

The Central Florida Lygodium Strategy: how successful are we at stopping the northward spread of Old World climbing fern?



The Nature Conservancy 
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

Cheryl Millett & Kristina Serbesoff-King

The Nature Conservancy

May 2013

Old World climbing fern

(*Lygodium microphyllum*)

- Grows Fast
- Spreads easily and quickly
- Growth form difficult to control
- Fire tolerant
- Invades a wide variety of habitats
- Grows in very remote and undisturbed areas
- Has been found as far north as Sumter across to Volusia County and Duval in 2012







Fertile

Non-fertile

How to identify: Leaflets usually without lobes & without hairs on the lower surface; leaf stalks articulate (left behind when leaf drops)

CFLS is...

- A partnership:



CFLS is...

- A goal:
 - create a “*Lygodium*-free” zone across central Florida
 - prevent northward spread
- A strategic program:
 - stay north
 - public and private lands
 - detect and remove *Lygodium microphyllum*



Find it

- **Aerial surveys:**
 - past SFWMD, APAFR, LH
 - present SWFWMD
 - missing east coast
- **Getting the word out to CISMAs in the northern zone:**
 - limited resources
 - phone and email contact
 - in-person only if combined with something else



Contact us

If you see Old World climbing fern in
Pasco, Sumter, Lake, Seminole,
Volusia or Duval Counties
Let us know!!



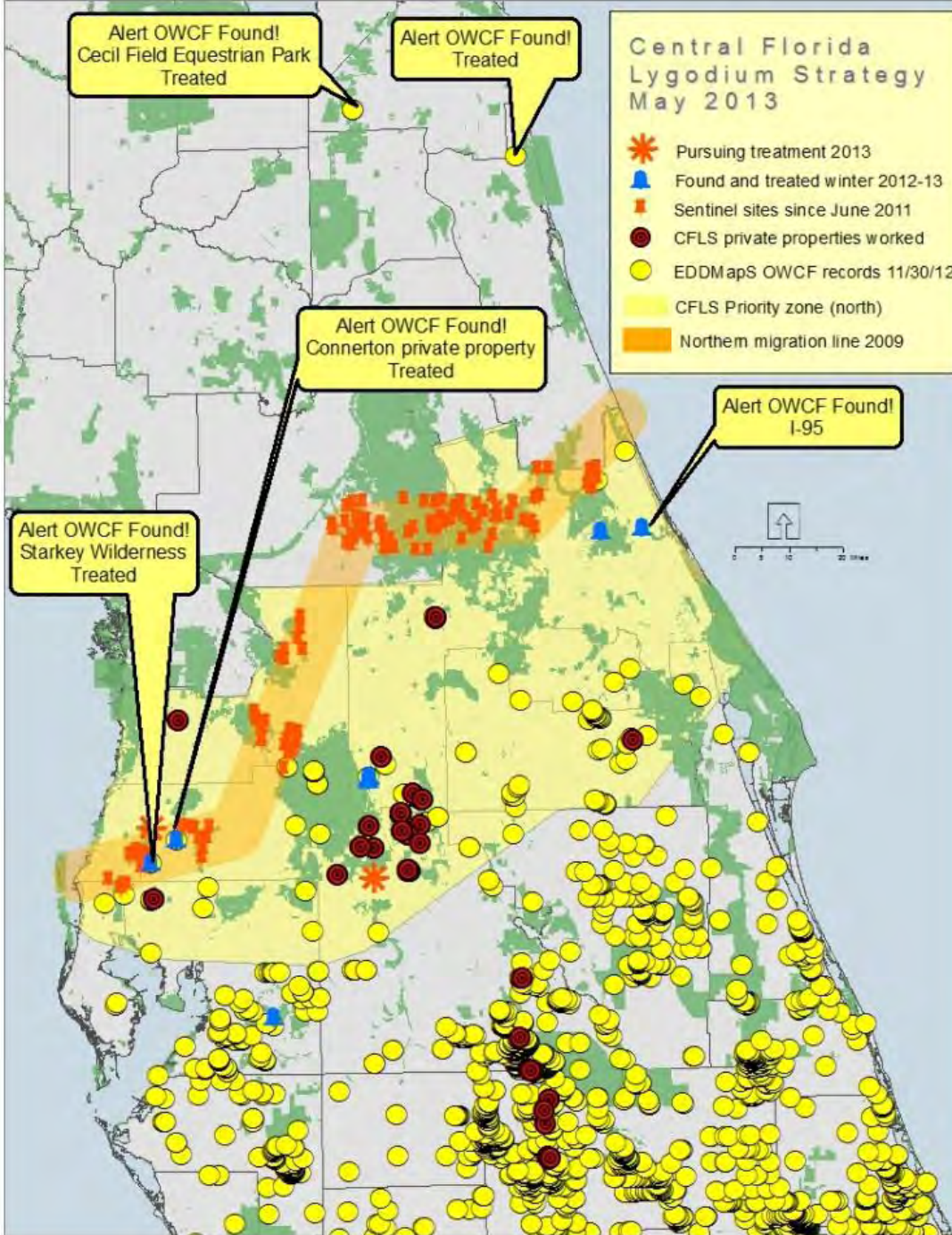
call: 863.604.3352
and ask for Cheryl
or email: cmillett@tnc.org

Kill it

- **If new and small** - pull out by the root* and bag up tightly, or spray
- **Small or low-growing infestations** - Spray-to-wet leaf surfaces with glyphosate or metsulfuron methyl
 - Plants must be growing, not stressed
 - Glyphosate products 2-3%
 - Metsulfuron methyl 2 oz/100 gal.
- **If climbing into trees:** *poodle cut* & spray
 - cut at waist height
 - 10-12 inch gap
 - treat lower, rooted portion of the plant with herbicide
- **Re-treat**



Big picture in Florida



- *>38 private properties treated*
- *>18K acres surveyed*
- *26 conservation areas buffered*
- *130 sentinel sites to measure success*
- *Public managers reporting sightings*
- *SWFWMD treating at Green Swamp*

Success or failure?

- Failure? A goal:
 - create a “*Lygodium*-free” zone across central Florida- found on “firebreak”
 - prevent northward spread- found so far north
- Success? A strategic program:
 - stay north
 - public and private lands
 - detect and remove *Lygodium microphyllum*
 - EDRR



Vision for the future

- Continue approach and partnership
- More creative ways to partner/embed
 - FFS funding for survey and monitoring:
manage sentinel site monitoring?



For additional information and pictures of Old World and Japanese climbing ferns:

- Institute of Food and Agricultural Science **(IFAS) publication “Identification and Biology of Non-Native Plants in Florida’s Natural Areas”** edited by K.A. Langeland and K. Craddock Burks
- UF-IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants website at <http://plants.ifas.edu>
- Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council website at www.fleppc.org