsch, 1877) - *Pahi*
- Ua Pou Monarch (extinct ?) - *Pomarea mira* (Murphy & Mathews, 1928) – *Pati'oti'o*

- Tuamotu Kingfisher – *Todiramphus gambieri gertrudae* (Murphy, 1924) - *Koteuteu*
- Polynesian Ground-dove - *Alopecoenas erythropterus* (Gmelin, 1789) - *Tutururu*
- Rapa Shearwater - *Puffinus auricularis myrtae* (Bourne, 1959) - *Kaki kaki*
- Fatu Hiva Monarch – *Pomarea whitneyi* (Murphy & Mathews, 1928) - *Oma'ō*



(From left to right and up to down on the picture)

In 2015, SOP Manu will proudly celebrate 25 years of existence ! It will be great for us and for Mother Nature with a lot of various and international actions to save biodiversity all over the world !

Best regards

Monique Franc de Ferrière

Secretary to the Board of Directors

PS: We would be delighted to count you again among our members in 2015 and greatly appreciate your support for the Birds of Polynesia.

Please, let me know if you want to receive a membership form or download it on our website: www.manu.pf

Hawaii Update.

Based on the outcomes of the Regional Biosecurity Plan meetings back in May, the Hawaii Invasive Species Council endorsed the overarching goals and jurisdictional recommendations of the RBP in a resolution adopted on 10/28/14. The signed resolution is at the link below. <http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/hisc/files/2013/02/HISC-Resolution-14-1-Endorsing-RBP.pdf>

Hope everyone is enjoying the holiday season. Aloha, Josh

Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species meeting scheduled

The C-GAPS are planning their first meeting of the new year on January 20 from 9-noon at the Hawaii Department of Agriculture Plant Quarantine conference room. An agenda will be posted to these lists a week prior. For more information contact Christy martin, Public Information Officer (www.cgaps.org)

Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle - bi-weekly update [December 8 - 19, 2014 Update]

One female beetle was detected in a trap in the Waianae area. This represents the first positive find in this trap. Intensive trapping, and mulch and damaged tree surveys following this find have not indicated there is a breeding population in the area. The same can be said for the individual finds in Mililani and Diamond Head from October. These individual finds may have been beetles inadvertently transported in green waste or mulch.

137 new traps were deployed primarily around the Waianae detection; 2,618 panel trap services and 137 barrel trap services were conducted island-wide.

During this two week period, 40 adult CRB and 1 larvae were detected; 38 of these adults were found on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam and 2 were located off the base.

No public reports of suspected CRB were received during this period. To date 100% of all public reports have been Oriental Flower Beetle or rat/mechanical trimmer damage to trees.

Liaison Officer, Randy Bartlett, Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC), negotiated the posting of CRB outreach materials at the Mānoa Public Library.

A reporter from the Los Angeles Times did a ride along with a field team and interviewed IC Rob Curtiss about the one year anniversary (Dec. 23) of CRB in Hawaii and where the program is now. In addition, the potential impacts of CRB were discussed.

Beetle Fact: Both CRB (*Oryctes rhinoceros*) & Oriental Flower Beetle (*Proteatia orientalis*) larvae have been detected in bags of commercially sold compost and mulch.

Palau. President HE Tommy Remengesau Jr honored

HE Tommy Remengesau Jr., President of Palau and a champion for stopping the spread of invasive species has been recognised by UNEP as a Champion of the Earth for policy leadership for strengthening his country's economic and environmental resilience by implementation of policies to protect biodiversity and livelihoods.

Pohnpei - iSTOP Update.

