

NEBRASKA INVASIVE NEWS NETWORK

FEBRUARY 2010

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UPDATES TO THE NEBRASKA INVASIVE SPECIES WEBSITE!

[HTTP://WWW.SNR.UNL.EDU/INVASIVES](http://www.snr.unl.edu/invasives)

IF YOU HAVE A SUGGESTION FOR THE WEBSITE, PLEASE EMAIL US:

INVASIVES@UNL.EDU



Interested in attending a conference on invasive species?

Nebraska Invasive Species Project Calendar: <http://snr.unl.edu/invasives/events.htm>

National Conference Information: <http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/news/calendar.php>

Missed a Conference? Proceedings here: <http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/news/proceedings.shtml>

NIOBRARA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WIN NATIONAL AWARD

Niobrara High School was recently announced the winner of the State Farm Service-Learning Youth Leadership for Service-Learning Excellence Award.

This project originated four years ago when the Niobrara State Park invited our high school biology class to observe a conservation activity on the local banks of the Missouri River. Those students observed members of Nebraska Game and Parks, Northeast Nebraska Weed Control Board, US Army Corps of Engineers, and the Natural Resource District working together to control Purple Loosestrife, an invasive wetland plant. [Read more here](#)



Purple Loosestrife
Photo: Nebraska Weed Control Association



Nebraska Invasive Species Project:

<http://snr.unl.edu/invasives>

CONFERENCES/EVENTS IN NEBRASKA

Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Seminar

Feb. 3, 2010: Hastings, NE

Dinos and Disasters: Extinctions

Feb. 6, 2010: NU State Museum, Lincoln NE

Pheasants Forever State Habitat Meeting

Feb 6, 2010: Kearney, NE

Rivers and Wildlife Conference

March 18-21, 2010: Kearney, NE

MRNRC Con-

ference and BiOP Forum

March 17-19 2010: Nebraska City, NE

Check out what's going on in Nebraska!

RESEARCHERS MAKE PROGRESS IN BATTLE AGAINST PHRAGMITES



*Phragmites (common reed)
Photo: Nebraska Weed Control Association*

University of Delaware researchers have uncovered a novel means of conquest employed by a common reed, Phragmites australis, which ranks as one of the world's most inva-

sive plants. Phragmites is a problem in Nebraska rivers and streams, such as the Platte. Last October, Platte Valley Weed Management Area (PVWMA) crews were busy spraying in Hall County along the

Platte River areas designated for weed extermination. The PVWMA is a group of public and private agencies and individuals who are concerned with stopping the spread of noxious and invasive plants in the Central Platte River drainage area.

[Read](#)

POST-SPRAYING WATER-QUALITY RESULTS ON THE PLATTE RIVER

During the summer of 2008 and 2009, Platte Valley and West Central Weed Management areas applied trade name HabitatR herbicide on approximately 12,000 acres of Phragmites and Purple Loosestrife within the Platte River Corridor. Habitat R is EPA labeled for aquatic use to control undesirable wetland,

riparian and terrestrial vegetation growing in and round surface water. The product is not harmful to aquatic or terrestrial fauna a recommended rates. Eleven water samples were taken a 5 different locations. [Read about the results here:](#)



*Spraying the Platte River
Photo: Gary Stone*

IMPACT OF NATURE'S INVADING SPECIES MEASURED FOR FIRST TIME

Invasive Alien Species, ranging from disease and plants, to rats and goats, are one of the top three threats to life on this planet, according to a new publication coordinated by the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), of which IUCN is a partner. Most countries have

made international commitments to tackle this threat, but only half have introduced relevant legislation and even fewer are taking adequate action on the ground. The publication, "Global indicators of biological invasion: species numbers, biodiversity impact and policy

responses", looked at 57 countries and found that, on average, there are 50 non-indigenous species per country which have a negative impact on biodiversity

[Read here](#)



House mice kill chicks of the Endangered Atlantic Petrel on Gough Island and contributes to the species' poor breeding success and rapid decline
Photo: Andrea Angel and Ross Wanless

A GUIDE TO NONNATIVE INVASIVE PLANTS INVENTORIED IN THE NORTH BY FOREST INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS



Spotted Knapweed
Photo: Nebraska Weed Control Association

[The Forest Inventory and Analysis \(FIA\)](#) program of the U.S. Forest Service is an ongoing endeavor mandated by Congress to determine the extent, condition, volume, growth, and depletions of timber on the Nation's forest land.

