

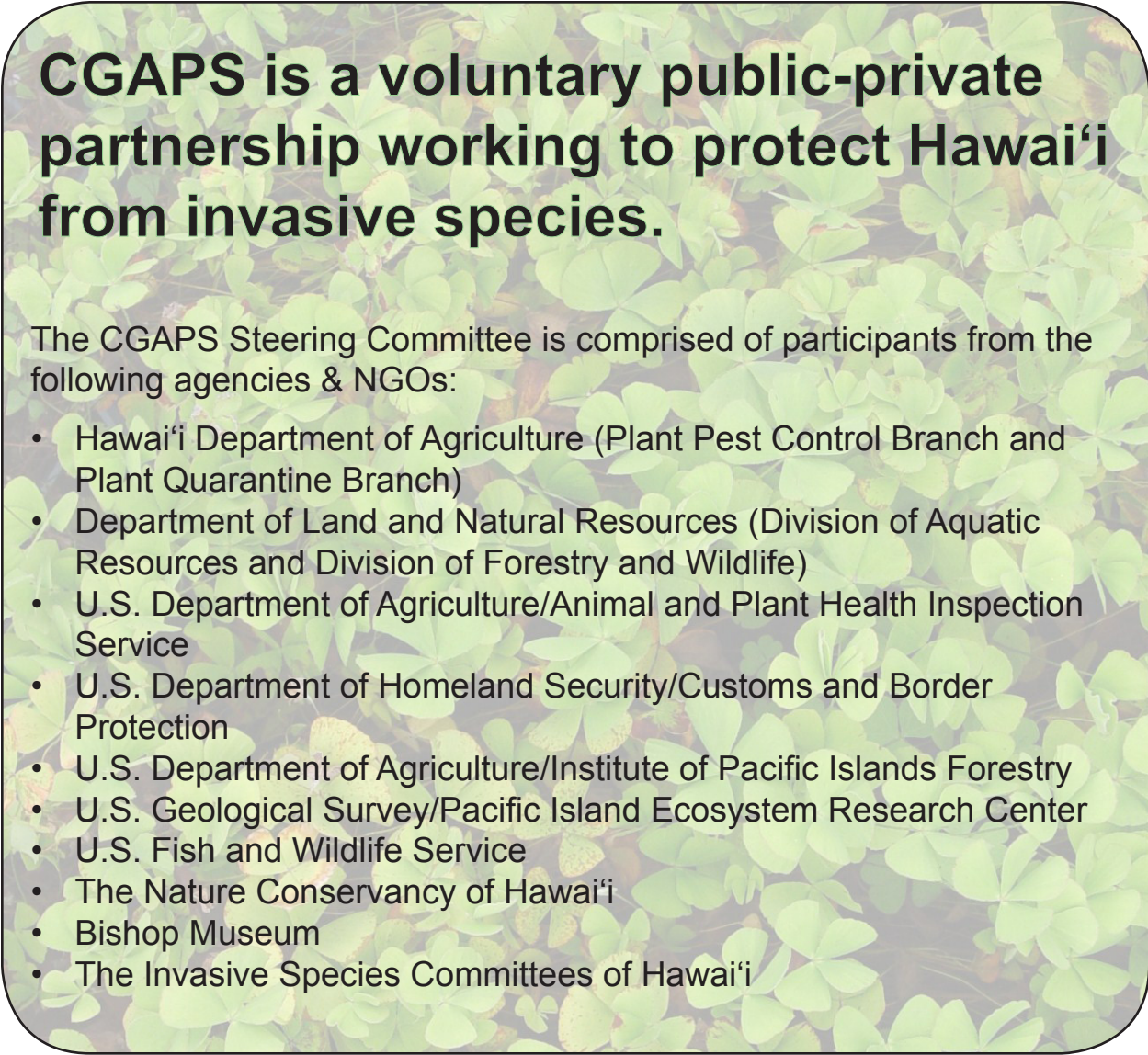
# **Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS)**



## **Public Information Officer Annual Report**

**January 1 — December 31,  
2010**

**Submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office,  
National Park Service-Pacific West Region and University of Hawai'i-Pacific Cooperative  
Studies Unit.**



## **CGAPS is a voluntary public-private partnership working to protect Hawai'i from invasive species.**

The CGAPS Steering Committee is comprised of participants from the following agencies & NGOs:

- Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (Plant Pest Control Branch and Plant Quarantine Branch)
- Department of Land and Natural Resources (Division of Aquatic Resources and Division of Forestry and Wildlife)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture/Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security/Customs and Border Protection
- U.S. Department of Agriculture/Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry
- U.S. Geological Survey/Pacific Island Ecosystem Research Center
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
- Bishop Museum
- The Invasive Species Committees of Hawai'i

### **About This Report**

This report covers the major initiatives and activities of the CGAPS PIO during the 2010 calendar year. Reports are submitted to the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit Principal Investigator, CGAPS Steering Committee, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service. Reports are also posted online at [www.cgaps.org](http://www.cgaps.org).