Kaselehlie iSTOP members and friends,

On November 6th, 2014 iSTOP was given an opportune time to present a copy of the iSTOP SAP with the Control Plan along with the draft Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Emergency Response (CRB ERP) to the Acting Governor, Honorable Lt. Governor Marcello Peterson. During this visit iSTOP Secretary Konrad Englberger gave a power point preview of the CRB Emergency Response training that he conducted earlier from an USDA IPM funding assistance through CSP which included the FSM Quarantine Officers, PPA Officers, Cargo movers & holders from both Air and Shipping(FSCO), PNI State Fish & Wildlife, Extension Agents, iSTOP members and ended with a draft copy of the CRB ERP needing review by the AG and endorsement by Governor. iSTOP Vice Chairman also presented the update on status of the work of iSTOP on invasive species on Pohnpei. Generally, here are some of the action items agreed upon or general understanding from this visit:

1. Acting Governor will work with the Pohnpei State Attorney General to draft a legislation focusing on invasive species and share with iSTOP for review.
2. Per emergency response statement from Acting Governor Peterson – in any declared state of emergency there will be funding resources made available for the response needs.
3. During iSTOP's contact with the AG office – will also request the AG office for legal advice on how to work with private land owners. What kind of working relationship need to be put in writing if needs be.
4. OEA Administrator will facilitate the development of the job description for a permanent Invasive Coordinator for Pohnpei State who will implement the field activities identified in the iSTOP SAP. This will eventually be included in OEA's annual budget. This was highlighted as high priority action item for all member jurisdictions on the Regional Invasive Species Council (RISC) during the Guam meeting earlier this year. With the dedicated long hours committed by NRCS Resource Conservationist Arlene Rosenkrans and CSP Program Manager Francisca Obispo, Forestry – iSTOP was able to meet the submission deadline for the US Forest Service Competitive grant. With fingers crossed – if granted a three year PNI State Coordinator will be hired and at the end of this three year period, the OEA will need to pick up, extend and house the permanent PNI State Invasive Species Coordinator.

In the pipeline – iSTOP will pay an outreach visit to the PNI State Legislature's R&D Committee. This will be arranged by the Administrator OEA Lorens and iSTOP Chair. On our behalf, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Administrator Lorens for arranging this great opportunity to meet the Acting Governor Lt. Governor Peterson. Attached are some photo documentation by CSP. Many thanks to Fran, BJ and Konrad for being there for all of us. Cheers

Gibson Santos | Agriculture Conservation Specialist| [Pacific Islands Area](#) | USDA-NRCS, Pohnpei, FSM 96941|691.320.5893 x102| gibson.santos@pb.usda.gov



i-STOP committee members meeting with Hon. Lt Governor Marcello Peterson

PACIFIC INVASIVES PARTNERSHIP & REGIONAL BITES

Convention on Migratory Species meet

The eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP11) of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) convened in Quito, Ecuador, from 4-9 November 2014. The COP is the CMS decision-making body. It meets every three years to review the Convention's implementation, adopt budgets, resolutions and recommendations, amend Appendix I and II and decide on priorities for future CMS activities. CMS COP11 was preceded by a High Level Ministerial Panel and regional coordination meetings on 3 November, and held along with meetings of the CMS Standing Committee on 2 and 9 November 2014. The COP took important decisions, including among others on the following issues: listings on the CMS Appendices of 32 migratory species under threat, including the polar bear, the African lion and more than 20 shark species; species Action Plans for the conservation of argali, Pacific loggerhead turtles and the saker falcon; Strategic Plan for Migratory

Species 2015-2023 to provide vision, leadership and a driving force toward the full and effective implementation of commitments related to migratory species; a new initiative on Central Asia including a programme of work for the conservation of large mammal migrations in this region; and a series of important institutional issues including on concerted and cooperative action, an implementation/review mechanism for the Convention, and options for a new structure and modus operandi of the Scientific Council.

ISSG reaches a milestone

The Invasive Species Specialist Group concludes the year on a high with 1312 listed members. Shyama Pagad, the Program Officer and the key person moderating the discussion and exchanges noted that this provides an excellent platform for 2015, where it is hoped that the number of members and exchanges will increase further. Congratulations to all members and to Shyama in particular.

Hot on the internet-wire!

Botanic gardens - plant oases or invasions waiting to happen?

Marc Imaly (Chair of Biological Control Working Group in Maryland) wrote:

"Botanic gardens: plant oases or invasions waiting to happen? A relaxing stroll in a botanic garden sounds like a lovely way to spend an afternoon. These green oases can encourage people to appreciate nature and bring attention to conservation issues. But some botanic gardens might harbor an ecological threat: they could be prime sources for invasive species to spread into the wild.

