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Contents

- Final AWR-152 Classes for 2009
- National Summit: Companion Animal Emergency Management
- Emerging Ag Pest Alert – *Drosophila suzukii*
- Coyotes and Responders
- Biosecurity for the Birds
- FWC Seeks Survey Input
- Situations in Response
 - Down power lines
 - Man refuses to evacuate
 - SART Mystery Partner
- About the SART Sentinel

Certified Agroterrorism Course Offerings Last Chance for this Training in 2009!

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Agricultural Emergency Preparedness and Western Institute of Food Safety and Security (WIFSS) are presenting AWR-152: Preparedness – Principles of Preparedness for Agroterrorism and Food Systems Disasters, a DHS Certified Agroterrorism Course in 2009. All courses (including lunch) are **Free**.

*Principles of Preparedness
For Agroterrorism and Food Systems' Disasters*

The course **goal** is to prepare participants with the skills and knowledge to recognize agroterrorism vulnerabilities.

Topics include identifying targets, developing prevention, protection and mitigation strategies, employing the principles of building multi-disciplinary response teams, and identifying the roles of the local, state and federal agencies prior to and during an agricultural or food system disaster.



Tuesday, 12-15-09

AWR-152: Ft. Myers – 8:00 am (registration) to 4:30 pm – Ft. Myers Regional Operations Center, 4700 Terminal Drive, Suite 6. Free lunch provided.

Wednesday, 12-16-09

AWR-152: Sarasota – 8:00 am (registration) to 4:30 pm – 1660 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota. Free lunch provided.

Registration:

<http://wifss.ucdavis.edu/agroterrorism/classes/classesbydate.php>

Additional Course Information:

http://wifss.ucdavis.edu/agroterrorism/classes/course_desc.php

Contact for questions:

John Terry, (850) 410-6756 or terryj1@doacs.state.fl.us

**National Summit
Companion Animal Emergency Management**

The 2009 National Summit on Companion Animal Emergency Management will take place December 8-10, 2009, at The Center for Animal Welfare at USDA's Kansas City, MO, facility. The meeting is being hosted by the National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs (NASAAEP) and sponsored by APHIS' Animal Care program.

Florida representatives are ESF 17 Coordinator Joe Kight, UF Vet Med's John Haven, FDACS' David Perry and Sumter DART's Ronnie Graves.

The second annual Summit's goals include:

1. identifying and sharing best practices,
2. communicating mechanisms for disaster resource mobilization,
3. exploring opportunities for collaboration to enhance national readiness,
4. and discussing emergency planning and preparedness initiatives among states.

In conjunction with the Summit, NASAAEP's newly formed Best Practice Working Groups will convene for a day-long kick-off meeting on Monday, December 7. The eight working groups will bring together nationally recognized experts to examine Planning & Resource Management; Evacuation & Transportation; Animal Sheltering; Animal Search & Rescue; Disaster Veterinary Care; Animal Decontamination, HazMat, & Radiological Issues; Training; and Preparedness & Community Outreach. The working groups are co-chaired by NASAAEP, the American Veterinary Medical Association and the National Animal Rescue and Sheltering Coalition.

For information about the Summit or about NASAAEP, contact Dr. Arnold Goldman, President, NASAAEP Board of Directors, at 860-639-9300, or at ctsart@ctvet.org.

For more information about the NASAAEP Best Practice Working Groups, contact Dr. Scott Mason, Chair, Best Practice Working Groups Steering Committee and NASAAEP Board Member, at 405.722.4777, or at pnah@cox.net.

NASAAEP is a not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to bringing together federal and state officials, as well as veterinary and voluntary professionals, to form a strategic collaboration to enhance the nation's preparedness and capacity to respond to emergencies and disasters involving animals.



Agricultural Pest Alert

Spotted Wing *Drosophila* (*Drosophila suzukii*)

Fruit Pest is New to North America

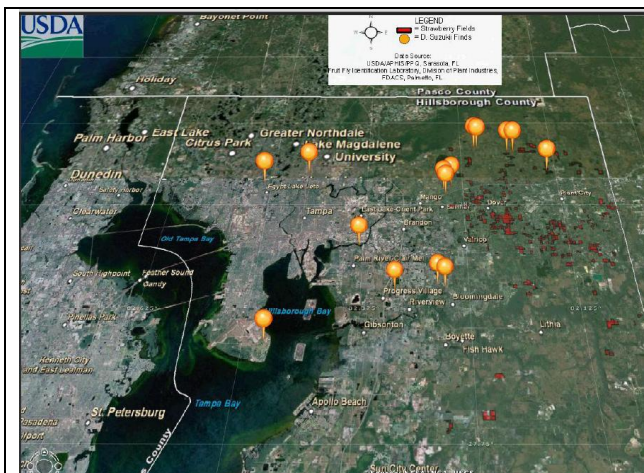


The first Florida detections of the *Drosophila suzukii* were made on August 4th this year in rural Hillsborough County when flies were captured in traps.

