



Platydemus manokwari, also known as the New Guinea flatworm, is a species of large predatory land flatworm.

Invasive Species Alert: New Guinea Flatworm

One of the world's most invasive species has shown up, uninvited, to Florida; and officials contend they will likely not have predators in the United States.

According to Newsweek, the New Guinea Flatworm—looking like a cross between a slimy slug and a flattened snake—has a renowned hunger for snails and the ability to live in just about any environment. In the past few decades, it has spread out of its native New Guinea to islands throughout the Pacific and as far away as France. It has now been discovered in mainland United States, in several gardens in Miami.

A study [published](#) last month in the journal *PeerJ* shows that the odious worm has also made its

way to Puerto Rico, Singapore, several New Caledonian islands, and the Solomon Islands.

"It will not make differences between abundant common species and rare endemic snails," says study author Jean-Lou Justine, a researcher at the National Museum of Natural History in Paris. "In that, it is a significant potential threat to all [native] snail species."

This could ripple up the food chain to affect creatures that eat snails, like birds. It could have impacts in the other direction of the food chain as well: The plants that snails eat, like certain weeds, might spread and become overgrown.

(See *New Guinea Flatworm*, page 2.)

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- *SART Spotlight: Florida Veterinary Corps*
- *NAHERC Training Opportunities Available Online*

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— Tommy Carpenter
Manager, Lake County
Emergency Management



New Guinea Flatworm (Continued)

According to the Justine, it has probably already spread to many gardens in Miami, since these "are often attended by professionals with many clients. Movements of the flatworm from garden to garden together with soil, compost, rooted plants, potted plants and garden waste will certainly disseminate the invasive species."

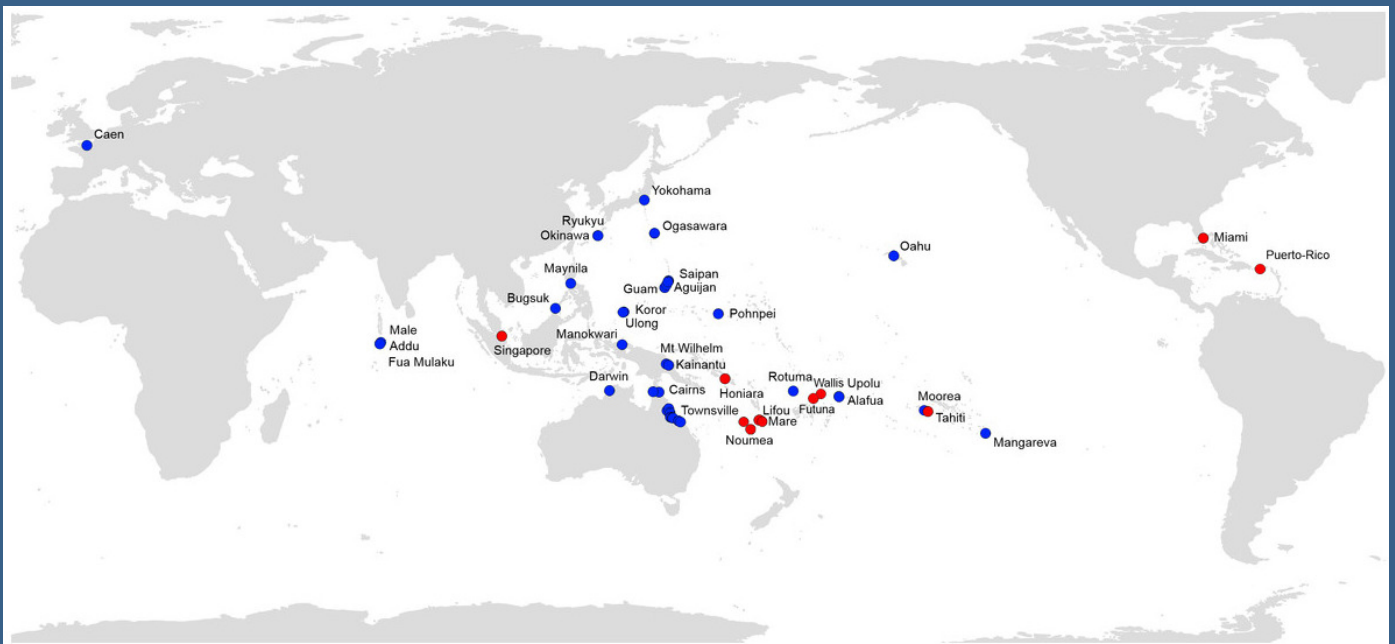
Once they are in an area, it is very difficult to halt their spread, since they are small—2 inches long—and live in the soil

