CHAIRMAN'S NOTES - The 1992 Exotic Pest Plant Council's Annual Research and Operational Review and Business Meeting will be held (tentatively) at the South Florida Water Management District's main office in West Palm Beach. It is scheduled for March 23 and 24, 1992. A call for papers to be presented at the meeting is included within this newsletter (see the next page). Council Members, let's make a good effort to participate in this meeting by agreeing to be a presenter. Share your knowledge and expertise about the impact, management, and restoration of lands that have been infested by invasive exotic vegetation. Mr. Bob Smith, EPPC's Vice-Chairman, is chairing the selection of the meeting program ........On Sept. 27, 1991, the EPPC's Board of Directors met in Ft. Lauderdale. Briefly, the Board affirmed that any paid member during 1990-91 will remain an EPPC Member in good standing until the 1992 annual meeting. A membership application form will be included within the winter newsletter for those who want to pay their membership fees early or for those who cannot attend the March meeting. The Board approved obtaining a bulk rate mailing permit ($75 cost) for the Council's mailings. Dr. Dan Austin (FAU) reported that his committee on noxious plants has evaluated the draft EPPC exotic noxious plant list. List additions from his committee members (Dr. David Hall, KBN - Gainesville; Dr. Richard Wunderlin, USF; Dr. Daniel Ward, UF; Dr. Ron Hofstetter, UM; and Mr. Mark McMahon) have brought the number of species listed to 108. This list will be available to the Council members at the March meeting. For a copy of the Sept. 27, 1991 Board's minutes, please call Mr. Mike Bodle (407) 687-6132.....Mr. George Molnar, formerly with Dade County, is now in the process of establishing a California Chapter of the EPPC. Way to go George!

FEDERAL ISSUES - Finally, the USDA/APHIS intends to list Melaleuca quinquenervia as a Federal Noxious Weed (FNW). It should be a FNW within 60 days. Congressman Clay Shaw's, (R-Ft. Lauderdale) perseverance and unyielding pressure on the federal bureaucrats were largely responsible for getting the USDA/APHIS to add this species to the nation's dirty list). The intent to add
melaleuca to the FNW list was published in the Federal Register, Vol. 56, No. 201, Thursday, October 17, 1991. Comments will be accepted up to December 16, 1991. Please send your comments (an original and three copies) to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, room 804, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782. Do it before they change their minds!

STATE OF FLORIDA ISSUES - The Florida Dept. of Natural Resources (FDNR) is proposing to substantially increase the money available for combating invasive exotic plants, like melaleuca and Brazilian pepper, by changing Section 212.69, Florida Statutes. Presently, $3.8 million a year is transferred to FDNR for aquatic plant management from the Gas Tax Collection Trust Fund. The proposed change is to transfer 2% of the total gas tax collected to the FDNR in monthly installments rather than the flat yearly rate of $3.8 million. Presently Florida's registered boaters contribute at least 2% of the monthly total of the gas tax collected. Estimates are that if this legislation passes, a total of $17 million will be transferred each year to FDNR. However, 50% of these new FDNR funds will be used for recreational channel markings, public launching facilities, law enforcement, and other boating-related activities. That leaves $8.5 million a year for invasive exotic plant management, or an increase of $4.7 million. For more information, call Mr. Tom Brown at (904) 488-5631.

EPPC 7TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE CALL FOR PAPERS - The EPPC will be holding a joint symposium and business meeting on March 23 and 24, 1992. The conference is tentatively scheduled to be held in the Auditorium in the B1 building at the main office of the South Florida Water Management District in West Palm Beach. The symposium is being developed because of the overwhelming response to the papers and talks held during the last meeting. The function of the symposium will be for council members and others to present the most recent findings concerning the management, ecological impact, and restoration of wetland and upland forest ecosystems that have been impacted by invasive exotic vegetation.

If you want to make a presentation, AN ABSTRACT OF YOUR TALK SHOULD BE SENT BY FEBRUARY 1, 1992 TO:

Mr. Robert Smith, Senior Biologist
Environmental Resources Department
3101 Overseas Highway
Marathon, FL 33050
(305) 289-6031 FAX (305) 743-1993

PLEASE MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND THIS MEETING AND SUBMIT THOSE ABSTRACTS! More information about this meeting and possible field trips will be in the winter edition of the EPPC Newsletter (February).
LATHERLEAF IN THE KEYS - Latherleaf (Colubrina asiatica), a.k.a leatherleaf, is a newly introduced woody vine which is rapidly becoming a problem in the Florida Keys. Within the past five years, the initial infestation is estimated to have increased a thousand percent. This exotic plant species is primarily an invader of old dune systems where the substrate has been altered. However, undisturbed sites have also been invaded. In the Keys, very little sand is present and dunes generally are composed of calcareous plant remains. The ecological impact of latherleaf is the replacing of the native, vegetational flora with an exotic one. Present efforts to slow the spread of this exotic species by local governments is limited to code provisions which dictate that all parcels of land proposed for development must remove all invasive exotic plant species and control reintroduction onto the site. The principal method of removal is mechanical. For more information, please contact Mr. Bob Smith (305) 289-6031.