Drosophila suzukii has already turned into an expensive pest in California where it has attacked maturing raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, blueberries and cherries. In Japan, the fly has also been reported to damage grapes, apple, peach, plum and persimmon. The problem in California has escalated even in the single

year since first reported in 2008, say researchers Gary Steck, Wayne Dixon and

David Dean. In fact, fly populations are now widespread in west coast agricultural zones.



Fly populations complete about 13 generations per year, and a single life cycle can be as short as 8-9 days. Flies are active from April to November and Steck, Dixon and Dean report that their high rate of reproduction are a special concern. “Local populations can go through multiple generations and build to very large population sizes even in a single cropping cycle.” Where

there can be confusion with other species of *Drosophila*, DNA sequence data are now available to aid in identification.

Florida growers and agricultural service agencies should be alert to the appearance of this pest. Crops potentially at risk include thin-skinned fruits such as strawberries, blackberries and blueberries. For additional information and references to data from California and Japan: www.fl-dpi.com/enpp/ento/drosophila_suzukii.htm.

[The following FDACS-DPI personnel prepared information for the on-line report about *Drosophila suzukii*: Gary J. Steck, Taxonomic Entomologist steckg@doacs.state.fl.us; Wayne Dixon, Assistant Director dixonw@doacs.state.fl.us; and David Dean, Entomologist deand@doacs.state.fl.us.

First Pythons ... Now Coyotes

As a responder, how do you handle this?

The news in Central Florida is that coyotes are searching for food in the suburbs. As an opportunistic predator, the coyote will eat food waste, and mice, house cats or dogs if it can catch them. The **best practice** for family animals is to keep them inside ... where they belong.

Coyote news was accentuated in October when 19-year-old Taylor Mitchell –



A coyote similar to the one shown reportedly attacked a small pug in March, 2008 in Lakes of Estero. Coyotes have moved into South Florida in the past 10 to 15 years. Officials say domestic animal encounters are becoming more prevalent throughout the state.

(Photo Dr. Martin Main, UF- Immokalee)

often described as an “up-and-coming folk musician” and a singer-songwriter – was attacked and killed by coyotes while hiking alone in Cape Breton Highlands National Park in Nova Scotia.

Martin Main, a UF/IFAS wildlife ecologist recalls a 2002 incident in which firefighters rescued a coyote from a canal in Collier County. So far, suburban coyotes have created the biggest stir in Pinellas County, where residents blame the wild dog for the disappearance of housecats in 2003.

Following an emergency such as a hurricane, responders might reasonably expect to encounter coyotes, even in urban settings. Depending upon your agency’s policies, a cheap and effective means of warding off a four-footed animal is **pepper spray**. Many varieties are available commercially.

Wily Coyote in Florida

According to Main, who studies the coyote in Florida, tracking their spread, “Coyotes have a negative image, but on the whole they’re probably good for the ecosystem. The coyote is **just another poor guy trying to make a living**, and in doing so he’s killing smaller predators that feed on native birds and other wildlife.”

The coyote has increased its range throughout North America partly due to the extermination of wolves, a higher order social predator than the more solitary coy-dog. In Florida, coyotes are found in all but the southern tip of the state, with evidence of them as far south as Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve in Collier County.

People and coyotes

In the five years since UF’s coyote study began, populations appear to have steadily increased, which means more coyotes venture into suburbs searching for food. And development is bringing humans into territory already inhabited by the wild dog.

Main warns that people should **never feed** coyotes. Although they are relatively small – the largest coyote collected by Main weighed just 39 pounds – suburban residents out West have occasionally reported coyotes approaching small children or harassing people as they walked their pets. Such attacks are rare, but probably due to coyotes losing their fear of humans – which often happens when people feed them. (Think of the black bears along the Appalachian Blue Ridge Trail.)

“People may think it’s cute or an act of kindness to feed coyotes ... until someone gets bitten,” he said. “Then everybody changes their tune and wants to kill them all. If you want to do these animals a favor, stay away from them and let them go about their business.”

Coyotes and pets

The predators do pose a danger to housecats and small dogs, Main said, though people can lessen the risk by keeping pets inside or at least bringing them in at night. Main also believes **coyotes play an important role in the ecosystem by controlling feral cats.**

“Florida hosts a wide variety of migrating birds,” Main said. “Both feral and domestic cats – predators we’ve introduced – kill those birds, including species that are endangered.”

Coyotes also provide an ecological benefit by controlling populations of small predators, such as raccoons, that raid bird nests and eat eggs, Main said.

Biosecurity for Birds



As part of its “Biosecurity for Birds” Campaign, APHIS’ Veterinary Services program is distributing free calendars. They are year-round reminders of the importance of raising healthy backyard flocks. The latest version of the calendar is entitled “2010 Backyard Biosecurity: Keeping Your Birds Healthy.”

The calendar is printed in both English and Spanish and, with tips and recommendations, helps raise awareness about avian diseases such as avian influenza (AI) and exotic Newcastle disease (END). APHIS distributed more than 90,000 copies of the 2009 calendar. There’s a photo contest, too. So check it out!