For more information, read the complete story at Newsweek:
<http://www.newsweek.com/invasive-new-guinea-flatworm-has-made-its-way-florida-346159>



Photograph by Claire Goiran
Source: <https://peerj.com/articles/1037>

Shown below: All available records of *P. manokwari* in the world. The spread of the species mainly concerns countries and territories in the Pacific Area; Florida and Puerto Rico are the first records in the Americas. The record in Florida is the first on the American mainland.



UF/IFAS to host Bee Research Symposium on July 15-16

The University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences is hosting the state's first ever Bee Research Symposium, on July 15 and 16 at the Austin Cary Memorial Forest Conference Center. Symposium organizers are looking for research papers to discuss.

The meeting will bring together bee researchers and enthusiasts from across the region to discuss topics related to the study of bees, including honey bee colony losses, Africanized honey bees, pollination and native bee contributions to Florida agriculture.

Maintaining a healthy bee population is critical to human health. Notably, a worldwide honey bee die-off began to be reported around the U.S. in 2006. Scientists report yearly national losses of managed honey bee colonies around 30 percent and researchers have been working to pin down a cause.

Native bee populations may be suffering as well. Bee pollination is critical for much of the food we eat, and some estimates suggest the U.S. bee industry is responsible for pollinating as much as \$15 billion worth of crops every year.

To register for the event, visit:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2015-florida-bee-research-symposium-tickets-9680194723>.



The two day Bee Research Symposium will be split between Apis (honey bee) and non-Apis bees topics.

SART Advisory Board Meeting, September 16, 2015



Mark your calendars! The next SART Advisory Board meeting is set for September 16, 2015 in the Ocala, Florida area.

As the meeting approaches, additional details will be posted online at www.flsart.org.

Enrollment Open: Awareness Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Class

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition (SARC) and The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) Florida has three upcoming opportunities currently available for their *Awareness Level Small Animal Sheltering class*.

When disaster strikes, the team of trained volunteer responders will be there to shelter and protect Florida's companion animals.

This Awareness Level class gives students the knowledge necessary to work in an emergency animal shelter. This class provides expertise and practical experience required to become a professional disaster animal responder. The Awareness Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering class is certified by the Florida Department of Emergency Management and is required to respond in Florida to help companion animals during a disaster.

Course topics include: Personal Preparedness, Overview of the Incident Command System, Deployment Preparedness, Assisting in Shelter Set Up, Daily Care and Feeding, Proper Cage Cleaning and Disinfection, Animal Behavior, Stress Management, Zoonotic Diseases, and Personal Safety.

For more information about the courses, and to register, please visit: <http://flsarc.org/Training.html>

July 11th Course - Clearwater

When: Saturday July 11, 2015 from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM EDT

Where: Suncoast Hospice Foundation, 5771 Roosevelt Boulevard, Clearwater, FL 33760

July 25th Course - Palatka

When: Saturday July 25, 2015 from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM EDT

Where: Putnam County Emergency Operations Center, 410 South State Road 19, Palatka, FL 32177





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information at
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SART Spotlight: Florida Veterinary Corps

"Safeguarding Animal and Public Health in Florida," is the primary function of Florida Vet Corps. Protecting agriculture in Florida begins locally and requires cooperation, participation, and partnership. The Florida Veterinary Corps has been established to enlist veterinarians and veterinary technicians who are willing to volunteer their services in responding to animal emergencies in the state of Florida.

Animal agriculture in Florida is highly vulnerable to severe disruption and financial loss through natural disasters and exotic or zoonotic diseases. Counties and state agencies must be prepared to respond to animal disasters through planning and identification of human and material resources. Natural disasters are unpredictable and cannot be prevented. Florida is at high risk for an outbreak of an exotic animal disease.

