

FLORIDA BEACON

From the President's Desk
Kristin Bennett

"Affiliated Chapter of the National Association of Environmental Professionals" What does this mean to FAEP members?

It means for the low cost of your FAEP and local chapter membership, you receive many benefits of NAEP membership with your FAEP membership. Affiliated Member Benefits include:

- ◆ Ability to attend the NAEP National Conference at the NAEP member rate. If you register as an affiliated member during the "early bird" registration, you can save up to \$200.00 from the non-member conference rate. This will be a tremendous value to the FAEP members when the FAEP and Tampa Bay Chapter host the 2014 NAEP annual conference April 7-10 in St. Petersburg.
- ◆ Ability to participate in the NAEP webinars at a discounted price. Many local chapters offer the webinars as a chapter event, most hosting the webinars at no charge to members. If your local chapter is not hosting a webinar or you are unable to attend the webinar at the host location, you can register to participate on your own at the discounted affiliate member rate.
- ◆ Ability to access the NAEP National Desk. The NAEP National Desk is a bi-weekly publication of current national issues affecting the environmental professional. The NAEP National Desk is provided through a licensing agreement with Environment and Energy (E&E) Publishing, LLC (www.eenews.net). E&E's four daily online publications are ClimateWire, EnergyWire, Environment and Energy Daily, Greenwire, and E&E News PM. As part of the licensing agreement, E&E Publishing is offering a discount on new subscriptions. Please see www.eenews.net/trial/naep for more information. The NAEP National Desk coordinator is Ron Lamb (ronaldlamb@comcast.net). Questions or comments on the NAEP National Desk should be directed to Ron or Tim Bower (naep@naep.org).
- ◆ Ability to access the NAEP newsletter from the NAEP website (www.naep.org). The NAEP is always looking for articles for this great practitioner-based publication. Consider providing our nationwide audience a bit of your professional experience and insight. What we need is a MS Word document between 1,500 and 3,500 words with photographs, a short personal bio and a picture of you so our readers know who is telling them their story. It is really important for this publication to represent all fields of professional endeavor and all areas of the country. If you have an interesting subject or article written by someone else, let me know and we will try to republish it for our audience.

Continued on page 2

Florida Association of
Environmental Professionals

Spring 2013



FAEP 2012-2013

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Kristin Bennett—President

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Erin Kane—At Large Member

Courtney Arena—At Large Member

FAEP Annual Conference!!!

The Central Chapter is very excited to host the **2013 FAEP Annual Conference** at the Doubletree at the entrance to Universal Studios on **Sept. 11-13**. If you are interested in sponsoring, please see more information on page 6. and our website www.faep-fl.org.

The Central Chapter is happy to offer an Early Bird discount of \$150 off the Gold Sponsorship package until May 31st. If you are interested in speaking at the conference, please see the request for abstracts and submit to Amy Guilfoyle (amy.guilfoyle@ppmco.com) or Jennifer Cummings (Jennifer.Cummings@ocfl.net).

1000 CURRENT MEMBERS!!

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Member Benefits at our website:
WWW.FAEP-FL.ORG

Interested in becoming
a member of FAEP?
Click on **Renew-Join Here**

President's Message Continued...

There are also **Affiliated Chapter** benefits that benefit the FAEP and by extension the local chapters and chapter members. Affiliated Chapter Benefits include:

- ◆ General liability insurance coverage offered under the NAEP policy. Being included under the NAEP policy enables the FAEP and the local chapters to have general liability insurance coverage rather than each local chapter obtaining coverage on its own. This is a cost savings to the local chapters since the FAEP pays the premium for the insurance.
- ◆ Electronic storage of FAEP data. Being able to electronically store data on a secure/limited access portion of the NAEP website enables the FAEP to have a secure document storage option at no charge. We have submitted years of historical data to the NAEP for electronic storage.
- ◆ NAEP Affiliated Chapter leaders' webpage. This is a webpage available to all affiliated chapters to share documents and information. It contains documents of other chapters which may provide useful models for other chapters, such as governance materials and brochures.

The NAEP and the Affiliated Chapters have an ongoing discussion to identify additional benefits the NAEP can offer to the chapters, again, offered at no additional cost to FAEP members.

I encourage you to take advantage of all of the benefits to which FAEP members are entitled under the affiliation agreement, particularly the NAEP conference registration discount for the 2014 NAEP annual conference.

