South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Society Newsletter

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Biggest Meeting Ever

Pine Island always draws a good crowd, but the 21st Annual Meeting was the largest ever with a total of 97 members in attendance. Excellent weather, a great applicators workshop on Wednesday, fabulous speakers, and an exciting dinner cruise combined to draw record crowds.

The meeting started off with a rousing Keynote Address from Dr. John Rogers, Clemson University, on "Environmental risk Assessment in Aquatic Plant Management" and ended with a fascinating talk on "The Rocky Shoal Spider Lily: A Story of Survival" by Cindy Aulbach, Botanical Services of SC with a huge variety of excellent presentations in between including talks on water gardens, eradication of Salvinia, constructed wetland, a fisherman's perspective on plant control, native grasses for reservoir shorelines, and state and power company updates. Dr. Larry Dyck, Program Chairman, deserves credit for an excellent program.

The student paper competition was extra tough this year. We had the largest student paper contest in our history with nine participants from five universities, Clemson, USC, Duke, NC State, and Florida. Maybe it was in response to the increased prize money of $200, $150, $100, and $50 for first, second, third and fourth place, respectively. (See box for contest winners.)

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Near record crowd attends meeting

Many thanks to Jack Whetstone and Stratford Kay for organizing and teaching the Applicator Training Workshop. Attendance was excellent and it provided a great opportunity for aquatic herbicide applicators to increase their proficiency, brush up on the latest techniques and safety issues, and gain valuable recertification credits.

A very special aspect of this meeting was the dinner cruise aboard the Southern Patriot. Larry Feller of Zenneca Professional Products cooked up an delicious grilled teriyaki chicken dinner with all the fixin's. Our three hour cruise was piloted by Captain Joe Agnew, who treated us to great music, a little history of Lake Murray, views of shoreline habitat enhancement projects, a beautiful sunset, and a spectacular viewing of the return of hundreds of purple martins to Bomb Island, the largest known rooting site on the east coast.

A special thanks is extended to Tommy Boozer and South Carolina Electric and Gas Company for their gracious hospitality and hosting the meeting this year at their beautiful Pine Island Club.

SCDNR/Clemson MOU

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Clemson University Division of Regulatory and Public Service Programs have just signed a cooperative agreement to facilitate enforcement of the State Crop Pest Act relating to illegal aquatic plants. The agreement recognizes the importance of preventing the importation, sale, and distribution of noxious aquatic plant species, such at hydrilla, water hyacinths, and Giant Salvinia that threaten the aquatic environment and agricultural water supplies throughout the state.

"The MOU formally recognizes the interagency cooperation that already exists between our organizations" says Jack Jackson, Director of the Department of Plant Industry. "Hopefully, this will help minimize the occurrence of new aquatic weed problems in both public and private waters."

The Division of Regulatory and Public Service Programs routinely inspects commercial plant nurseries, greenhouse operations, transplant producers, sod/turf farms, and nursery dealers for plant pests (insects, diseases, weeds, etc.) through its Department of Plant Industry. These inspections allow DPI to certify plant shipments to other states and foreign countries.

Major provisions of the agreement include:

1. The DNR and DPI agree to cooperate in the enforcement of laws and regulations that help prevent the importation, possession, sale, and distribution of non-native aquatic plant species and the occurrence of noxious aquatic plant problems in public waters

2. The DNR shall act as an agent of the DPI with respect to the State Crop Pest Act as they pertain to aquatic plant pest species. The DNR shall promptly notify the DPI of each occurrence and request their assistance in regards to enforcement action.

3. The DNR shall provide DPI staff with appropriate training in the identification of noxious aquatic plant species and provide all necessary identification and public education material.

4. The DPI shall, as part of their routine plant nursery inspections, inspect for illegal aquatic plant species identified in the State Plant Pest List, take appropriate actions, and notify the DNR of each occurrence.

Alien Weed Eludes Authorities, Then Turns Up at Home Depot

The difference between a decorative reed and a noxious weed may depend on which side of the Atlantic you're on.

Consider *Sparganium erectum*, an aquatic plant prevalent along European lakes, streams, ditches and swamps. In 1976, the U.S. Department of Agriculture put it on the federal Noxious Weed list of banned plants, based on evidence in Europe that it chokes waterways and hinders recreation in shallow water.

Earlier this year, however, some 36,000 of the plants, also known as exotic bur reeds, slipped into the U.S. and found their way to Home Depot Inc. stores in at least 17 states, according to the USDA.

Garden State Bulb Co., a Hammonton, N.J., flower-bulb wholesaler and importer, brought the exotic burs in from the Netherlands and shipped them to Home Depot, in what both it and the USDA say was an accident. Garden State says it didn't know the exotic bur had been banned.

Incoming plant shipments usually go through a rigorous inspection process, says David Reeves, senior operations officer for the USDA's plant protection and quarantine division. One thing inspectors screen for is plants with a history of troublemaking in the U.S. Garden State's exotic-but shipment didn't raise red flags, Mr. Reeves speculates, because the plant hadn't actually been in the U.S. before. Still, he says, "we should've caught it."