FIA has responded to a growing demand for other information about our forests including, but not limited to, soils, vegetation, down woody material, and invasive plants. The intent of this guide is to aid FIA field staff in identifying 44 invasive plant species in the 24-state Northern Research Station region (Maine south to Delaware west to Kansas and north to North Dakota). However, this guide can be used by anyone interested in learning about these invasive plants. It contains distribution maps, short descriptions, space for notes, and numerous pictures of each plant.

[Download the document here:](#)

COLD WAR SPLIT BIRDS, TOO

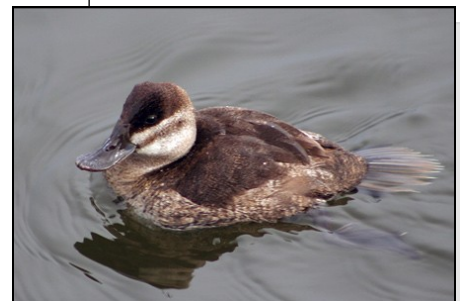
The Cold War divided the people of Europe for nearly half a century, and it turns out humans weren't the only ones stuck behind the Iron Curtain. Trade blockades led to vastly different numbers and types of invasive birds in

Western and Eastern Europe, new research reveals. The findings, say experts, highlight the dramatic impact human activity can have on the success of alien species. This disparity, researchers [argue](#) in the February issue of *Biological*

Conservation, had a profound effect on invasive bird species.

[Read about the study here](#)

Cold warrior. The ruddy duck invaded Western Europe during the Cold War. Credit: Wikimedia



BIOFUELS CROP CAN HOST WESTERN CORN ROOTWORM

The western corn rootworm beetle, a pest that feasts on corn roots and corn silk and costs growers more than \$1 billion annually in the U.S., also can survive on the perennial grass *Miscanthus x giganteus*, a potential bio-fuels crop that

would likely be grown alongside corn, researchers report. Rootworm beetle larvae can survive to adulthood on *Miscanthus* rhizomes, and adult beetles will lay their eggs at the base of *Miscanthus* plants grown near corn-fields, the research-

ers found. Their study, in the Public Library of Science journal PLoS ONE, is the first to identify *Miscanthus* as a host of the corn rootworm.

[Read full story](#)



After mating, the females begin feeding on corn pollen, silks and other corn tissue to obtain nutrients to provision their eggs. By late summer, a well-fed female will have deposited hundreds of eggs. (Credit: Photo by Joseph Spencer, INHS)

THE VEXING BUGS IN THE GLOBAL TRADING SYSTEM



Getty Images

As global trade has mounted, more goods are coming in from overseas, sometimes bringing with them the accidental cargo of destructive bugs and plants. are imported to the U.S. each year, and

shipments through one plant inspection station doubled to 52,540 between 2004 and 2006, according to the U.S.

Department of Agriculture. Today, about 30 new invasive insects are discovered annually in the U.S., up sharply over the last decade, the USDA says.

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[Read story here](#)

USDA AWARDS MORE THAN \$4 MILLION IN WEEDY AND INVASIVE SPECIES RESEARCH GRANTS

Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan announced today that USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is awarding \$4.6 million to 13 universities for research to develop

ecologically and economically rational strategies for management, control or elimination of weedy or invasive species. Of the amount, Merrigan said that nearly \$500,000 is for a University of California, Davis Laboratory. [Read Here](#)



Photo: epa.gov

U.S. MOVES TO BAN 'ALIEN SNAKES'

Federal officials want to keep nine kinds of constrictor snakes out of the United States, saying they belong to invasive species that pose the single biggest threat to the nation's environment. "This is the story of the invasion of the snakes in the United States of America,"

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar said Wednesday, standing near a live python at John F. Kennedy International Airport. He said the Burmese python and the other "alien snakes" are destroying some of the nation's most treasured — and most fragile — ecosystems. New York is the

biggest point of entry in the U.S. for imported wildlife, the secretary said. The ban covers any kind of import of invasive snakes into the U.S.

