



Two Ways to Protect Hawai‘i from New Invasive Plants: The Hawai‘i Pacific Weed Risk Assessment—49 questions about a plant & The Codes of Conduct—Voluntary, proactive steps to stem invasive plants

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is working with landscape and nursery industry groups, garden shops, farmers and hobbyists that import, grow or sell plants, on reducing the introduction and spread of new invasive plants in Hawai‘i.

The Hawai‘i Pacific Weed Risk Assessment—49 questions about a plant

One way we can do this is to use the Hawai‘i Pacific Weed Risk Assessment (HPWRA) as a screening tool to ask “background questions” about a plant BEFORE it is imported and planted in Hawai‘i. The HPWRA uses a technician to look up published information about a plant’s biology and invasive tendencies elsewhere. The questions result in a “score” that is a prediction of whether a plant is likely to be invasive in Hawai‘i. The HPWRA has proven to be 95% accurate in catching the would-be invasive plants. This is a FREE service to anyone that imports new plants, and it is non-regulatory.

To submit a plant for screening, email the name of the plant to hpwra@yahoo.com, or call the HPWRA screener, Chuck Chimera at (808) 264-1202. A second HPWRA screener will soon be hired. The Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council is providing funding for this public service.

More than 600 plants that are already present in Hawai‘i have also been screened using the HPWRA—the information may be used to guide some planting decisions, although some plants that have scored as “predicted to be invasive” may also have overwhelming economic or social benefits. The utility of this list is up to the user—it is provided as biological information about 600 of the 8,000 plants that have been introduced to Hawai‘i. Funding for the initial work on the HPWRA was provided by the Ka‘ulunani Urban Forestry Program, with support from the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa and the US Forest Service.

To view the list of plants that have been screened, visit <http://www.botany.hawaii.edu/faculty/daehler/wra/>, or type “weed risk Hawai‘i” into a search engine such as Google.

The Codes of Conduct—Voluntary, proactive steps to stem invasive plants

CGAPS is promoting the “Codes of Conduct,” a list of voluntary steps designed to reduce the importation of new invasive ornamental plants to the islands, and slow or stop the spread of some ornamentals that are invading the native forests.

The Codes of Conduct have three main objectives, which participants have voluntarily agreed to. First, they agree to use the HPWRA to screen new ornamental plants before they promote them. Second, they agree to identify some ornamental plants that are currently available, yet they agree are invasive, to phase-out and discontinue sale/production/specifying/recommending due to their invasive nature. Third, signers agree to promote non-invasive or native plants wherever possible, and to help educate people about the use of non-invasive plants.

The plant industry groups that have signed voluntary Codes are the O‘ahu Nursery Growers Association (ONGA) and the Kaua‘i Landscape Industry Council (KLIC), and the Maui Association of Landscape Professionals (MALP). Others, like Wal-Mart Garden Marts statewide have agreed to not sell certain invasive plants, and the Landscape Industry Council of Hawai‘i (LICH) endorses the Codes project. Recent signers of the Codes are the Hawai‘i Island Landscape Association, Harold L. Lyon Arboretum, Waimea Valley Audubon Center, and the National Tropical Botanical Garden (NTBG). Lyon Arboretum and NTBG have agreed to have new plant introductions screened using the HPWRA, remove some incipient invasive plants from display, and help educate the public about the issue.

All plant industry groups, businesses, agencies and individuals that import, grow, sell, or use plants are urged to participate by signing the Codes of Conduct. For more information about this program and to look at the Codes, visit the Hawai‘i Landscape Industry Council’s website at www.lichawaii.com and click on “invasive species”.

For more information on the HPWRA, the Codes of Conduct, or to participate by signing the Codes, please feel free to contact Christy Martin at CGAPS (808) 722-0995, christym@rocketmail.com

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