## Goals

The primary goal of the Statewide Invasive Species Public/Community Relations Coordinator (shortened to PIO) is to **raise the awareness** of the public, officials, and special interest groups about invasive species **issues and solutions** in order to **effect a change** in perception, actions, or funding for invasive species programs. The CGAPS PIO also **coordinates** the CGAPS partnership and **facilitates** communication within and between agencies.

### Outreach Tools & Methods

- Presentations & Talks
- Information Displays & Activity Booths
- Printed Flyers & Materials
- Press Releases
- Articles, Commentaries, and Letters to the Editor
- Websites
- Videos
- Print, Radio & Television Ads
- Radio & Television Interviews & Programs
- Surveys & Measures of Effectiveness

## Support

None of the projects or progress by the CGAPS PIO could have been accomplished without help. Funding for the CGAPS PIO and CGAPS projects was provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Park Service, and administered by the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (PCSU) of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH). In-kind support included (but was not limited to):

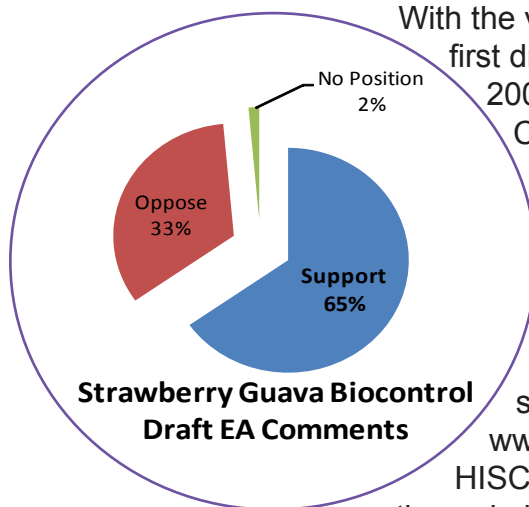
- UH College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) Dr. Robert Paull (Tropical Plants and Soil Sciences Chair) and Dr. Joe DeFrank provided office space
- PCSU provided fiscal and administrative support.
- Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA), Bishop Museum, and USFWS provided meeting space.
- U.S. Geological Survey Pacific Basin Information Node and Hawaiian Ecosystems at Risk maintained and hosted the CGAPS website, administered listserves, and provided technical council and assistance on projects.
- The CGAPS Steering Committee and Chairs provided guidance and supervision. Agencies and NGOs that allow their staff to assume a CGAPS Chair or Steering Committee position contribute immeasurable amounts.



### CGAPS PIO Position Description

1. Develop, implement, and maintain outreach programs for CGAPS and related organizations statewide. Identify, budget, and prioritize year-to-year project needs to support education agendas. Provide CGAPS, ISC and HISC media and accomplishment summaries for reports and funding requests, as needed. Provide periodic evaluation of outreach campaigns. 35%
2. Serve as the main public point of contact for invasive species issues. 50%
  - Maintain regular, consistent media exposure (print, video, etc.) for important alien species issues including state and local legislation, rapid response and control actions.
  - Work closely with the media as well as private, county, state, and federal organizations, politicians, key officials and the general public, to engender widespread support for invasive species initiatives.
  - Cultivate broad-based relationships among recreationists, horticultural, agriculture, landscape, nursery and animal industries, landowners, and tourism to gain support of alien species initiatives.
  - Make presentations to school, recreation, environmental, and community groups to recruit volunteers for control or restoration projects.
  - Prepare multimedia presentations and press releases on environmental awareness, develop informational pieces for different target audiences (schools, public, politicians).
3. Coordinate CGAPS meeting logistics and facilitate inreach opportunities to promote engagement in invasive species issues. 10%
4. Perform miscellaneous related duties as required. 5%

### *Promoted public awareness and acceptance of biocontrol as a conservation tool in general, and strawberry guava biocontrol in particular.*



