

Meeting Notes

FL-EPPC's 17th Annual Symposium

FL-EPPC's 17th annual symposium was held September 17th–19th at the historic Kenilworth Lodge in Sebring, Florida. Attended by 190 people, the meeting was a great success on all fronts.

Craig Regelbrugge, Senior Director of Government Relations for the American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA) in Washington, presented an illuminating keynote address on **National perspectives on the horticulture industry and invasive pest problems**. Craig represents ANLA legislatively on industry regulatory issues. He also is a member of the Invasive Species Advisory Committee that advises the Federal Invasive Species Council. ANLA (www.anla.org) is a national trade organization for nursery and landscape businesses. The organization was founded in 1875 and has approximately 2,300 members. Craig cited national horticulture industry revenues as more than \$12 billion (aggregate), which is 11% of the crop agriculture value, and \$40 billion retail. Craig unequivocally stated that "*New plants drive the market.*" He admitted that changes in industry practices are needed with regard to invasive species, but stressed that they must be at a pace the market can adapt to. He further commented that native plants and invasive species must be considered as separate issues, with both the potential harm and benefits of non-native species to be considered. Some of the goals of ANLA are to prevent new plant pest introductions (that is *plant pests*, not *pest plants*), and to maintain the ability to introduce new plants. Craig observed that the industry has moved from grower-driven to consumer-driven, making consumer education critical. As a framework for solving exotic pest plant problems, he suggested the 3 E's: *educate* (consumers), *eradicate* (pests from natural areas) and *eliminate* (invasive exotic pest plants from the

trade). He further suggests that the role and impact of plant lists should be examined. He believes in reasonable, feasible, enforceable regulation, but also thinks voluntary efforts by the industry should be pursued and encouraged now, and alternatives sought. Craig congratulated Florida groups on the progress that has been made in voluntary pest plant removal agreements. Throughout his address, Craig stressed that collaboration with those of other perspectives could be beneficial to all with an interest in invasive exotic pest plants.

Many other interesting and informative talks were given at the one and a half day presentation sessions, including news of the first known study on the economic impacts of 14 Category I ornamental plant species on nursery sales by UF/IFAS researcher Ferdinand Wirth.

Other events

Jim Duquesnel's training committee presented a one-day training session on invasive plant control in natural areas that was attended by approximately 40 participants. A test was administered that will enable those with a passing grade to apply for Restricted Use Pesticide Applicator licenses in Natural Area Weed Management (Category 21) from the Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services (FDACS). Licensed applicators may purchase and apply restricted use pesticides and supervise up to fifteen unlicensed applicators under their immediate direction. (For information on other opportunities to take this test, contact the UF/IFAS Pesticide Information Office (352/392-4721).

Field trips took participants to Bok Tower Gardens, Highlands Hammock State Park, Archbold Biological Station, Lake Wales Ridge State Forest, Avon Park Air Force Range, and Kissimmee Prairie State Preserve. Sunny, breezy weather, as opposed to Tropical Storm Gabrielle's wind and rain at the 2001 symposium, allowed participants to enjoy the great outdoors in south Florida and view both natural areas, research sites and botanical gardens.

The social was a lively affair with the group well fed on catfish and boiled shrimp and dancing to the music of the

Pith Penetrators. An unexpected special guest star, **George Terry**, songwriter and former guitarist with **Eric Clapton** and a current resident of Sebring, joined the stunned members of the band for a few songs.

Annual Business Meeting

Outgoing FL-EPPC board members Alison Fox, Dennis Giardina, Christine Sutter and Phil Waller were replaced by incoming board members Jim Cuda, Bill Snyder, Andrea Van Loan and John Volin. Heidi Rhoades came on board as the new secretary.

Some of the highlights of the annual business meeting were awards of *Member of the Year* to **Jackie Smith**, FL-EPPC secretary for 5 years, *Lifetime Honorary Membership* to retiring botanist **Nancy Coile**, and *Non-Member of the Year* to UF/IFAS Extension Agent in Natural Resources **Ken Gioeli**.

Membership Committee Chair Andrea Van Loan reported that the FL-EPPC educational display was used at 12 events that were attended by over 5,000 people. Two portable displays are available on loan by contacting Andrea (see *Membership Committee*, p. 3).

Important note: the next annual symposium will return to the original schedule and will be held **June 5-6, 2003** at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort in St. Petersburg, FL. Details will be posted on the FL-EPPC web site at www.fleppc.org

Karen Brown, Editor

Stay tuned!

**The 18th Annual
Symposium**
of the
**Florida Exotic Pest
Plant Council**
will take place
June 5-6, 2003
(returning to a Spring/Summer symposium schedule.)

**at the Renaissance Vinoy
Resort in St. Petersburg, FL**

Details will be announced in the next
issue of *Wildland Weeds*, and will