<http://conservationmagazine.org/2014/12/botanic-gardens-plant-oases-or-invasions-waiting-to-happen/>

Many visitors to botanic gardens love a section with just locally native plants in a natural area. I recommend that botanic gardens around the world have the edge areas of the botanic garden be the location for the native plant area for a relaxing stroll so invasives are less likely to spread into the local environment.

INVASIVE OPPORTUNITIES

The Rapid Response Facility (RRF)

Invites small grant applications for UNESCO inscribed natural World Heritage sites, and tentative sites facing emergency threats to their biodiversity. The RRF is a unique small grant programme jointly operated by Fauna & Flora International and UNESCO World Heritage Centre. With a target processing time for grant applications of just 8 working days, the RRF provides rapid support to enable conservation practitioners to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies in some of the world's most important sites for biodiversity. For more information visit – www.rapid-response.org

Craig S. Harrison Conservation Grants – Pacific Seabird Group

The objective of the Conservation Fund is to advance the conservation of seabirds by providing funds or supplies to individuals from developing countries as well as those from elsewhere working in those developing countries primarily in or bordering the Pacific Ocean, (1) for conservation and restoration activities that benefit seabirds in the Pacific Ocean; and (2) to help develop within-country seabird expertise in developing countries within or bordering the Pacific Ocean. Send an email to Verena Gill (verena.gill@gmail.com) and Craig Harrison (charrison@hunton.com), briefly explaining what you want to propose and where you want to do the work. That way, you can get a rapid determination from them of whether your proposal is eligible for consideration for funding. If they determine that your study is eligible, then fill out and send the application form, the proposal/budget, and the letter of reference, as described below, to Verena Gill and Craig Harrison. Please note that applications/proposals may be submitted at any time—there is no fixed deadline for submission. All applications / proposals will be evaluated as they are submitted.

BIISC Early Detection Program Technician

Looking for a technician that can help implement a comprehensive invasive plant early detection program on the island of Hawaii. Surveys high risk sites for invasive plants and animals. Assess the risk of invasiveness and feasibility of managing incipient plants island-wide. To apply, please go to www.rcuh.com click on employment, select apply and navigate to see job announcements and/or apply for job. Closing date: 13 Jan. 2015.

SPREP (Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme)

SPREP has a number of vacancies and tender opportunities available. Currently, SPREP is looking for a Pacific Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change - Solomon Islands Country Manager and a Pacific Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change Vanuatu Country Manager. Applications close on 28th November, 2014. Please check out the SPREP's Job Vacancies page for further information. <http://www.sprep.org/Human-Resources/Job-Vacancy/>

SPC (Secretariat of the Pacific Community)

SPC has vacancies and consultancy opportunities. Please check out the SPC's website for further information. www.spc.int/job.html - or contact Christine Croombes (recruit@spc.int).

GLOBAL INVASIVE BITES

Why some butterflies sound like ants

Ant nests can offer a lot to organisms other than just ants. They are well-protected, environmentally-stable and resource-rich spaces -- in many ways everything a tiny creature could ask for in a home. For the insects that squat inside ant nests, though, survival means finding ways to live with the ants -- by foiling the chemical cues ants use to distinguish friend from foe, for instance

To catch an invasive species

In Florida if you catch a foot-long invasive Asian carp - you put it back. 8,300 sterile carps have been released into selected waterways in South Florida to help control hydrilla, a ropery, invasive water plant that can grow up to an inch a day and can reach 20 feet and clog flood-preventing canals, smother native plants and tangle boat propellers. the South Florida water managers have been using sterilized carp as an alternative to treating hydrilla for the last 20 years.

The ants that conquered the world

About one tenth of the world's ants are close relatives; they all belong to just one genus out of 323, called Pheidole. New research suggests that Pheidole evolved the same way twice; once to take over the New World, and then again to take over the Old World.

Wetlands more vulnerable to invasives

In the battle between native and invasive wetland plants, a new [Duke University study](#) finds climate change may tip the scales in favour of the invaders - but it's going to be more a war of attrition than a frontal assault.

Two-headed salamander?



Researchers have found a salamander tadpole with two heads. Researchers noted that while they had observed an incidence of deformity, especially among the limbs of salamanders, in the past such cases of two heads were more rare. The reason for this deformity is unknown, but the chief theories are pollution of water sources, changes in radiation and the influence of a small population.