With the vocal negative reaction to the posting of the first draft EA for the biocontrol of strawberry guava in 2008-2009 (which was subsequently pulled), the CGAPS PIO committed significant amounts of time to coordinate outreach with pertinent staff in preparation for the re-released draft EA in 2010. Worked with outreach staff and agency personnel to draft outreach materials. Coordinated media in preparation for the posting of the strawberry guava biocontrol draft EA. Media package included fact sheets, photos, video and shot lists, and a website, [www.strawberryguavabiocontrol.org](http://www.strawberryguavabiocontrol.org). Worked with HISC Outreach Specialist to draft and edit pieces for the website, and worked with HEAR staff to implement the

website. Communicated with legislators prior to news releases. Monitored media stories and provided letters to the editors, additional fact sheets, and maintained contact with journalists following the story. Solicited and provided additional contacts for the media.

***Promoted public awareness and support for DLNR Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR), and provide DAR with support for funding requests.***

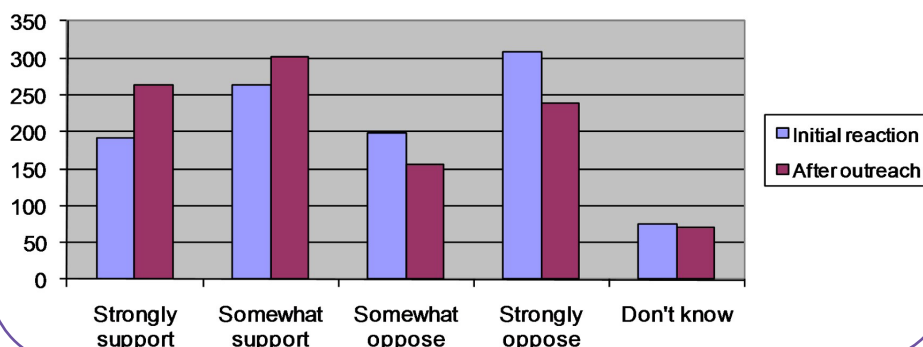
The CGAPS PIO worked with DAR staff and DLNR PIO on media outreach regarding the success of native sea urchins in controlling alien algae on Reef 16 in Kāneʻohe Bay. Due to a funding glitch, DAR had not planned to capture video of this project while the results were so stark. The CGAPS PIO identified this as an important product that could build public support and also be used to secure additional funds for DAR. The CGAPS PIO contracted videographer Cal Hirai (photo) to produce a video news release and capture B-roll on the story for the media and funding sources for DAR. Worked with DAR staff and HEAR staff to provide print-quality photos and captions for the media, available on [http://hear.smugmug.com/Press-releases/DLNR-20100817/13368297\\_NJS3z#972086826\\_srNE7](http://hear.smugmug.com/Press-releases/DLNR-20100817/13368297_NJS3z#972086826_srNE7). Worked with the DLNR PIO to distribute information to the press.



***Promoted public awareness of and support for rodent control on offshore islets and main island conservation areas***

Participated in the outreach working group to plan, coordinate and implement public outreach to support rodent control in conservation areas. A

**Survey respondents level of support of using helicopters to apply rat bait in remote natural areas before and following outreach**



2009 baseline survey exploring the public's sentiments towards rodent control via aerial application of rodenticide shows that the public support may be garnered through outreach (table). Drafted content for a new website

and assisted in outreach via presentations, legislative updates, and working with the news media. Interviewed on KITV 4 on 6/12/10; KHON 2 News on 6/18/10. Video of news interviews and other outreach products posted at <http://removeratsrestorehawaii.org/category/news/>.

### ***Promoted awareness and support within the green industry for invasive species initiatives***

The green industry includes plant nurseries, landscape contractors, landscape architects, arborists, garden shops, and even botanical gardens and arboreta. The CGAPS PIO spends a significant amount of time working with this special interest group because they tend to import plants that may be new to Hawai'i (and may be invasive), they move plants and equipment (and possibly hitchhiking pests) into or around the state, and they are in the urban forest environment where many new pests show up and are therefore important in early detection and reporting. The CGAPS PIO promoted awareness of invasive plants in horticulture, the utility of the Hawai'i Pacific Weed Risk Assessment (HPWRA), invasive pests associated with plant/equipment movement, and the importance of early detection and reporting via talks, articles, and programs.