SKUNK VINE ON THE MID-WEST COAST OF FLORIDA - During the past ten years, skunk vine (Paederia foetida), has become a problem plant species in the Cypress Creek 5,000 acre Wellfield/Wildlife preserve (located in central Pasco County) and the 8,000 acre Starkey Wellfields (located in western Pasco County). Large sections of the Cypress Creek flood plain and mesic hammocks containing needle palm are dominated by this vine. Skunk vine was imported from Asia approximately 30 years ago and has now become a definite threat to the native vegetational communities in central Pasco County. Skunk vine also can be seen completely blanketing areas of native vegetation along I-75 starting in Hillsborough County and extending into Hernando County. Some areas are so heavily infested that the limbs of large trees have broken off from the weight of this exotic vine. Skunk vine is spread by runners, rooting at each leaf node and also by seed, which it produces prolifically. Although it prefers disturbed, moist areas, it appears to be gaining a foothold in more xeric locations in Pasco and Hillsborough Counties. Conventional means of eradication do not appear to work. For more information, please contact Ms. Patricia A. Fesmire (813) 996-2835.

INTEREST CONTINUES TO GROW ABOUT MELALEUCA REMOVAL - PRIDE of Florida is in the preliminary stages of formulating a business plan for the harvesting and herbicidal treatment of melaleuca in South Florida. Prison Rehabilitative Industries and Diversified Enterprises (PRIDE) is interested in this project for two purposes. The first purpose is to offer assistance to South Florida governmental agencies in reduced cost eradication or control of this invasive exotic plant species and to market the biomass as mulch or fuel wood. The other purpose is to expand PRIDE training programs for inmates in South Florida Correctional Institutions. The approach that PRIDE would like to take will be from an environmental as well as an entrepreneurial view. They anticipate employing mechanical as well as manual harvesting crews. The operations will be based mainly in the field with hopes of locating
work camps near harvesting operations. At this point, PRIDE has made no definite decisions on where to start the operation. This information will be developed over a period of time with the input of governmental agencies and private interest groups. PRIDE's primary concern is to make an effort toward developing a program that will assist in the eradication or control of this noxious plant and form a close working relationship with interested participants. If you would like more information, please call Mr. Tim Hannon at (904) 431-1912.

MIMOSA PIGRA STATUS - During a recent survey by FDNR staff and Dr. Ken Langeland (IFAS), new, previously unknown catclaw mimosa plants were discovered at the Sebring, Loxahatchee, and St. Lucie infestation sites. The cost of the survey was paid for by the USDA/APHIS, Plant Protection and Quarantine Division. Fortunately, these new plants were all contained within the operations area for the on-going control efforts. All of these plants were found in areas of recent disturbance, such as along dug-out ditches and fence lines. It appears that the Mimosa pigra infestations in these areas are slowly expanding their range. FDNR is now funding IFAS (Gainesville and Ft. Lauderdale) $60,000 for FY 91-92 to investigate the ecology, evaluate different control methods, and develop a plan of eradication in Florida of this potentially devastating plant invader. An additional $32,000 has been provided to FDNR from the USDA/APHIS to combat this Federal Noxious Weed in Florida. For more info, contact Mr. Robert Kipker (904) 488-5631.

BIOLOGICAL POLLUTION, A GROWING PROBLEM - On October 25 and 26 in Indianapolis, Indiana, a symposium was held on "Biological Pollution: The Control and Impact of Invasive Exotic Species." The topics ranged from invasive exotic vegetation to the zebra mussel. It was clear that the ability of man to rapidly move plant and animal species from foreign locals, without adequate environmental screening, to the United States has resulted in numerous problems for the environment as well as for human kind. Some highlights: Africanized bee populations are expanding at a rate of 200 to 300 miles per year and will most likely be in Florida by 1994. Approximately 20% of the North American flora is now exotic and an estimated 20% of recent extinctions are related to introduced species and habitat alteration. Exotic species management ranks 3rd on a National Park priority list and at least $70 million needs to be spent to combat exotics in the parks each year (presently, only $3 million is spent a year). And finally, a majority of the earthworms in North America can now be considered exotic.

EDITORS PLEA FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES - Help! I need to know what you have been up to. Please send me information about your on-going or future plans in managing invasive exotic vegetation, your efforts at restoring lands once inhabited by exotic plants, and any changes in local ordinances regarding this issue. It is your newsletter Council Members, so contribute! My FAX (904) 488-1254.