

1994 - 2004 The Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council Celebrates 10 years!

The Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council (TN-EPPC) is celebrating its 10-year anniversary with events across the state. In April, TN-EPPC coordinated a symposium, "Invasive Plant Awareness and Research: Priority Status" at the annual Association of Southeastern Biologists meeting in Memphis. In middle Tennessee, TN-EPPC sponsored a field day workshop in Dickson County on "Invasive Weed Identification and Control." A fall workshop on invasive plants is planned for September 3 in Knoxville. The council also has prepared a "Tennessee's Most Unwanted" invasive plant poster that will be ready for distribution soon. Check the TN-EPPC website for information on upcoming events and membership information:

www.tneppc.org

TN-EPPC Turns 10!

The **Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council** was established on March 12, 1994 in Nashville at the first annual Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Symposium. This initial meeting was attended by approximately 70 participants and had 14 invited speakers, including by **Dr. Peter White**, Director of the North Carolina Botanical Garden, and **Dr. John Randall** from the California Exotic Pest Plant Council.

Prior to the first annual symposium, groundwork had been laid that created the opportunity to form TN-EPPC. In November 1993, an exploratory meeting was held at Vanderbilt University that considered the issue of exotic pest plants. This meeting included approximately forty invited participants representing a cross-section of resource managers, scientists, teachers, and others interested in the issue. The event received a small amount of financial support from the Florida EPPC, which also sent a representative to speak about their council. Those who attended agreed that a statewide organization was a desirable approach.

Not unlike other EPPCs, TN-EPPC began by identifying goals and forming committees to accomplish them. One of the first tasks completed was to publish the Spring 1994 *TN-EPPC News*. The newsletter has since been published quarterly. Another significant task completed that first year was to successfully obtain 501(c)3 non-profit status from the IRS.

Since its inception, TN-EPPC has hosted statewide annual symposia and sent representatives to speak at similar conferences. In the spring of 1997, the annual symposium was much wider in scope and addressed exotic pest issues throughout the region. The "Exotic Pests of the Eastern Forests" conference was held in Nashville and co-hosted with the USDA Forest Service and numerous other co-sponsors.

TN-EPPC has continued to publish its newsletter and educational brochures, and has presented numerous workshops. The organization also has published the *Tennessee*



Exotic Pest Vegetation Manual and the *Tennessee Invasive Exotic Pest Plants List*. TN-EPPC serves as a technical advisory body and has participated in cooperative efforts to convince federal and state government agencies to stop using exotic plants. The council also participates as a member of the National Association of Exotic Pest Plant Councils.

While much remains to be done, the Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council has played an important role by addressing a critical issue that no other organization in the state or region recognizes as its mission. In other states or regions where groups are considering forming a council, it should be realized that other EPPCs, including Tennessee, can help facilitate establishment of an Exotic Pest Plant Council. Many of the organizational protocols (bylaws) are already in place and can be shared. TN-EPPC was able to form largely because of this support from other EPPCs.