The CGAPS PIO also functions as an advisor to the industry, sits on the Board of Directors for the Landscape Industry Council of Hawai'i, and participated in a five-year visioning and goal-setting

colloquy in January 2010 (photo), and in various meetings.

Worked with the Hawai'i Society for Urban Forestry Professionals on the crafting and adoption of an Invasive Species Position Statement (Attachment 1).

The UH CTAHR Master Gardener Program has been a largely untapped venue for invasive species outreach over the years. Master Gardeners learn a lot about pests and weeds in their training, and could be valuable in early detection and reporting. In addition, as "the planting public", they are the target audience for the message of planting non-invasives. The CGAPS PIO was the keynote speaker opening the first statewide gathering of master gardeners from each island, and a handout was provided to promote multiple messages (Attachment 2).

### ***New Project: Plant Pono***

Considerable resources are directed toward developing and implementing early detection, rapid response, and ongoing management programs to detect, remove or reduce the influence of invasive plants on the native ecosystems,



agriculture, and natural resources. One of the biggest loopholes in the laws protecting Hawai'i is that it is still legal to import more than 250,000 species plants in the world. Of these, 10% will naturalize and spread on their own if imported and grown in Hawai'i, and, of these, 10% will become invasive. In addition, of the 10,000 flowering plants have been introduced into Hawai'i, about 1,215 have "jumped the fence" and established self-sustaining populations, some of which are considered harmfully invasive. Some of these are still being sold and planted, again because of inadequate laws. Although new laws and policies are necessary, they may still be many years away, and enforcement of laws and policies will always be a challenge.

The Plant Pono initiative aims to educate and encourage "mindful planting," by the green industry and the gardening public. In 2009 the CGAPS PIO planned and sought funding for a website which would feature information on the topic, basic planting information on some non-invasive plants, and access to the Weed Risk Assessment. This project started at the request of landscape and nursery industry, and the need was verified by requests from the plant-buying public for a guide to non-invasive plants.

In 2010, funds from the HISC POWG supported the design of a logo by Jesse Kline, the Pest Hotline graphic artist. The CGAPS POWG drafted and sent the design RFP, coordinated the logo selection and worked with PCSU on contracting. Also in 2010, respected horticulturist and garden



writer Heidi Bornhorst was selected and hired via RFP to identify fifty non-invasive plants for planting and write short planting descriptions.

Meetings were held with the Hawai'i Export Nursery Association, Kaua'i Landscape Industry Council, at the statewide Landscape Industry of Hawai'i Conference, and the Hawai'i Island Landscape Industry conference

to solicit support and input on the project. Suzanne Case, Director of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i also presented the Plant Pono project to members of The Garden Club of Hawai'i. The URL [www.plantpono.org](http://www.plantpono.org) has been secured, and a placeholder is up until the site can be populated.

Funding for a website programmer was secured from the Kaulunani Urban Forestry Program (\$9,900), and HISC (\$3,000). Drafted and sent an RFP for programmers and worked with the WRA screeners and partners at PBIN and HEAR on technical planning for [www.plantpono.org](http://www.plantpono.org). Fiscal year 2011 work will include the design of the website and database, alpha and beta testing with intended user groups, and the and database, alpha and beta testing with intended user groups, and the planning of a marketing campaign to encourage use by the public.

### ***Interim DLNR Invasive Species Program Manager***

Departing DLNR Invasive Species Coordinator Mindy Wilkinson requested that the CGAPS PIO fill in until the newly hired Coordinator, Christy Finlayson, started and was able to take the reins. The PIO filled in as Interim DLNR Invasive Species Program Manager stationed at DLNR between May 26-July 20. This included processing invoices, reports, and requests from the



multiple grantees of the HISC and DOFAW Invasive Species programs, assisting with Injurious Wildlife Permit information and requests, HISC coordination, and public/media information requests in addition to ongoing CGAPS duties.