FAEP Board of Directors and Chapter Boards of Directors

I may have been remiss in not recognizing earlier in the year the 2013 Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of a representative from each of the eight local chapters, seven elected at-large board members, the past president (Erik Neugaard) and the NAEP representative (Bruce Hasbrouck). I want to thank all of the FAEP and the local chapter boards of directors for their efforts. All of the boards donate their time for the good of the organization to plan technical meetings, training programs, and networking events. Please recognize your board members for their efforts. A complete listing of the FAEP board can be found on the FAEP webpage and local chapter information can be accessed through their links on the FAEP webpage.

Consider getting involved on your local board. You may want to start out by getting involved in a committee or helping plan an event. Then raise your profile by becoming a member of your local Board or the FAEP Board. Board participation is a great way to develop leadership skills and to get your name and your company's name in front of the more than 1,000 FAEP members.

I want to recognize and thank also Teri Hasbrouck, the FAEP administrator. Teri handles the vast majority of the administrative tasks associated with the organization including preparing the FAEP newsletter, updating the webpage and handling membership renewals and applications. I know she does so much more than that and I appreciate her efforts!

In closing...

Included in this newsletter is an update from the Florida Local Environmental Resource Agencies (FLERA) with information about the FLERA annual conference. Last year, the FAEP and FLERA leadership began discussing ways in which our two organizations can contribute to one another for the betterment of both organizations and the environmental profession as a whole.

Finally, you will also see in this newsletter information about the 2013 FAEP annual conference being hosted by the Central Florida Chapter at the DoubleTree – at the Universal Studios Entrance Orlando, Florida, September 11-13. Interested parties may email abstracts and contact information to Jennifer.Cummings@ocfl.net or Amy.Guilfoyle@ppmco.com.

There are also a variety of opportunities for **EXHIBITORS AND SPONSORS** including a new dual sponsorship with the NAEP conference in April of 2014. Interested parties may e-mail AaronD@accutest.com. Additional information will be posted at <http://www.cfaep.org/index.php/meetings/events>.

We look forward to seeing you at the conference!

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the FAEP and/or your local chapter, please contact me (Kristin.Bennett@tetrattech.com) or any FAEP or local chapter board member.

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Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

Event	Date	Place
5th Annual Green Symposium	April 26, 2013	Deland, Florida
Florida Water Resource Conference	April 28 - 30, 2013	Orlando, Florida
National Mitigation and Ecosystem Banking Conference	May 7 –10, 2013	New Orleans, Louisiana
Florida Remediation Conference South	May 9 -10, 2013	Ft. Lauderdale
USEPA National Brownfield Conference	May 15 - 18, 2013	Atlanta, Georgia
Florida Native Plant Society	May 16 – 19, 2013	Jacksonville, Florida
Florida Society of Environmental Analysts Spring Meeting	May 22 - 24, 2013	Clearwater, Florida
Intn'l Symposium of Bioremediation and Sustainable Environmental Technologies	June 10 - 15, 2013	Jacksonville
FAWQC Conference	June 12 - 14, 2013	Naples, Florida
Florida Stormwater Association	June 12 - 14, 2013	Sanibel Harbor
Florida Chamber, Environmental Permitting School	July 17 - 19, 2013	Marco Island
Annual Conference Florida Engineering Society	Aug. 1 - 2, 2013	Palm Beach
Florida Bar Environmental Land Use Conference	Aug. 8 - 10, 2013	Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida
City of Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board 7th Annual Environmental Symposium	Aug. 23, 2013	Jacksonville, Florida
The Wildlife Society Annual Conference	Oct. 4 – 9, 2013	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Wetland Resources Conference	Oct. 6 - 9, 2013	Tampa
Florida Remediation Conference	Oct. 10 - 11, 2013	Orlando
Florida Brownfields Association Conference	Oct. 27 - 30, 2013	Palm Beach

FAEP shares information about conferences pertaining to the environmental professions. The FAEP does not endorse any of the referenced conferences.

UMAM 62—345 F.A.C.

Deputy Secretary Jeff Littlejohn has authorized FDEP staff from the Submerged Lands and Environmental Resources Coordinator Program to initiate rule development to amend the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM), Chapter 62-345, F.A.C. The Department envisions development of a revised UMAM rule that provides more consistency, can be more efficiently applied, and is appropriate for all of Florida's diverse ecological communities.

In conjunction with this rulemaking effort, the department welcomes comments and suggestions from all Florida citizens, regulators, and stakeholders. To learn more about participating in UMAM rule development click on the "Rule Development" button located on the Department's UMAM webpage found here:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/wetlands/mitigation/umam/index.htm>

The rule development webpage link includes a UMAM survey with an option to upload supporting documents, contact information for submission of recommendations by email, and a portal to register for the first UMAM Rule Development Workshop scheduled for Wednesday, May 29 beginning at 1 p.m., EST.

