

The Third Annual Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council Symposium was held March 21-23 at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education on the campus of The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia. The 135 attendants represented a number of state and regional EPPCs, including Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, Tennessee, North Carolina, Kentucky, Mississippi, Georgia, and Florida. Other attendants represented government agencies, academia, private industry, and non-government organizations.

**Lori Williams**, Executive Director of the National Invasive Species Council and keynote speaker, opened the *Policy and Regional Action Plans* session with an update of the Council's activities since Clinton's Executive Order on Invasive Species was passed. Lori further stated that she was confident that invasive species would remain an important issue during the Bush Administration, and that no federal programs were anticipated to be cut in the foreseeable future as a consequence of the change in administration.

The *Policy* session addressed many concerns, such as inter-agency dialog and cooperation and the perceived rift between research and policy. The *Ecological Research and Monitoring* session featured plenary speaker **Dr. C. Ronald Carroll**, Director of the Institute of Ecology, UGA, who gave an overview of classic competition models and how can they be integrated into invasive species research. Presentations featured a diverse range of interests, from natural history studies of *Ardisia crenata* to encouraging community participation in native species restoration efforts. **Todd Neel**, Exotic Plant Management Specialist with Carlsbad National Park explained the role of Exotic Plant Management Teams (EPMT) and their use of integrated control techniques on NPS lands, during his plenary address in the *Herbicide Technology and IPM* Session. The session concluded with an informative discussion panel entitled *Successful Invasive Weed Management Partnerships: Experience from Manufacturers, Contractors, and Resource Managers*, led by **Bill Kline**. The *Screening and Risk Management* session was highlighted by **Alison Fox's** update on assessment strategies for evaluating invasive plant species in Florida. The *Outreach and Public Awareness* session contained outstanding presentations, from using the popular media as a vehicle to capture the public imagination and interest in invasive species issues to encouraging community participation in landscaping and restoration efforts.

The Social Event was a lot of fun - we enjoyed excellent food and Americana tunes played by Athens based *String Theory*. The original venue was slated for the Institute of Ecology Courtyard, but some of our tender-footed Florida friends were already "freezing" in the mid-60 degree weather, so we moved the party inside - it was still a blast! (Incidentally, many of our Florida colleagues were so desperate that they were "forced" to purchase UGA Bulldog sweatshirts to keep warm - these were likely discarded at the Florida-Georgia state lines and airport bins all over Florida.) It was great to socialize, exchange ideas and

resources, and "hit the town" with friends old and new. A good time has had by all.

We would like to extend a sincere thanks to all those who attended and presented their work at the annual symposium. Of course, this event could not be possible without the generous assistance of our sponsors, including:

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Next year's symposium will be held in Nashville, Tennessee. Be sure to visit the SE-EPPC Web site (<http://www.se-eppc.org>) for developments. Hope to see you there!

-Cheryl McCormick, 2001 Conference Chair

(Editor's note: Cheryl did an unbelievable job in pulling this conference together, and has just been named President of Georgia EPPC. Great, job Cheryl!)



**Will the real John Randall please stand up?** CalEPPC's John Randall (left) and NC-EPPC's Johnny Randall finally met face to face at the SE-EPPC conference, quashing rumors that they are actually the same person.

Conference organizer, Cheryl McCormick (left) and SE-EPPC Coordinator, Brian Bowen enjoy a much-deserved break.