[Read here](#)

A Florida woman stumbles across a nine-foot python while out for a stroll. WPTV's Jon Shainman reports. NBC News Channel



FIRST TRACES OF ASIAN CARP IN LAKE MICHIGAN; ASIAN CARP CRISIS HEADING TO CONGRESS

Genetic material from the Asian carp, a voracious invasive species long feared to be nearing the Great Lakes, has been identified for the first time at a harbor within Lake Michigan, near the Illinois-Indiana border, ecologists and federal officials said Tuesday.

[Read about carp in IL](#)

Also, on Wednesday, U.S. Rep. Dave Camp, R-Mich., introduced a bill on the House floor to force the closing of two locks and expand the powers of the Army Corps of Engineers to stop migration of the invasive species before

it reaches the Great Lakes in large numbers.

[Read about the bill](#)



AP File Photo: Asian carp jump out of the water after being disturbed by the sounds of passing boats in the Illinois River in December.

MOUNTAIN PLANTS UNABLE TO WITHSTAND ONSLAUGHT FROM INVASIVE SPECIES

An international research team has studied the distribution of plant species in mountainous environments. The study shows that mountain plant communities are not particularly resistant to invasion by exotic species. The scientists also warn that these

may become more aggressive as global warming gets a grip. In 2005, scientists from various science centres in Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, the United States and Chile created the Mountain Invasion Research Unit (MIREN) in order to study the distribution of exotic species in high mountain species and to design experiments to confirm the invasive capacity of certain species in high mountain environments. [Read about the study here](#)



These invasive dandelions (*Taraxacum officinale*) are getting a foothold in mountain ecosystems such as this one in the Andes in Chile. (Credit: Anibal Pauchard)

The Nebraska Invasive Species Project

The Nebraska Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit, along with partners both state-wide and nationally, have joined together to provide information to the public and private sector on invasive species issues. This information includes basic invasive species biology, monitoring and management meth-



NEBRASKA INVASIVE SPECIES PROJECT

NE Coop Fish & Wildlife Research Unit
 909 Hardin Hall, 3310 Holdrege
 University of Nebraska-Lincoln
 Lincoln, NE 68583-0984
 Phone: 402-472-3133
 Fax: 402-472-2772
 E-mail: invasives@unl.edu
<http://snr.unl.edu/invasives>



HOW YOU CAN HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INVASIVES



Gardeners—Plant Native...If you don't know, don't grow it! Native plants often require less water!

Boaters and Fishermen

Don't dump your bait buckets into the water supply. Drain and clean your boat and equipment.



Burn it where you buy it!
 Never transport firewood—it can harbor harmful insects like the Emerald Ash Borer.

Pet Owners—never release your pets into the wild. The can release exotic diseases and damage habitats.

GET INVOLVED!!!
 Stay informed, share your knowledge with others. You are our first line of defense.

LEGISLATIVE BILL 582

...TO CREATE THE NEBRASKA INVASIVE SPECIES ADVISORY COUNCIL

The purpose of the *Nebraska Invasive Species Advisory Council* is to coordinate invasive species management and research across the State for the prevention and detection of invasive plant and animal species.

Through a coordinated effort, we intend to provide land managers with the information needed to utilize funding and resources more effectively and efficiently. Our goal is to minimize the effects of harmful invasive species on Nebraska's citizens and ensure the economic and environmental well-being of the state.

Nebraska Invasive Species Project:
<http://snr.unl.edu/invasives>