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FAEP Member Benefits

FAEP Membership Database

Did you know that, as an FAEP member, you can access the FAEP Member database through our website? Just log on to the website with your user name and password. This will take you to the Member Welcome page. If you click on "Member Directory" one of the selections available is View Entire Directory. Click on this link and you will be taken to the list of over one thousand FAEP members, arranged in alphabetical order. If you click on a name you will see that member's profile, including their employer and their location.

If you select Simple Search, you can search for a member by name or other search term such as employer. We believe that FAEP offers you an excellent opportunity to network with other Environmental Professionals (EPs) throughout the state and want to make it as easy as possible for you to contact other EPs that you may want to contact for information about what they do or what issues are important to them.

Advertising

You can also advertise your organization on the website or in our newsletter to reach a wider audience than you might find with other marketing outlets. See the last page of this newsletter for sizes and pricing.

Networking Opportunities

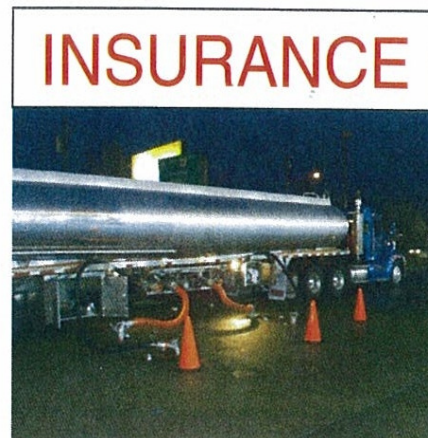
Each local chapter provides excellent networking opportunities. These luncheons and evening meetings provide you with an opportunity to meet and talk with EPs who work for state agencies, private companies, local governments, academia, consulting firms, environmental laboratories, and equipment providers. Have you been trying to find someone who knows a lot about water quality or another specific subject? You can find these experts at a local chapter meeting.

FAEP Annual Conference

You will notice in this newsletter the announcement for the upcoming 2013 FAEP Annual Conference, September 11-13 in Orlando. Every year a local chapter hosts this annual event and packs it full of educational presentations and fun activities for you to enjoy. We hope to see you in Orlando!

2014 NAEP Conference

Did you know that the 2014 National Conference will be held in Florida? In April 2014, FAEP and the Tampa Bay Chapter are hosting the National conference in St. Petersburg! Speakers from all over the US will converge on St. Pete to share with you everything they know about their discipline. So mark your calendars now for this exciting event.



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NAEP Jim Roberts Scholarship Competition

Jim Roberts travelled far and wide to espouse the value of living an ethical life, both inside and out - side of the office. He lived NAEP's Code of Ethics. One of his last accomplishments was to travel, on his own dime, to most of NAEP's state and regional chapters reading the story of Winnie the Pooh and relating how this philosophy of life will assist you in living your life in an ethical manner.

Jim was a wonderful man, always positive in his outlook with soft mannerisms. Jim thought the world of NAEP and was willing to commit a large portion of his time and energy in support of the organization and the ethical growth of the environmental profession. Aside from serving as president of NAEP, he was chair of NAEP's International Committee for 13 years and the Ethics Committee chair for 7 years, among other duties.

Jim always stated that you have to participate in the profession in order to benefit the most from it. In Jim's eye, participation did not only consist of looking inwardly in pursuing one's career, but also exploring your effect on others. He felt this was best done through organizations such as NAEP, not only by paying dues, but by attending conferences, joining committees, and really getting involved with fellow professionals.

He wrote countless articles and encouraged members to engage in discussions on environmental topics including environmental ethics. In 1999, AEP, NAEP's California Chapter, presented Jim with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution to the environmental profession. Four years later, in 2003, Jim was named a Fellow of NAEP for his lifetime of contributions to the organization.

Jim passed away in November, 2007. Brain cancer removed Jim's ability to speak and made communication very difficult, a very sad ending to a life filled with communication. Nonetheless, he kept up his enthusiasm until the very end.

NAEP developed the James Roberts Scholarship Fund in 2008 to promote the importance of living an ethical life, professionally and otherwise. The fund will help nascent environmental professionals pay for their education. Over the past few years, the James Roberts Scholarship Committee has told the Jim Roberts story to countless environmental professionals and has collected seed money in order to bring this scholarship to fruition. Eventually, a foundation will be created to manage the funds.

