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What's in a List?

This issue of *Wildland Weeds* includes the FLEPPC 2005 List of Invasive Species, the associated explanations of its purpose and uses, and notes the members of the FLEPPC Plant List Committee. A number of invasive plant lists and assessments can be found from a variety of sources, each with a somewhat different purpose and geographic coverage. A more detailed article in the next issue of *Wildland Weeds* will review and compare some of these tools. Brief descriptions of a few of them currently in use follow:

Federal Noxious Weed List

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/weeds/>

Administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture under the Federal Noxious Weed Act, listed plants are prohibited from importation and interstate transport without a special permit. Listing of noxious plants requires a risk assessment, a period for public comments, and a final rule published in the Federal Register.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Noxious Weed List

<http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/enpp/botany/noxweed.htm>

This list has regulatory authority in Florida and includes most species on the Federal Noxious Weed List (<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/weeds/>). Its main scope is plants that currently, or potentially, threaten agricultural and upland habitats. Listing of a species requires a formal proposal that documents most available information on the species, consultation with many biological experts, and opportunities for public input. Reflecting the preventative intent of these lists, highly noxious species may not be included if they are already considered widespread and beyond reasonable control. Listed plants are prohibited from introduction, cultivation, and transport without a special permit.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection List of Prohibited Aquatic and Wetland Plants

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/invaspec/index.htm>

This list includes 27 taxa and carries regulatory authority in Florida. All are exotic plants that currently, or potentially, threaten aquatic and wetland systems. Species are added to this list only after agreement of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Listed plants are prohibited from possession, cultivation, introduction, collection, and transport without a special permit.

Local Ordinances

Some Florida counties and municipalities have addressed specific exotic plant species in their ordinances. The particular restrictions may be an exemption from tree-removal permits, a requirement for removal under certain circumstances, or a prohibition from planting.

FLEPPC List of Invasive Species

<http://www.fleppc.org/Plantlist/list.htm>

This advisory list has 133 species of non-native plants already found escaped from cultivation in Florida. It has no regulatory authority but is intended to assist land-managers in setting priorities for control programs, including warning them of species that may not have altered native plant communities yet, but are increasing in abundance or frequency. The list is prepared biennially by a committee of botanical and natural areas experts. The listing process is supported by current ecological observations in the field plus information in several statewide plant databases and herbaria. Background information on most Category I species (species of most concern) has been provided in *Identification & Biology of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas*, by K.A. Langeland and K. Craddock Burks, 1998, University of Florida.

In comparing species lists, be particularly aware of the following:

- ▶ What is the stated purpose of the list?
- ▶ Does the list have regulatory authority or is it an advisory list?
- ▶ Does it apply only to species already within the area or does it include potential threats?
- ▶ What types of habitats are considered?
- ▶ Over what geographical area is a species evaluated?
- ▶ How are species added to the list?
- ▶ Who is expected to provide input to the listing procedures?
- ▶ What criteria are used to arrive at a species' listing or ranking?
- ▶ How often is the list reviewed for possible changes?

Assessment Processes

Following are recently developed assessment processes currently in use:

IFAS* Assessment of the Status of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas (IFAS Assessment)

<http://agronomy.ifas.ufl.edu/IFASassessmt.HTML>

The IFAS Assessment does not specifically provide a list of invasive plants but is a systematic process by which any exotic ornamental or forage plant species currently found in Florida can be evaluated using specific criteria for ecological impacts, potential for expansion, difficulty of management, and economic value. The system was developed to provide consistent recommendations to the public from UF/IFAS extension faculty. Recommendations are derived for species in each of three climate zones in the state (north, central, and south).

*IFAS = Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida

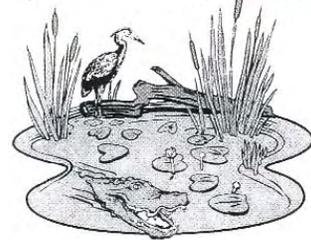
NatureServe – An Invasive Species Assessment Protocol

<http://www.natureserve.org/getData/plantData.jsp>

NatureServe is assessing all of the estimated 3,500 non-native plants that have escaped from cultivation in the United States. This new methodology, developed by the non-profit organization NatureServe in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, uses multiple criteria to provide a systematic evaluation of exotic plants that already occur in native species habitat. The protocol is applied to species as they occur over large areas such as a state, nation, or ecological region. The goal is to create a national prioritized list of non-native plants based on their impact to biodiversity.

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