Farmers help spread invasive weeds



What some farmers grow as pasture plants, others view as weeds. But with the need to cheaply feed food animals rising, circumstances are right for the weed invasion to escalate. The problem is that most of these so-called pasture plants are invasive weeds. Scientists are recommending tighter regulations, including a fee for damage to surrounding areas, evaluation of weed risk to the environment, a list of prohibited species based on this risk, and closer monitoring and control of natural area damage.

Smuggler caught with 250 specimens

Puerto Rico officials have more turtles than they know what to do with. In San Juan, a man was caught trying to smuggle a crate of exotic animals into the country. The Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DRNA) believe that man intended to sell the prohibited animals in Puerto Rico. The shipment was sent from Miami to the island of Puerto Rico.

INVASIVE SPECIES PUBLICATION

CABI - Invasive Species Compendium Pacific News (newsletter). Topics: Featured datasheet: *Tithonia diversifolia*. Featured review: *Bambusa vulgaris*. Many more - please contact me for a copy.

Roy *et al.* 2014. Horizon scanning for invasive alien species with the potential to threaten biodiversity in Great Britain. *Global Change Biology* 20: 3859-3871, doi: 10.1111/gcb.12603

Kumschick, S., Richardson, DM. 2014. Species-based risk assessments for biological invasions: advances and challenges. *Diversity and Distributions* 19: 1095-1105.

Banks, NC, Paini, DR, Bayliss, KL., Hodda, M. 2015. The role of global trade and transport network topology in the human-mediated dispersal of alien species. *Ecology Letters* 18: 188-199. doi: 10.1111/ele.12397.

Economo, EP., Klimov, P., Sarnat, EM., Guenard, B., Weiser, MD., Lecroq, B., Knowles, LL. Global phylogenetic structure of the hyperdiverse ant genus *Pheidole* reveals the repeated evolution of macroecological patterns. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 2014; 282 (1798): 20141416 DOI: 10.1098/rspb.2014.1416

The Micronesia Challenge Newsletter No. 38 is out. Some of the articles include: new Coral Research for Palau | GCCRMP graduates more student monitors in December | MINA launches green bag program | Signing ceremony of Nett Water Fund | Modeling climate change by University of Chicago, begins January 18, 2015.

SPAN (South Pacific Agricultural News - Institute for Research, Extension & Training in Agriculture. vol. 39, No. 10/11/12 is out. Some excellent reading include: Survey of nematodes in taro soils of Samoa confirmed good soil health | Nesting space improved egg quality laying hens | Damage of rose beetle on pele reduced with fertilizer application | Snail meat - a potential replacement for fish meal in laying hen's diet in Samoa | Samoan talo export demand 'unprecedented'.

WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society) Fiji Quarterly Newsletter is now out. Contents include: What does the future hold for Pacific Island biodiversity | How faith impacts Fijian fisheries | Exploring the Vatu-i-Ra seascape | Hope for sea cucumbers : a regional approach | Q & A session with a WCS-Fiji Volunteer.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2014	Event	Participating Partner
November		
3-8 Nov.	NEOBIOTA 2014. Biological invasions: from understanding to action. (Antalya-Turkey)	http://neobiota2014.org/
12-19 Nov.	IUCN World Parks Congress (Sydney, Australia)	http://worldparkscongress.org/
17-21 Nov.	Society for Ecological Restoration Australasia Conference (New Caledonia)	http://www.seraustralasia.com/pages/conference.html
24-27 Nov.	World Biodiversity Congress (Colombo, Sri Lanka)	http://www.wbc2014.in
28 Nov.	ChemFree Working with Weeds Workshop (Melbourne, Australia)	http://www.eventbee.com/v/chemfree2014
December		
2-4 Dec.	Australasian Wildlife Management Conference (Brisbane, Australia)	http://www.awms.org.au/conference

Disclaimer: Articles contained within this or other PILN Soundbites do not necessarily reflect the views of PILN teams, SPREP or the Pacific Invasives Partnership. Contact the PILN Coordinator for further information (posas@sprep.org).