Mark Your Calendar
• Field Techniques for Invasive Plant Management Course, April 7–11, 2008, National Conservation Training Center, Shepherdstown, WV. https://doilearn.doi.gov (Course Code: WLD2139)
• “People-Powered Projects: The National Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) Conference,” April 15–17, 2008, Reno, NV. Representatives from all 50 states will focus on CWMA funding and logistics, working with volunteers, EDRR, awareness and outreach, and state and national initiatives. http://www.weedcenter.org/CWMAconf/cwma_conf.htm
• Florida Vegetation Management Association Conference, April 16–18, 2008, Daytona Beach, FL. www.fvma.info
• 23rd Annual Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) Symposium, Jacksonville, FL. April 21–24, 2008. www.fleppc.org
• University of Florida/IFAS Aquatic Weed Control Short Course, May 5–8, 2008. Coral Springs, Florida. conference.ifas.ufl.edu/aw
• The International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) Work Group will hold a meeting at the National Conservation Training Center May 26–30, 2008, Shepherdstown, WV. “All Alien Invasive Species and International Trade” will focus on assessing and interrupting pathways for movement of alien invasive species. http://www.fs.fed.us/ne/morgantown/4557/iufro_wv/index.htm
• 35th Natural Areas Conference, “Tuning In to a Changing Climate and Biological Invasion,” in partnership with the National Association of Exotic Pest Plant Councils (NA-EPPC). October 14–17, 2008, Nashville, TN. www.naturalarea.org

Web Sites
Volunteers and Invasive Plants – Learning and Lending a Hand
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Center for Invasive Plant Management announce a new website aimed at engaging volunteers and the public in invasive plant issues and management. Designed for National Wildlife Refuge volunteers and Friends groups, the website provides science-based, introductory information that is suitable for anyone interested in learning about invasive plants. Includes five self-study modules, competitive grant information, additional web-based resources, and training in how to map invasive plant infestations using hand-held computers and GPS devices. www.fws.gov/invasives/volunteers/TrainingModule

The USGS has developed a new fact sheet on Asian bittersweet (Celastrus orbiculatus) that provides a very useful key for distinguishing it from American bittersweet (Celastrus scandens). They have a companion paper coming out soon in the Journal of the Torrey Botanical Club. http://www.glsc.usgs.gov/_files/factsheets/2007-2%20Identifying%20Bittersweet.pdf

Have you seen the new Candidate Conservation web page? Working in partnership with public and private landowners, the Candidate Conservation Program assesses species, and develops and facilitates the use of voluntary conservation tools for species potentially at risk and their habitat. The goal is to identify and conserve these species before they require protection by the Endangered Species Act. See http://www.fws.gov/endangered/candidates/index.html

If there’s a question about pesticides, very likely the U.S. National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC) can provide an answer, even if the question is in any of more than 170 languages. A new feature of NPIC, an ongoing cooperative program between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Oregon State University, is around-the-clock, over-the-phone interpretation service provided by a specialized contractor. The Center was established to provide free “objective, science-based information about pesticides and pesticide-related topics to enable people to make informed decisions about pesticides and their use.” NPIC staff fields questions ranging from the technical (toxicology and active ingredient factsheets) to the more general, such as pesticide safety (including the signs and symptoms of pesticide intoxication), pesticide labels, food and pesticides, pesticide risks, and pets, wildlife and pesticides. The NPIC website leads to a variety of categories, gateways, and other key sources of pesticide-related information. http://npic.orst.edu/index.html

Other News
In September 2006, Arizona’s first reported population of kudzu was discovered in Huachuca City, Cochise County. Treatments consisted of Milestone VM applied at a rate of 7 oz. per acre, with retreatments in March and June 2007. Visual estimates in August 2007 indicated >97% biomass reduction. Even though the infestation appears to be controlled, treatments are planned for 2008 to complete eradication and will continue until new shoots cease to emerge.

UPDATE: In December 2007, the red palm mite (Ratiaella indica) was found in Palm Beach County, Florida. The mite has been present on Caribbean islands since at least 2003. The red palm mite is native to Old World tropical and subtropical regions and is known to attack 32 species of palms as well as banana, heliconia, and ginger. Native palms in Florida are at risk.

