

Editorial

In 1958, the eminent British ecologist Charles Elton wrote, "We must make no mistake: we are seeing one of the greatest historical convulsions in the world's fauna and flora." Nearly 40 years later, it is evident that this "convulsion" is more like a *cancer*. It continues to spread throughout Florida, disguising itself as Brazilian pepper and Old World climbing fern in south Florida; skunkvine and cogon grass in central Florida, and kudzu and Chinese tallow in the panhandle. Would this shock Charles Elton? Would it surprise him to learn that this cancer infests 1.5 million acres of Florida's remaining natural areas? What would his reaction be when he discovered that 45% of these invasive non-native species were imported for ornamental reasons, and 39% are still available commercially?

We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to preserve Florida's rich biological heritage. Within just a few decades, ecosystems and plant species found nowhere else on Earth could be lost due to the invasiveness of some exotic plants. Individuals who share the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council's passion and commitment for preserv-

ing our remaining natural treasures should agree, education is paramount!

Wildland Weeds Magazine provides a forum for individuals to convey the impacts non-native invasive plant species have on native biodiversity and native plant communities. Additionally, *Wildland Weeds* provides a mechanism for educating resource managers and the public about the

identification, biology, distribution and management of invasive exotic plants.

The challenge we face is great. However, never before has so much interest been focused on the problem of non-native invasive plants. I encourage and invite all to use *Wildland Weeds* as a mechanism for increasing the knowledge base and awareness of the many problems resulting from exotic plant species.

Greg Jubinsky

Greg Jubinsky,
Chairman, Florida EPPC

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