

YOU THINK YOU HAVE PROBLEMS? THE CRISIS IN HAWAII. Christy Martin, Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit, Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species Project, Dept. of Botany, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. [christym@rocketmail.com](mailto:christym@rocketmail.com).

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Hawaii's evolutionary isolation and diverse physical environments led to more than 18,000 native species and the world's highest degree of endemism. The diversity of unique species that have evolved in the Hawaiian archipelago is virtually unparalleled. Equally unparalleled is the enormous vulnerability of these species to the effects of biological invasions. Hawaii is particularly at risk since it is a transportation hub of the Pacific, and as it continues to rely upon imports for most consumer goods. Two independent studies in the 1990s found that Hawaii had the nation's worst alien pest problem due to gaps in prevention, detection, and control programs, and concluded that many issues could be addressed through increased communication, cooperation, and public outreach. The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is a government/non-government partnership formed in 1995 to address these gaps and work on public awareness. Since that time, CGAPS has identified and is working to address the ten most important issues for optimal invasive species programs, and progress has been made. The arrival of the neotropical rust *Puccinia psidii*, and subsequent work to restrict the importation of its Myrtaceae plant family hosts, epitomize challenges of protecting Hawaii, in this case from arrival of potentially more virulent genetic strains of the pathogen that threaten the endemic forest tree ohia, which comprises 80% of the native Hawaiian forest and is a critically important watershed tree.

The American Phytopathological Society (APS) and the International Association for Plant Protection Sciences (IAPPS) joined forces August 6-10 in Honolulu, Hawai'i.