En eagle-eyed informant spotted the weeds, packaged in sets of three, on Home Depot shelves and tipped off the Georgia Department of Agriculture, which in turned notified the USDA.

Home Depot spokesman Jerry Shields says the plants were pulled immediately once the company heard they were noxious. Signs were then posted in Home Depots across the country telling customers to bring the plants back

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Feller Member of the Year

The Member of the Year Award is one of the Society's most prestigious honors. Each year the award is presented to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the Society and to the field of aquatic plant management.

This year the award was presented to Mr. Larry Feller at the Annual Meeting. Larry is a sales representative for Zeneca Professional Products serving the Carolinas and Georgia. While we know him mostly from his support of the aquatic herbicide Reward, he also represents a full line of turf and ornamental products.

Although Larry has been in aquatics for only three years, he has made his mark. In the field, he is more than willing to work with resource managers to make sure that they are satisfied with the availability and efficacy of his products. He takes the time and effort to go on site, see the operations, and provide assistance when needed.

Larry Feller humbly accepts Member of Year Award

Larry's common sense approach to problems and willingness to help the Society and anyone else at the drop of a hat made him an obvious candidate to serve on the SCAPMS Board of Directors, where he has served as Director for two years. In addition, Larry has served on Society committees and coordinated the SCAPMS Scholarship Golf Tournament.

Some say that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. Well...maybe. But the way to Member of the Year is certainly through the Society's stomach. We were first introduced to Larry's culinary delights at the 1998 SCAPMS Annual Meeting Banquet when he served up a fabulous Beaufort Stew, then again at the this year's banquet, Larry cooked up Grilled Teriyaki Chicken with all the fixin's. Because his meals have become such a highlight of the meetings, Larry has also been nominated as unofficial SCAPMS chef.

Congratulations Larry and thanks for all you do for the Society!!

Student Paper Contest Winners

1st place, Ryan Casey, Clemson University,

$200

2nd place, Julie Mitchell, Clemson University,

$150

3rd place, Michael Dorn, Clemson University,

$100

4th place, Nathan Craig, Duke University,

$50

Sandra Knuteson from Clemson University receives SCAPMS $2000 scholarship grant for 1999.

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New Officers and Directors

The membership voted in three new board members at the annual business meeting.

Vice President: Chris Page

Directors: John Hayes and Tommy Boozer

Chris Page works for the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources in Columbia where he serves as Prevention Coordinator for the Aquatic Nuisance Species Program and assists with the Shoreline Habitat Enhancement Program.

John Hayes is owner of Outdoor Appearance, a private aquatic plant management company in Dalzell (Sumter), SC.

Tommy Boozer is supervisor for Lake Management Programs for South Carolina Electric and Gas Company and manages the shoreline management and recreation programs for five lakes. Tommy has been very active in promoting the Shoreline Habitat Enhancement Project and assisting with aquatic plant control operations on Lake Murray.

1999-2000 SCAPMS Board

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to the store for a full refund. "It was over in about a week," Mr. Shields says.

Of the roughly 11,800 packages that Garden State Bulb shipped to Home Depot, 10,000 have now been recovered, the USDA says. Given a choice of incinerating the plants or returning them to Europe, Garden State Bulb opted for the latter.

USDA officials say they hope the rest of the exotic burs will end up someplace where they can't choke waterways. Still, it remains to be seen whether the bur reed will join fire ants as an insidious imported evil.

Says Polly P. Lehtonen, a USDA botanist, "One man's designer garden plant is another man's enormous headache.

(Excerpt from Wall Street Journal article)

Southeast ANS Panel Likely

A regional aquatic nuisance species panel similar to those in the Great Lakes, Western, and Gulf Coast regions, may be formed in the southeast to help provide regional coordination of non-native invasive species management in southeastern waterways. Numerous attendees from the public and private sector signed up to serve on a Southeast ANS Panel following the first southeast regional conference on aquatic nuisance species titled "Aquatic Nuisance Species: A Focus on the Southeast" held October 12-14 at the Sheraton Hotel in Charleston.

Over 130 state and federal resource managers, researchers, and electric and water utility operators and managers from throughout the southeast attended the conference which presented a comprehensive overview on the prevention, detection, and control of existing and potential aquatic nuisance species in the southeast. Sessions included a review of national ANS programs and policies; Southeast issues, impacts and management options for noxious aquatic plants, freshwater invertebrates, freshwater fishes, and marine and estuaries species; federal research programs and priorities; state and regional prevention and management programs.

The meeting was hosted by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) and co-sponsored by SCDNR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Research and Development Center, U.S. Geological Survey, South Carolina Electric and Gas Company, North Carolina Division of Water Resources, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and Sea Grant Programs from South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana.

For more information about the Southeast ANS Panel and participation on the panel contact Ms. Pat Carter, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, at 404-679-7108 or mail at pat_carter@fws.gov.

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