As chair of the Scholarship Committee, at the NAEP conference in LA, I was proud to announce the first recipient of this annual scholarship. The applicants, current undergraduate and graduate students, were asked to write an essay that reflects on how their education and experience to this point supports ethical work on environmental problems. The winning candidate was selected by an awards committee based on how this essay reflected how Jim Roberts would have carried out his life.

I encourage you to tell nascent environmental professionals that you know about this scholarship. Also, please contribute to the scholarship through NAEP's website to increase the endowment. Let's continue to support ethical practices in the environmental professions and continue Jim's influence.

Look for the next scholarship opportunity at www.naep.org.

Gary Kelman
Chair of the Jim Roberts Scholarship Fund



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FAEP 2013 Annual Conference

CALL FOR SPONSORS

The Florida Association of Environmental Professionals
2013 Annual Conference
Hosted by the CFAEP
September 11-13, 2013
Doubletree at the entrance to Universal
Orlando, Florida



There are several sponsorship levels available:

Conference Partner
Gold Partner—\$1,000
Silver Partner—\$500
Bronze Partner—\$250
Pewter Partner—\$100

More information and forms are located on the FAEP website: www.faep-fl.org

CALL FOR PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

The Central Florida chapter of FAEP is honored to host the 2013 Annual conference. The conference will include keynote speakers, technical sessions, an expo, and networking socials. This conference provides an excellent opportunity for professionals and students working in a wide range of environmental specializations to come together and present recent success projects, lessons learned, and new techniques and/or ideas. This year's conference will focus on three tracks: Contamination/Remediation, Biological/Ecological, and Environmental Permitting and Policy. Presentations related to any environmental topic within Florida are encouraged. Topics may include, but are not limited to, ecology, economics, management, restoration, risk assessment, policy/regulation, innovative technologies, and interdisciplinary projects. Presentation abstracts will be reviewed and voted for inclusion in the conference.

Instructions for submitting presentation abstracts

The deadline for submitting abstracts is **May 31, 2013**.

Abstract submittals should include full name, address, phone number, email, professional title, affiliation, biography, presentation title, a brief description of your presentation topic, estimated length and which of the three tracts your presentation is most related to. The presentation description must be 350 words or less and submitted in MS Word using the Presentation Abstract Submittal Form. Abstracts should be submitted via e-mail to the Conference Committee Chairs – Jennifer Cummings at Jennifer.Cummings@ocfl.com or Amy Guilfoyle at Amy.Guilfoyle@ppmco.com.

The 2013 FAEP Annual Conference Committee will review and vote on all abstract submissions. A notification of acceptance will be emailed to the corresponding author no later than July 15th.

More information and forms are located on the FAEP website: www.faep-fl.org

FLERA Announces New Approach to Annual Conference

The Florida Local Environmental Resource Agencies (FLERA) will hold their annual conference from October 23-25, 2013. Once more, the Orlando area will host this year's conference, at the spacious Embassy Suites Orlando—Lake Buena Vista South. The hotel is conveniently located near all major Orlando attractions, and offers an excellent venue for the conference with the added amenities of family fun.

This year the FLERA conference promises to be thought-provoking and action-oriented. While the legacy events such as the Annual Environmental Leadership awards luncheon and stimulating panel discussions and technical presentations will remain, there will also be some new twists.

FLERA began 2013 with an initiative to organize and empower separate committees to focus on key issues impacting the various environmental resource management disciplines. These committees include Wetlands, Waste, Outreach, and Legislative, among others. At the annual conference, the committees will meet in charette sessions. Through the course of these meetings, each committee will develop an index of key issues and program areas of concern for their discipline. They will develop an action plan and recommendations. These sessions will be scheduled independent of the technical sessions and panel discussions, to preclude conflicts. And of course these sessions are open to all attendees. This is a tremendous opportunity to provide input to the development of FLERA programs and positions.

These charette sessions will be summarized to the full membership during the last day of the conference. This will provide key guidance to the FLERA Board for the development of the FLERA 2014 Annual Action Plan and 2014 Legislative Policy Statement.

For more information about the submittal of presentations or papers, sponsorship or exhibitor opportunities, and registration information, contact Tony D'Aquila at (813) 389-2238 or at flera@tampabay.rr.com.

Conference information and registration form will be available soon on the FLERA webpage, at www.flera.org.



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USF TBAEP Student Goes to The NAEP Conference!!!