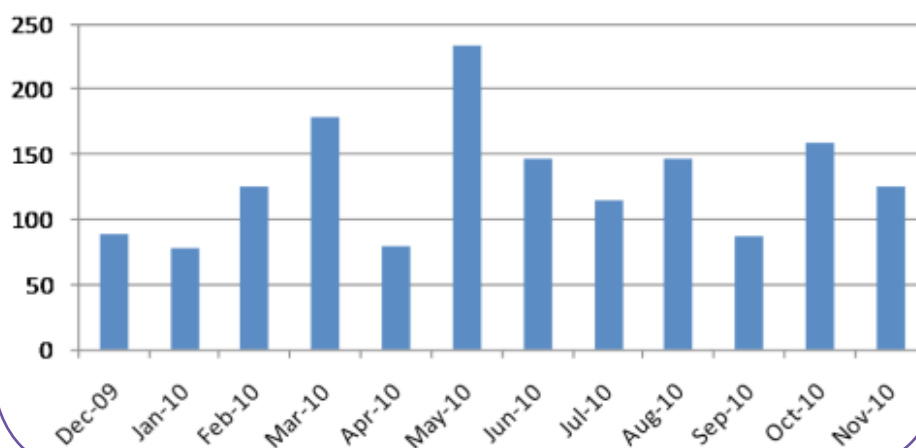
Provided Christy F. with an overview of the groups doing invasive species work, the key issues and challenges, the needs, and her role as the new Program Manager. Assisted with HISC coordination by planning and scheduling meetings to pass the 2010 HISC budget. Worked with DBEDT on a replacement for retired Resources Working Group Chair Liz Corbin. Met with DBEDT's Meredith Kuba to provide a background of invasive species issues, the formation and workings of the HISC, and guidelines for her role in preparation for the annual budget meetings. Coordinated working group meetings and the last HISC meeting before the change in administration.

### ***Promoted public reporting network for invasive pests***

Due to spending restrictions on media buys, radio and television time was not purchased this year to advertise the State Pest Hotline. Outreach on reporting pests to the Pest Hotline was limited to articles and news stories, outreach talks, displays and products. There were 1,561 calls to the Pest Hotline between December 1, 2009 and November 30, 2010, and 1,652 calls during the same period in 2009.

There is still no way to determine the topic of the calls, or whether or not the calls were routed or resolved, as this function lies wholly within the Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

**Pest Hotline Calls**



### ***Assumed lead role in responding to public calls reporting dead birds***

Budget cuts resulted in the dismantling of the Got Dead Bird early detection public reporting project, including Hawai'i Department of Health testing of dead birds, the 211 hotline, and most of the funds supporting dead bird transport. Faced with a choice to advertise a public message to call the DLNR office on each island during work hours, or receive calls directly and assist with screening, the CGAPS PIO chose the latter so as to be responsive nearly 24/7.



**www.gotdeadbird.org**

**402: Number of unique visitors in 2010**

**November 2008: Date last radio ad aired**

**November 2009: Date of last printed giveaway**

Although www.gotdeadbird.org website visits are down 50%, there were still nearly 400 unique visitors to the site, which describes in what instances people should

call the CGAPS PIO cell number (dead native birds, unusual numbers of dead non-native birds, questions or concerns). There was an average of three calls per month, although that number rises to three calls per week when winds are gusting. A total of three birds were picked up and delivered for testing to Dr. Thierry Work, USGS, and all were negative for diseases of concern.

***Additional activities:***

- Coordinated quarterly CGAPS meetings and ad hoc Steering Committee meetings. Planned agendas, confirmed speakers, and distributed information to networks.
- Participated in legislative hearings on invasive species bills. Tracked bills and provided information to legislators. Drafted and submitted testimony on behalf of CGAPS.
- Assisted HDOA in garnering support by contacting and coordinating the submission of letters from conservation entities to the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) in defense of Hawaii's Pest inspection, quarantine, and eradication fund. Secured letters from the Maui Conservation Alliance, Conservation Council for Hawaii, and the UH Environmental Center, and others. Drafted and submitted a letter on behalf of CGAPS (Attachment 3).
- Assisted in promoting a new restriction on the importation of myrtaceae to prevent the introduction of new strains of *Puccinia psidii* by participating in meetings, events (see page 8), and providing summary information to officials (Attachment 4).
- Participated in the HISC Public Outreach Working Group (POWG). Assisted in project planning, implemented some POWG initiatives such as revising and printing displays for each island. Provided council to outreach staff and chair, and filled in for chair as needed.
- Assisted Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission Faunal Restoration Working Group to plan outreach in preparation for small mammal control to restore native species.
- Participated in quarterly Pesticide Risk Reduction and Education meetings to provide information on invasive species issues, legislation and needs.
- Assisted the Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT) Highways Division on drafting and promoting a new invasive species prevention and mitigation plan for HDOT Highways staff and contractors.
- Participated in ISC meetings when possible, and quarterly ISC administrative

- meetings. Volunteered for MoMISC in a field day.
- Drafted and submitted press releases, articles, letters to the editors, photos, videos, and other information to journalists and media outlets. Served as a main point of contact on invasive species issues (Attachments 5-18).

