

WAPMS NEWS- Summer/Fall 2000 Issue

Newsletter of the
Western Aquatic Plant Management Society

WAPMS NEWS

September 2000

Note from the editor: Hi everyone. In the last issue I warned you that I would be out of commission for a while due to an impending baby. Well, I had my baby (a boy, Benjamin, he is adorable of course). I am gradually going to be getting back into work and aquatic plants, so thanks for your patience in the interim!

- *Jenifer Parsons*

Not too Early to Plan for Our Next Conference!

WAPMS 20th Annual Meeting!!

The Officers and Directors invite you and your associates to join us in Las Vegas as the WAPMS enters its 3rd decade. Our annual meeting will be held March 29 & 30, 2001 at the Circus Circus Hotel, Casino, & Theme Park located on the Strip.

Room rates for March 28 & 29 (Wed/Thurs) are \$69/night and for anyone planning to stay the weekend, \$99/night (Fri/Sat). These rates will be held until Feb. 28, 2001. When calling to make your reservation, use the WAPMS Group Code # D03WEST-Western Aquatic Plant Management Society. Phone # (800) 634-3450 for reservations. Need transportation from/to the airport? Every ridden in a limousine? Try Las Vegas Limousines (LVL), \$5.00 one way. Ph # 740-4745.

Are you conducting new research or starting a new program? How about updating the Society on a continuing program? Has your project been successful or given you unusual or unexpected results? If you are interested in giving a presentation, please contact me at (760) 339-0565 or e-mail gcastro@iid.com. I hope to have a tentative program by the end of December.

Springtime in southern Nevada should be great. In addition to all the new and old hotels/casinos, UNLV is around the corner, Hoover Dam and the Colorado River are just down the road. You can spend time in New York or Paris or Rome (a few hundred years ago), see pirates battle, volcanoes erupt, or shop 'til you drop. Just to remember to attend our meeting.

Make plans early, pre-register and save, and see you in Las Vegas.

- *Mike Mizumoto*

Scholarship for Work on Aquatic Plants

The Western Aquatic Plant Management Society (WAPMS) announces a scholarship to support students in their pursuit of a degree in aquatic sciences.

WAPMS is a professional and scientific society of western aquatic plant managers and scientists. Members include research scientists, aquatic vegetation managers, agency personnel, and industry interested in all aspects of aquatic plant biology, ecology, and management. The WAPMS Scholarship is supported by WAPMS members.

WAPMS will present a \$1000 scholarship in 2001. Scholarship funds may be used by the recipient to cover costs associated with education and/or research expenses. Eligible applicants must be enrolled as a full-time undergraduate or graduate student in an accredited college or university in the western United States. Course work or research in an area related to the biology, ecology, or management of aquatic plants in the West is also required. The guidelines for applying are described below.

All scholarship applicants will receive a one-year membership in WAPMS and a waiver of registration fees for the 2001 meeting in Las Vegas. The scholarship recipient will be invited to make a presentation at the annual meeting in 2002.

Applications will be judged by a committee consisting of academic, industry, and agency representatives. Judging will not be done by individuals with a personal or institutional affiliation with the applicant.

Application Procedure:

1. Applicant must provide a short resume; transcripts of all college/university course work; and a statement of their interests, career goals, and intended use of scholarship funds. The statement should be limited to four pages.
2. Two letters of support must also be submitted. One must be from a college or university faculty member familiar with the students abilities, interests, and career goals.
3. All application materials should be send to the WAPMS Scholarship Program Chair by December 31, 2000 (post-mark date). Announcement of the scholarship winner will be at the WAPMS annual meeting in March 2001.

Please send five copies of all application materials to:

Mark D. Sytsma
WAPMS Scholarship Program
Center for Lakes and Reservoirs / ESR
Portland State University
Portland OR 97207-0751
Phone: 503-725-3833
email: sytsmam@pdx.edu



California Takes on the 'Purple Plague'

*By: Carri Benefield, Purple loosestrife
Project Coordinator*

The California Department of Food and Agriculture was awarded a grant by the CALFED Bay-Delta Program to conduct a purple loosestrife education, detection, and control program. Purple loosestrife, better known as the "purple plague," is a showy ornamental plant that has escaped home gardens and nurseries and moved extensively throughout wetlands across United

States causing immense ecological destruction. Purple loosestrife is listed by the California Department of Food and Agriculture as a "B" rated noxious weed and as a "species with potential to spread explosively" by the California Exotic Pest Plant Council. Compared to northeastern states and some western neighbors, the distribution of purple loosestrife in California is relatively limited. California has the unique opportunity to address purple loosestrife at an early stage of infestation.

Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), which spreads primarily by copious production of seed the size of ground-pepper, threatens to become established and forms dense stands that crowd out native wetland vegetation and associated wildlife, thus threatening the overall biodiversity of aquatic, wetland, and riparian areas. The complex interface between farm land and water in the California's Bay-Delta system also provides rich and varied habitat for wildlife, particularly waterfowl. The displacement of valued flora and fauna and the diminishment of critical fish and wildlife habitats has been well documented throughout the United States.

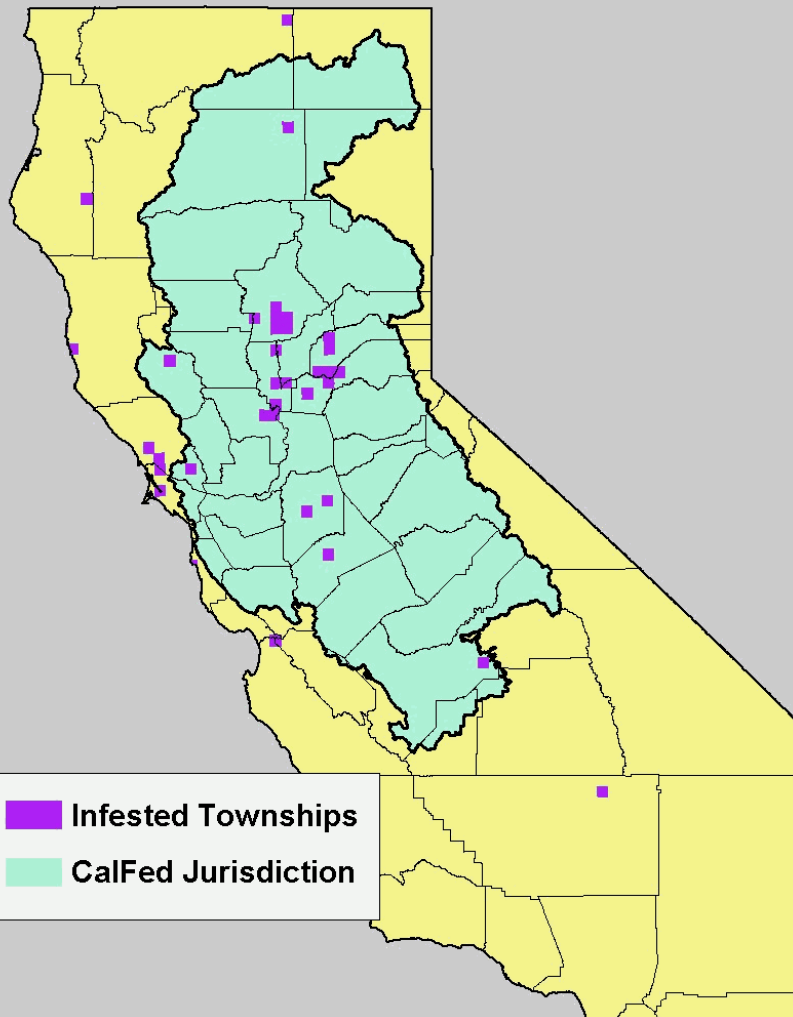
Primary program objectives will be to conduct:

- A broad education and training campaign
- Extensive surveying and mapping
- Collaborative assessment meetings of cooperators to develop site specific adaptive management plans
- Comprehensive local containment, control, biological control, and eradication efforts
- Monitoring

The geographical focus of the project will be on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta watershed (see map) where there are a number of threatened and declining species due to a multitude of environmental stressors. The project will be an extensive collaborative effort with the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Integrated Pest Control Branch, County Agricultural Commissioners, local Weed Management Areas, CA Department of Boating and Waterways, the CA Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA-ARS Resource Conservation Districts, and local watershed groups, amongst others.