With more than 400 registrants at the 38th Annual NAEP Conference, the JW Marriot-LA Live was the place to be. Registrants delved into issues varying from renewable energy resources to sustainable water management techniques and everything in between. This year's theme, Walk the Talk, undoubtedly recognized the environmental advances being made across the nation.

The week full of sessions and workshops made it hard to have nothing to do. With educative sessions one after the other and breaks for lunch with keynote speakers like Mr. Brett Rohring, Director of Corporate Citizenship Environmental Policy, at Disney Worldwide Services, Inc. facilitated for a cornucopia of information.

Mr. Nicholas Albergo, President and CEO of HSA Engineers & Scientists delivered one particular session that struck an accord with me. As a native Floridian, his presentation on past experiences at job sites all over the world had guests enthralled. Albergo's work involves hazardous pollutants including lead, mercury, chromium, arsenic, and radionuclides just to name a few. The projects he has worked on involved the reduction of chromate in Tamil Nadu, India, removal of lead smelter in Zambia, water contamination from herbicide and defoliant-Agent Orange, in Vietnam, and the Chernobyl nuclear incident in Ukraine. Albergo's interesting background engaged the audience as it sparked lively conversation.

Land use, climate change, and sustainability were other key issues addressed during this year's conference. The sessions were as diverse as the professionals in attendance. Another helpful session I attended was a panel discussion with Mrs. Heidi Rous, VP and Everest Yan, Senior Engineer of PCR Services Corp., with Mr. Austin Kerr, Senior Air Quality & Climate Change Specialist of Ascent Environmental Inc. both based out of California. Their discussion involved communicating health risk assessments (HRAs) in a meaningful and cognizant way to a variety of stakeholders to ensure their goals are met. Emphasis was aimed at effective means of risk communication and public involvement using real world case studies.

There was plenty to do even after the sessions, depending on the day, registrants were able to attend a reception at the famous Grammy Museum, L.A. LIVE with friends and colleagues, or enjoy an evening of wine and cheese after all the sessions were completed. This was all a unique experience! I'm glad I got to share this with Mr. Bruce Hasbrouck, VP of Environmental Services & Technical Director, at Faller Davis & Associates Inc. and Ms. Erin Kane, Business Development Manager, at Accutest Laboratories.

As a graduate student concentrating in toxicology and risk assessment the conference enhanced my knowledge on the growing issues that affect us all and allowed me to interact with some of the professionals doing something about it. The collaboration among environmental planners, scientists, engineers, geologists, and all those whose efforts go into making our environment a safe and livable place for generations to come is truly noteworthy.

I would like to thank TBAEP and the Board of Directors for sponsoring my attendance. I feel very fortunate to be the only student from Florida to be selected to take part in an event like this one. I am excited to actively participate in the 2014 NAEP Conference being held in St. Petersburg, FL on April 7-10th!

By: Kushani Rodrigo B.S./B.A., MPH Candidate
Toxicology & Risk Assessment
University of South Florida



From left to right: Bruce Hasbrouck, Kushani Rodrigo, and Nicholas Albergo

FDEP Announces April is Water Conservation Month!

FDEP recognizes April as Water Conservation Month, a time dedicated to educating residents and visitors of the importance of protecting Florida's water resources and supply and everyday steps that can be taken at home to help.

Governor Rick Scott has recognized April as Water Conservation Month in a proclamation that emphasizes the importance of increasing awareness and prompting action for efficient use of the state's water resources.

"Our priority continues to be to ensure the sustainable supply and quality of our water," said Greg Munson, Deputy Secretary for Water Policy and Ecosystem Restoration. "This April is the perfect time for Floridians to join us in these efforts by learning more about water conservation."



For the last 16 months, the Department has led a statewide effort to improve consistency in the consumptive water use permitting programs implemented by the state's five water management districts. As part of that process, the Department has taken steps to incentivize water conservation measures at the local level. The Department is also revising and expanding state rules to further increase Florida's use of reclaimed water. Even as the rules have been developed, the state's five water management districts continue to fund extensive water conservation initiatives through education campaigns and reclaimed water development projects. Ongoing efforts statewide show that water conservation efforts are working. Florida remains one of the most water-efficient states in the nation. In 2011, Florida used more than 722 million gallons of reclaimed water every day to conserve freshwater and replenish rivers, streams, lakes and aquifers. Florida uses reclaimed water to irrigate 311,068 residences, 546 golf courses, 998 parks, and 346 schools, according to 2011 data. As a result, Florida re-uses more water than any other state.