***Conducted outreach via presentations, community events, and radio and television interviews***

- 1/11 Presented Plant Pono website concept to the Kaulunani Urban Forestry Council
- 3/6 Display and information booth at the Hawai'i State Science and Engineering Olympiad
- 3/20 Guest on the Solar Guy radio show
- 3/24 Participated in Ag Day at the Capitol
- 3/26 HPR interview on Little Fire Ants
- 5/15 Staffed a display and information booth at E Mālama I Ke Kai
- 5/20 Presentation on Mōkapu for Moloka'i community
- 6/10 Guest on KITV morning
- 6/18 Guest on KHON morning
- 6/25 Presented Plant Pono to Hawai'i Export Nursery Association board
- 7/1 Guest on KITV morning
- 7/2 Presented Plant Pono to the Kaua'i Landscape Industry Council
- 7/29-30 Presentation on WRA and Plant Pono at the Landscape Industry Council of Hawai'i conference; attended conference
- 10/6 Presentation to the UH Marine Option Program class
- 10/13 Presentation to the UH Landscape Design class
- 10/15-10/16 Keynote presentation at the first statewide Master Gardeners conference; attended conference
- 11/14 Participated in HDOA's Buy Local for the Holidays flower event (photo)
- 11/18 Presentation to the CTAHR Career Fair attendees

Report compiled & submitted by  
Christy Martin, CGAPS PIO  
(808) 722-0995  
P.O. Box 61441  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96839  
christym@rocketmail.com  
www.cgaps.org



## Attachment Description

1. *Invasive Species Position Statement*. Position adopted by the Hawai'i Society of Urban Forestry Professionals
2. *Resources to Help you Protect Hawai'i*. Hanout provided at the statewide Master Gardeners Conference
3. CGAPS letter to the USDOT
4. Issue Summary: Molecular Genetic Studies Highlight Potential Threat of Guava Rust (AKA 'Ōhi'a Rust, in Hawai'i) to Myrtaceae. 8/17/10
5. Press Release: Agencies and NGOs coordinate actions. 1/15/10
6. Letter to the Editor: Special funds support important inspections. 1/20/10
7. Article Submitted: Invasive Plants. 2/2/10. Printed in Backyard Conservation pamphlet for statewide use.
8. Article Submitted: Little fire ants in Kona: Stop little fire ant coalition. 2/15/10. Printed in Hawai'i Landscape March/April, 2010.
9. Information Submitted: Two key issues for the Solar Guy Radio Show. Submitted in preparation for interview, 3/20/10.
10. Letter to the Editor: Impacts of fewer agriculture inspectors. 6/15/10
11. Press Release: Draft EA posting on strawberry guava impacts and proposed biocontrol insect. 6/23/10. Articles appeared in the Honolulu Star Advertiser, Hawai'i Tribune Herald, West Hawai'i Today, The Garden Island, Maui Now, and several online news venues and blogs. Generated a spontaneous commentary by Honolulu Star Advertiser's Cynthia Oi: Despite its attractions, strawberry guava still a bully, 7/1/10. TV news also covered the story using footage provided by CGAPS.
12. Article Submitted: Draft EA posting on strawberry guava impacts and proposed biocontrol Insect. 6/28/10. Printed in Hawai'i Landscape July/August 2010
13. Article Submitted: Help plan the Plant Pono website. Printed in Hawai'i Landscape, July/August 2010.
14. Article Submitted: Questions on strawberry guava and biocontrol. 7/13/10. Submitted to Honolulu Star Advertiser, but unprinted.
15. Article: Sarhangi, Sheila. Hawaii's Invasive species. Honolulu Magazine. August 2010. Worked with HDOA to provide information.
16. Article: Kubota, Gary. Gap in laws allows plant invasion. Honolulu Star Advertiser. 8/15/10. Worked with journalist to describe and clarify the challenges of regulating imported plants. Provided photos and captions.
17. Commentary Submitted: Invasive Plant Solutions are Complex. 8/19/10. Submitted to Honolulu Star Advertiser; unprinted.
18. Letter to the Editor: Protection Not Porkbarrel. 11/20/10. Printed in the Honolulu Star Advertiser, 11/24/10.