Some of the invasive plants currently under consideration for biofuel production are jatropha (Jatropha spp.), reed canary grass (Phalaris arundinacea), giant reed (Arundo donax), and Chinese tallow tree (Sapium sebiferum). Jodie Holt, University of California-Riverside recently coauthored the Weed Science Society of America white paper, “Biofuels and Invasive Plant Species,” which outlines the risks associated with cultivating invasive plants for biofuel crops. The impact of invasive plants on the nation’s agriculture, water quality, wildlife and recreation already costs the U.S. an estimated $34.7 billion.
From the other side –
Four Western governors hope to beat cheatgrass

Last year, wildfires fueled by non-native cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) in Idaho, Nevada, and Utah burned thousands of square miles, including giant fires on the Idaho-Nevada border that torched an area as large as Rhode Island. Four western governors want a pilot project that will prevent cheatgrass from gaining a greater foothold. Their program includes planting other grasses in the charred landscape but officials say there aren’t enough grass seeds to go around. Some federal lands where seeds are collected also have burned. In the last decade, surveys by U.S. Forest Service scientists show that 2.5 million pounds of grass seed were needed annually for restoration projects—but that only 765,000 pounds were available. That leaves more ground vulnerable to fast spreading cheatgrass.

Researchers analyze retardant use

From Oregon – Reporters, photojournalists, editors and interns conducted interviews, compiled information, recorded damage, and wrote stories about different invasive species for the Statesman Journal in Salem, OR. The series’ Web site, www.InvasiveSpeciesofOregon.com, has a monthly focus on different types of invasive species and their impacts, that began in September.
and runs through June. New information being added includes a comprehensive invasive species database, monthly companion educational materials for teachers and parents, and other online extras such as videos and photo galleries.

Publications
The 9th edition of the Herbicide Handbook may be purchased from the Weed Science Society of America for $95.00 at www.wssa.net. Includes trade names and manufacturers, and herbicides from all over the world.


Invasive Plant Science and Management
a new Weed Science Society of America peer-reviewed journal, will focus on fundamental and applied research on invasive plant biology, ecology, management, and restoration of invaded non-crop areas, as well as on educational, sociopolitical, and technological aspects of invasive plant management. Visit http://www.wssa.net/WSSA/Pubs/IPSM.htm


If you are not familiar with this sedge, its spread and distribution (Coastal Plain – GA & FL to TX), you may want to read this paper – The Recent Spread of Cyperus erianthus in the Southeastern United States and its Invasive Potential in Bottomland Hardwood Forests, by D.J. Rosen, R. Carter, and C. Bryson. 2006. Southeastern Naturalist 5(2):333-344.

Globalization and Invasive Species Issues in Hawaii: Role-Playing Some Local Perspectives, by A.M. Fox and L.L. Loope. J. Natural Resources & Life Sciences Education 36:147-157. 2007. A tool to help teach “…how local business and conservation interests can influence, and be influenced by, changes in global trade and transportation.”

Biofuel Feedstocks: The Risk of Future Invasions, by J.M. DiTomaso, J.N. Barney and A.M. Fox. 2007. CAST CommentaryQTA2007-1 November. “Biofuel crops are being selected, bred, and engineered to exhibit desirable agronomic traits, many of which also typify much of the nonnative flora invading native ecosystems.”


The Beginning of a New Invasive Plant: A History of the Ornamental Callery Pear in the United States, by T.M. Culley and N.A. Hardiman. BioScience, December 2007 / Vol. 57(11):956-964. “An introduced species that is in the early stages of spread in the United States is Pyrus calleryana Dcne. (Rosales: Rosaceae), an ornamental tree frequently planted in urban residential and commercial areas. Wild populations of P. calleryana can now be found throughout the United States in disturbed sites with high light, including transportation corridors, park boundaries, and restored wetland prairies. The latitudinal range of wild individuals in the United States corresponds to the range of the species in China. In this article we (a) review the horticultural history of P. calleryana to understand how it has affected the species’ present distribution, (b) examine the biological traits promoting its invasiveness, and (c) document the current invasive status of the Callery pear.”


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