On this 15th anniversary of April as water conservation month we would like to thank all that adopt and integrate conservation into their everyday routine," said Lisa Krentz, Water Use Efficiency Division Chair of the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association. "It is imperative we continue to recognize water is the keystone to life in Florida.

Since most areas of Florida continue to struggle with drought conditions, water conservation is critical. Water conservation is the least costly and easiest plan to preserving our natural resources. Floridians can participate this month by implementing one or more of these 10 simple tips from the Southwest Florida Watershed Management District. These tips can help lower monthly bills while helping to save hundreds of gallons of water:

Indoor tips:

- ◆ Only run your washing machine and dishwasher when they are full.
- ◆ Use the shortest clothes washing cycle for lightly soiled loads.
- ◆ Thaw frozen food in the refrigerator or microwave, not under running water.
- ◆ Scrape, don't rinse, your dishes before loading in the dishwasher.
- ◆ Install high-efficiency showerheads, faucets, and toilets.

Outdoor tips:

- ◆ Check your home's irrigation system for leaks to save up to 6,300 gallons of water per month.
- ◆ Turn off your home's irrigation system and only water as needed; save up to 2,000 gallons each time a watering day is skipped.
- ◆ Don't leave sprinklers unattended. Use a kitchen timer to remind yourself to turn sprinklers off.
- ◆ Use a hose with a shutoff nozzle when washing the car to save around 40 gallons per wash.
- ◆ Consider installing a rain barrel with a drip irrigation system for watering your landscaping. Rainwater is free and better for your plants because it doesn't contain hard minerals.



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FAEP WELCOMES THESE NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Tolu Adesanya	Robert Cork	Laura Gimpelson	Christopher Landsea
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Florida Battles Slimy Invasion by Giant Snails!!!

South Florida is fighting a growing infestation of one of the world's most destructive invasive species: the giant African land snail, which can grow as big as a rat and gnaw through stucco and plaster. More than 1,000 of the mollusks are being caught each week in Miami-Dade and 117,000 in total since the first snail was spotted by a homeowner in September 2011, said Denise Feiber, a spokeswoman for the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Residents will soon likely begin encountering them more often, crunching them underfoot as the snails emerge from underground hibernation at the start of the state's rainy season in just seven weeks, Feiber said. The snails attack "over 500 known species of plants ... pretty much anything that's in their path and green," Feiber said. In some Caribbean countries, such as Barbados, which are overrun with the creatures, the snails' shells blow out tires on the highway and turn into hurling projectiles from lawnmower blades, while their slime and excrement coat walls and pavement.

"It becomes a slick mess," Feiber said. A typical snail can produce about 1,200 eggs a year and the creatures are a particular pest in homes because of their fondness for stucco, devoured for the calcium content they need for their shells. The snails also carry a parasitic rat lungworm that can cause illness in humans, including a form of meningitis, Feiber said, although no such cases have yet been identified in the United States.

EXOTIC INVASION

The snails' saga is something of a sequel to the Florida horror show of exotic species invasions, including the well-known infestation of giant Burmese pythons, which became established in the Everglades in 2000. There is a long list of destructive non-native species that thrive in the state's moist, subtropical climate. Experts gathered recently in Gainesville, Florida, for a Giant African Land Snail Science Symposium, to seek the best ways to eradicate the mollusks, including use of a stronger bait approved recently by the federal government.

Feiber said investigators were trying to trace the snail infestation source. One possibility being examined is a Miami Santeria group, a religion with West African and Caribbean roots, which was found in 2010 to be using the large snails in its rituals, she said. But many exotic species come into the United States unintentionally in freight or tourists' baggage.

"If you got a ham sandwich in Jamaica or the Dominican Republic, or an orange, and you didn't eat it all and you bring it back into the States and then you discard it, at some point, things can emerge from those products," Feiber said.

Authorities are expanding a series of announcements on buses, billboards, and in movie theaters urging the public to be on the lookout. The last known Florida invasion of the giant mollusks occurred in 1966, when a boy returning to Miami from a vacation in Hawaii brought back three of them, possibly in his jacket pockets. His grandmother eventually released the snails into her garden where the population grew in seven years to 17,000 snails. The state spent \$1 million and 10 years eradicating them.

Feiber said many people unfamiliar with the danger viewed the snails as cute pets. "They're huge, they move around, they look like they're looking at you ... communicating with you, and people enjoy them for that," Feiber said. "But they don't realize the devastation they can create if they are released into the environment where they don't have any natural enemies and they thrive." (From Reuters)

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