



VICTOR ALAN RAMEY
06/21/48 – 11/24/05

Victor Alan Ramey, innovative and creative educator in the field of aquatic and invasive plants, passed away on Thanksgiving Day following heart surgery.

Vic worked for the University of Florida-IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants for more than 25 years. During that time, he completed a large array of educational products for those in the aquatic plant management arena. Vic conceived of and built the Aquatic Plant Information Retrieval System (APIRS) database, which has been used by researchers and others around the world for 20 years. He started the AQUAPHYTE newsletter back in 1981 of which Volume 25 Number 2 has just been published and sent to almost 1,000 subscribers in more than 70 countries. He commissioned and produced a large set of aquatic plant line drawings; he traveled around Florida to obtain an extensive photographic collection; he created the popular *Aquatic Plant Identification Deck* and the companion *Grasses, Sedges, and Rushes Identification Deck*; he produced a series of aquatic plant educational videotapes, including the 7-part *Aquatic Plant Identification Series*, multiple aquatic plant applicator training videos, general education videos for students, homeowners and lake- and riverfront property owners, and the clever and popular *Careers in Florida's Freshwater Environments* video for middle and high school students. More recently, Vic and his team produced a set of four large-format aquatic and invasive plant photomurals, aquatic-themed mouse pads, and the two newest products: aquatic and invasive plant fold-out recognition guides to use as road maps to plant identification in the field. Along the way, there were peripheral items such as the hand-drawn *Freshwater Plants* poster, the *Aquatic Plant Coloring Book*, and more. Vic accumulated all of this information into the world's largest aquatic and invasive plant website at <http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu>. This website has been active for 10 years and has grown to hundreds of individual pages.

Vic's most recent project was to bring together all of his accomplishments into a far-reaching educational program to create study units, labs and hands-on learning activities for schoolchildren of all ages, and programs for Florida Park Service rangers, biologists and volunteers, in an effort to teach as many people as possible about aquatic, wetland and invasive plants in Florida, a subject Vic described as "dear to our hearts." The program is called Florida's Invasive Plant Educational Initiative, a joint effort by the Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants and the Bureau of Invasive Plant Management of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The team members that Vic has left behind plan to continue working on these projects and to maintain and expand the existing programs at the Information Office of the Center. It is important to all of us to continue his legacy, the work that was dear to his heart, of providing the best educational resources on aquatic and invasive plants to the people of Florida and around the world.

by Karen Brown,
Vic's co-worker of 22 years