The Corps is a component of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team under the University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine, and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry. Volunteers may serve in veterinary infrastructure assessment teams, in triage or emergency animal treatment teams, and in animal disease surveillance or control teams under an incident command system.



Florida veterinarians and animal health technicians have volunteered to assist animal owners and local officials in responding to animal emergencies. The team is currently recruiting more volunteers to help protect our state.

Anyone who would like to join this very important service, please contact the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to obtain an application, or visit the SART Web site at: <http://flsart.org/vetcorps>

Florida Agriculture: No Additional Guava Fruit Flies Found

After finding two male guava fruit flies in Palm Beach County on May 28, Commissioner Adam H. Putnam announced on June 9th that no additional fruit flies have been found. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services increased trapping following the discovery last month. Guava fruit flies pose a threat to Florida agriculture because their eggs, laid in fruits and vegetables, render the product inedible. The department and federal partners deployed an additional 365 fruit fly traps in a 55-square-mile area around the original finds and inspected them on a daily basis.

"Florida's climate makes it a hotbed for invasive pests and diseases, which is why we routinely monitor the more than 56,000 fruit fly traps as part of our early detection network. The initial discovery of these two guava fruit flies followed by no additional finds after increased monitoring shows that this system is effective," said Commissioner Putnam.

Following the initial discovery, the department deployed additional traps and checked them daily to determine if there was a reproducing population of this invasive pest. No additional flies were found and trap monitoring extended to weekly inspections. This weekly trap monitoring will go on for two life cycles of the fly.

The guava fruit fly has been trapped several times in Florida since 1999, but it has not become established. It attacks many of Florida's fruit and vegetable varieties including guava, peach, mango, fig, date, tropical almond, sapodilla, roseapple, jujube, castor bean and sandalwood.



Male Guava Fruit Fly, above.

Source:

<http://www.acgov.org/cda/awm/agprograms/pestdetection/guavafruitfly.htm>

Pet-Friendly Shelters Announced for Lake County

Nearly two weeks into the 2015 Atlantic hurricane season, Lake County Emergency Management officials are excited to announce that all nine of the county's emergency shelters are now pet-friendly.

"We are aware of how important pets are to many of our citizens, so we are thrilled to have worked with the Lake County Sheriff and the School Board to ensure people can bring their pets with them during emergencies," said Tommy Carpenter, Manager of Lake County Emergency Management. "It is important to know that all pets arriving to county shelters will need to be crated and owners must bring their animal's vaccination records along with food and water."

Shelter locations include Astatula Elementary, Leesburg Elementary, Lost Lake Elementary, Mascotte Elementary, Round Lake Elementary, Spring Creek Elementary, Treadway Elementary, Umatilla Elementary and The Villages Elementary.

Read the complete story at:

https://www.lakecountyfl.gov/media/news_releases/news_release.aspx?id=2709

Training Opportunity: National Animal Health Emergency Response Corps (NAHERC)

Why wait until a foreign animal disease outbreak, Natural/Man-made disaster or emergency to occur?

When an animal health emergency occurs, an immediate response is necessary to protect both animals and people. The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will look to many sources to obtain the veterinary personnel needed to help meet the critical staffing needs of such an emergency.

In 2001, APHIS established the NAHERC to respond to exotic disease outbreaks and other disasters which affect livestock, poultry, companion animals, and wildlife. More volunteers are urgently needed to assure a decisive response to any potential animal health crises.

Iowa State University administers the training, and is pleased to announce free online courses for any individuals interested in animal health emergency response. The training is designed for veterinarians, technicians, and emergency responders. Get training free, online and at your own time and pace.

Topics include: Personal Protective Equipment, Biosecurity, Cleaning and Disinfection, Disposal, Health & Safety, Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Tracing and Vaccination for Contagious Diseases.

For additional information about the training, or to register for a course, go to: <http://naherc.cfsph.iastate.edu>

Please login and
update your
membership
information online at:
<http://flsart.org>

About The SART Sentinel

The **SART Sentinel** is an e-mail newsletter prepared monthly by the members of the **Florida State Agricultural Response Team**. Past issues of the Sentinel are archived on the Florida SART Web Site, www.flsart.org.

If you have a story or photo that you would like to have considered for publication in the **SART Sentinel**, please contact the editors.

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