From the November 2009 “Biosecurity for Birds” Calendar
Hunters – Handle with Care

When preparing your game, always wash your hands after handling dead birds.
Bleach your cleaning equipment and cleaning surfaces when finished. Always cook meat thoroughly to an internal temperature of 165° F.

Order your calendar on-line at <http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov>. For more information about “Biosecurity for Birds” contact Madelaine Fletcher (301) 734-6125 madelaine.fletcher@aphis.usda.gov.




Love a Lion, Stroke a Snake FWC seeks public input on captive wildlife rules

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), a Florida SART partner, invites the public and especially the response community which could be directly affected in an emergency management situation, to participate in an on-line survey [click here to go to that link:

http://myfwc.com/NEWSROOM/09/statewide/News_09_X_CaptiveRulesSurvey.htm] which will help the agency develop new requirements for individuals who wish to possess Class I, II and III wildlife. The survey runs until November 24.

The FWC survey (which took the editor about 5 minutes to complete) includes questions about:

- whether Class I and II captive wildlife owners' facilities should meet local building codes and/or zoning requirements,
- whether wildlife owners should provide their Critical Incident and Disaster Plan to their county's emergency manager,
- whether people shipping or delivering live wild animals via interstate or intrastate commerce should label such packages,
- whether the label should list the name and address of the sender and receiver and identify the number and species of live wildlife in the shipment and
- about licensing requirements for hobbyists (those who possess wildlife for personal use and enjoyment) who may occasionally exhibit or sell Class III wildlife

		
<p>Class I wildlife includes gorillas, chimpanzees, lions, leopards, tigers and bears.</p>	<p>Class II wildlife includes several species of small monkeys, small exotic cats, coyotes and wolves.</p>	<p>Class III wildlife - all species not listed as Class I or Class II, species specifically listed as not requiring a permit for possession.</p>

For a complete list of animal classifications, rules and to participate in the survey, visit MyFWC.com/Rules. The contact individual is Captain Linda Harrison (850) 488-6253 or linda.harrison@myfwc.com.

Responder Notes

Downed Montana Power Line Electrocutes Wildlife

November 4, 2009: A downed power line outside Eureka, Montana electrocuted more than a dozen animals over the past few months, officials said.

Roger Pitman, a superintendent at Lincoln Electric Cooperative, said crews did not know about the situation until October 10 when the dangling power line in the Pinkham Creek drainage finally failed. A crew called to repair the line found the carcasses of five whitetail deer, four black bears, two wolves, one coyote and a turkey vulture in the area.

One of the wolves found at the scene by the utility crew was reported to be “still warm” from its fatal shock.

"We're just thankful there weren't any two-legged creatures up there, except for the turkey vulture," Pitman said.

Tim Thier, a biologist for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks said it's likely the deer walked into the power line and were electrocuted. The deer carcasses then drew predators that were in turn electrocuted.

"It's sort of a chain reaction," Thier said. "But I've never seen it relative to a power line before."

Officials suspect a dry tree fell on the power line over the summer causing it to break.



Man Refuses to Evacuate – Demands Assistance

August 17, 2004 – Scott St. John, a Captiva Island handy man, rode out Hurricane Charlie in an 8,000-sqft mansion on that barrier island. Days before the hurricane struck, its snowbird owner – one David Venarge – fled to his summer home in Ohio ... but not before asking St. John to look after the house.

After the storm, St. John heard a helicopter and climbed to the roof. There, he held up a spray-painted sign: one side read “SOS” – the other side read “SEND ICE.”

"I'm just trying to get the supplies I need," he said via cell phone. Perhaps he was also out of Dijon mustard and could have used a six-pack of his favorite beverage.

When responders refused to air-lift ice to his location, citing widespread damage and the home's relative inaccessibility, St. John accused them of trying to starve him out: "The only way I'm leaving is in a body bag."

By telephone from Ohio, the owner said that responders were "treating him [St. John] like a dog" and that St. John "has my 100 percent support." The handy man, Venarge noted, had already saved him thousands of dollars by cleaning up the floors and repairing a window.

St. John admitted he might be being unreasonable and admitted he was exhausted, hungry and in desperate need of a shower, called the situation a "test of wills" with responders.



Can You Name this SART Mystery Partner?

Created by the Florida Legislature in 1996, it was not actually opened for another nine years. Situated on 500 acres in Marion County, it is now open year-round. This partner is a park that offers international competition in every discipline of its specialty, educational opportunities and direct access to hundreds of miles of trails winding through the Cross Florida Greenway.

This facility ran its first nationally recognized 3-day event in November of 2005, and early in 2006 was named an official training site for the U.S. team it represents. This SART member now hosts "the best of the best" in World and Olympic level sports competition and "celebrates our nation through team and individual competition."

Answer at end of this month's SART Sentinel newsletter.

About the SART Sentinel

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The SART SENTINEL is an E-mail newsletter prepared monthly by Rick Sapp and 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.

SART Mystery Partner

Called the Florida Agriculture Center & Horse Park Authority, the park is located at 11008 S Highway 475, Ocala, FL 34480 Office: (352) 307-6699. To learn more about the park and its year-round equestrian activities, check out its web site at www.flhorsepark.com.

