



**Northeast Aquatic
Nuisance Species Panel**
Resource Digest – May 1, 2003
Volume 2, Issue 5

Please send items and postings for the NEANS Panel Digest to info@northeastans.org.

The next meeting of the NEANS Panel will be held on May 21-22 in Bar Harbor, Maine. A workshop on ANS Rapid Response will be held on May 20-21 in conjunction with the Panel meeting. Further information is available at <http://www.northeastans.org>.

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Index

A. News

Virginia approves plan to grow Asian oysters in Chesapeake Bay
State and Federal Plans to Reduce Mute Swans and Double-crested Cormorants
Prince Edward Island fishermen will be allowed to sell invasive green crabs

B. Reports and Publications

Invasive Species: West Virginia
Population Biology of Invasive Species
Legislation, Regulation, and Policy for the Prevention and Control of Nonindigenous Aquatic
Nuisance Species: Model Guidance for Great Lakes Jurisdictions.
Native Species, Nature's Choice

C. Upcoming Conferences and Events

ANS Rapid Response Planning Workshop
12th International Conference on Aquatic Invaders
New England Invasive Plant Summit
Accidental and Purposeful Introductions of Animals: Investigating Species Interactions at
Different Trophic Levels

D. Other

Aquatic, Wetland, and Invasive Plant Information Retrieval System
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A. News

Virginia approves plan to grow Asian oysters in Chesapeake Bay

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission has approved a plan to begin growing one million Asian oysters in Chesapeake Bay. The decision is in response to the decimation of native oyster populations by diseases to which the Asian oysters are more resilient. Asian oysters are also a desirable species for aquaculture because they grow larger and faster than native oyster species. Although the oysters used will be sterile, some scientists have expressed concerns that they will establish themselves permanently in Chesapeake Bay—with unknown consequences for the ecosystem and native oyster populations.

State and Federal Plans to Reduce Mute Swans and Double-crested Cormorants

Two recent regulatory decisions will affect populations of water fowl: a decision by Maryland officials to initiate a cull of Mute Swans in the state, and the establishment of a “depredation order” allowing state and federal agencies to reduce populations of double-crested cormorants in freshwater habitats in many states.

Mute Swans are an invasive species in the Chesapeake Bay region. The regional population has increased from 500 birds to 4,000 birds since the mid-1980s. Despite their popularity with some area residents and tourists, Maryland officials feel that their aggressiveness and appetite for submerged vegetation in the Bay warrant the new control measures. Officials will try to scare them away from some areas but may kill birds found nesting in areas designated as endangered wetlands, wildlife refuges, and parks.

In contrast, the double-crested cormorant is a native species whose numbers have increased dramatically in recent years, largely due to lower levels of DDT in the environment. In New York State and many states in the Midwest, state and federal officials will be allowed “lethal take” of the birds if they are believed to be affecting public resources, mainly fish, or aquaculture operations. Without an order of this kind, the birds are automatically protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. More information can be found at:

<http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/issues/cormorant/cormorant.html>

Prince Edward Island fishermen will be allowed to sell invasive green crabs

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has recently changed their rules to allow fishermen to sell any green crabs that are caught as by-catch in several of the Island’s fisheries. Originally from Europe and northern Africa, the invasive crabs have recently moved up the Northeast Atlantic coast into Prince Edward Island waters and are considered a threat to native clam beds and the province’s large mussel cultivation industry. A market for the crabs does not currently exist in the region but a DFO spokesperson says they will try to develop a market in order to encourage fishermen to reduce or eliminate green crab populations in the region. A similar plan has been discussed to target green crabs in Maine.

B. Reports and Publications

Union of Concerned Scientists. 2003. **Invasive Species: West Virginia**

This is the second in a series of state-specific reports on invasive species being prepared by the Union of Concerned Scientists. It includes discussion of the invasive species now found in West Virginia and their extent, as well as the costs of these invaders and management and regulatory requirements. Given the widespread nature of many invasives, much of the discussion is applicable to states and provinces in the Northeast. The report can be found at http://www.ucsusa.org/global_environment/invasive_species/page.cfm?pageID=1113

Conservation Biology, February 2003. **Special section: Population Biology of Invasive Species**

The February 2003 issue of Conservation Biology includes seven papers investigating population biology of invasive species, with titles including: Population Biology, Evolution, and Control of Invasive Species (Fred W. Allendorf, Laura L. Lundquist), Nonindigenous Species: Ecological Explanation, Environmental Ethics, and Public Policy (David M. Lodge, Kristin Shrader-Frechette), and How Much Information on Population Biology Is Needed to Manage Introduced Species? (David Simberloff)

Great Lakes Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species. 2003. **Legislation, Regulation, and Policy for the Prevention and Control of Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Species: Model Guidance for Great Lakes Jurisdictions.**

This report and many other publications from the Great Lakes Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species are available from their website, <http://www.glc.org/ans/pubs.html>.

Canadian Wildlife Federation. 2003. **Native Species, Nature's Choice.**

This educational kit for youth is available from the CWF website, <http://www.wildeducation.org>. The site also includes an interactive story maze for kids, Battle with the Alien Space Invaders.

C. Upcoming Conferences and Events

May 20-21, 2002 Bar Harbor, Maine

ANS Rapid Response Workshop

This workshop is being hosted by the NEANS Panel in conjunction with its semi-annual meeting (in Bar Harbor from May 21-22). The workshop will be the first step in developing a model rapid response plan for the region. The intended products are:

- a set of recommendations to the ANS Task Force regarding their potential role in assisting states and regions with rapid response planning;
- an outline of the roles of regional entities upon the detection of a new invader (i.e. notification and reporting networks, lists of taxonomic and control experts, etc); and
- a framework and strategy for developing state rapid response plans.

For more information, contact Jay Baker at the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, jason.baker@state.ma.us.

June 9-12, 2003 Windsor, Ontario

12th International Conference on Aquatic Invasive Species.

This annual four-day conference is widely considered the most comprehensive international forum for the review of accumulated scientific knowledge on the impacts of aquatic invasive species, presentation of the most recent field research, technologies for control and mitigation, discussion of policy to prevent new introductions, and approaches to effective public education and outreach initiatives. Visit www.aquatic-invasive-species-conference.org for further information.

September 19-20, 2003 Framingham, Massachusetts

New England Invasive Plant Summit

The conference will highlight research on the biology and management of invasive plant species. In addition, national & regional perspectives will be offered on the following topics: identifying research needs, risk assessment, inventory, early detection/rapid response, biological control, restoration, and green industry involvement. Once planning is complete, a full agenda and registration information will be posted on the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England website, <http://invasives.eeb.uconn.edu/ipane/>

October 14-16, 2003 Sacramento, California,

Accidental and Purposeful Introductions of Animals: Investigating Species Interactions at Different Trophic Levels

The Symposium will examine purposeful and accidental animal introductions in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems with introduced vertebrate species and their interactions with native animal and plant species as the central theme. This symposium may address ecological, sociological, political, economic, cultural, conservation, and policy perspectives, with views encouraged from areas throughout the world. More information may be found at <http://www.tws-west.org>

D. Other

The University of Florida's Aquatic, Wetland, and Invasive Plant Information Retrieval System (APIRS) now is in a much more user-friendly format. The database covers freshwater aquatic and wetland plants, as well as terrestrial and aquatic invasive plants, and includes annotated citations for more than 58,000 research articles, books and reports about plant ecology, physiology, utilization and control. It is available through

<http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/search80/NetAns2/>