For more information please see www.cdfa.ca.gov/purpleloosestrife or contact Carri Benefield, Purple loosestrife Project Coordinator, (916) 654-0768, cbenefield@cdfa.ca.gov

Distribution of Purple Loosestrife, *Lythrum salicaria* as of September, 1999



Exotic Marine Alga Discovered in San Diego- Eradication already underway

By Lars Anderson, USDA-ARS Exotic and Invasive Weed Research, Davis, CA. Chair, SCCAT Technical Advisory Team

June 12th may not evoke any memorable images or remind you of an historic event- until now. This was the day-*this year*- that Rachel Woodfield (Merkel and Associates), while conducting some routine surveys of eelgrass populations in Agua Hedionda Lagoon in Carlsbad, CA, noticed the distinctively bright green appearance of *Caulerpa taxifolia*. Fortunately, Rachel suspected this plant was an interloper and immediately sent samples to UC Berkeley (UC's Jepson Herbarium) for confirmation. Within days of the discovery, key state and federal agencies were alerted and the first of a series of meetings of the Southern California Caulerpa Action Team (SCCAT) began. In less than a month from the June 12 sighting, the first operations to eradicate this aggressive, tropical non-native were started. As of today, all colonies have been isolated by

anchored PVC tarps, treated with chlorine (or in a few cases, acetic acid), and the surveys of immediately adjacent areas within Agua Hedionda are complete.

The remarkable swiftness of this response stems from several fortuitous circumstances. First, the staff at Merkel and Associates, who were conducting an eelgrass restoration project, knew of the devastating results of the *Caulerpa taxifolia* spread in the Mediterranean coast, which began in 1984. Second, the key agency representatives were also very aware of the threat due to press and video documentation of the Mediterranean situation in recent years. Third, by providing direct support and participation, Cabrillo Power (the electrical utility located on the lagoon) enabled operations to begin almost immediately. Finally, the regulatory, action and research agencies pulled together reached consensus on operational approaches and gave the eradication plan the green light. It is also important to note the iCal-EPA (DPR), US Fish and Wildlife Service, California Dept. of Fish and Game, National Marine Fisheries Service, State Water Quality Control Board (San Diego Region), USDA-Agricultural Research Service, California Dept. of Food and Agriculture, and Merkel & Associates pulled out the stops to get this noxious plant controlled- for now at least.

Why such urgency? *Caulerpa taxifolia* spread from a few square meters in 1984 off the coast of Monaco, to several thousand square meters within 5 years, and to several thousand hectares today, aggressively crowding out native marine algae with its extremely dense "Astroturf-like" growth. As a consequence, normal benthic habitat in these temperate and sub-tropical areas has been severely damaged. The strain that has spread in the Mediterranean can grow 7 cm per day, and, with its anchoring stolons and "rhizoids" is able to establish a substrates ranging from sandy bottoms to rocky shores up to 150 meters deep. On top of this, it is poorly grazed upon by marine herbivores and does not appear to harbor the variety of epiphytes typically found on native eelgrasses. For these reasons, and as a consequence of urging by hundreds of scientists, led by the efforts of Dr. Andrew Cohen (San Francisco Estuary Institute), *Caulerpa taxifolia* was placed on the Federal Noxious Weed List in 1999. Thus, with what must be considered ecological foresight, the stage was set for one of the most rapid reactions to an invasive pest in recent years.

What now? The costs for eradication of *Caulerpa taxifolia* in Agua Hedionda Lagoon will approach \$1 million, which includes local, post-treatment monitoring. Some funds have been obtained from "emergency" sources, but there needs to be a significant and sustained funding of about \$3.5 million for the kind of broader surveys, monitoring, public education and outreach to ensure that this invader doesn't get a foothold in the US. Additionally, research gaps on the plant's biology, reproduction, ecology and control will require about \$1 million for short-term and long-term projects. With much of the Southern California coast and the southern East Coast susceptible to invasion, as well as Mexico, the stakes are high. (Note: Another, smaller infestation has been detected in Hunting Harbor and eradication plans are in the final stages.) Let's hope that the rapid responses to date can be matched by equally timely support for surveys and research so that the *Caulerpa* scourge can be halted, as the French say "À toute vitesse!" For more information, log on to the following websites:

<http://swr.ucsd.edu/hcd/caulerad.htm>

<http://www.anstaskforce.gov/Caulerpa.htm>

<http://www.sbg.ac.at/ipk/avstudio/pierofun/ct/caulerpa.htm>

Is Your Membership Expired?

If you did not attend the annual conference in March, your membership is probably up for renewal. If so, please send your \$10 annual dues to our treasurer Nate at the address below. Thanks!!

Send your dues of \$10 to:

Nate Dechoretz
CA Department of Food and Agriculture
1220 N. Street, Rm A-357
Sacramento, CA 95814