



Invasive Exotic Plants Surveillance & Rapid Response at Biscayne National Park

2011

Importance

Invasive plants are one of the most serious threats to maintaining ecosystem integrity in South Florida parks. Once established, invasive exotic plant species can affect park natural resources and visitor satisfaction by altering the natural landscape, reducing habitat for native plants and animals, and increasing demand on park resources for trail maintenance and exotic plant eradication efforts. Detecting new exotic plant species with the potential to become invasive, while they are still in small controllable populations, as well as infestations of known invasive species is important for the cost-effective management of this problem.

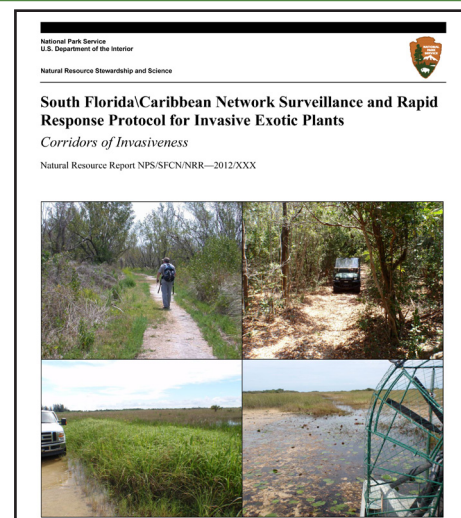
Objectives and Approach

The objective is to detect newly emerging invasive plant species in the National Parks of South Florida along the most likely routes, or corridors, for infestations, e.g. trails, roadways, campgrounds, and boat launches. Surveys are conducted by an experienced South Florida/Caribbean Network (SFCN) botanist along with the assistance of an Exotic Plant Management Team (EPMT) member. Exotics are treated immediately when possible and are reported quickly to park staff and through EDDMAPS.

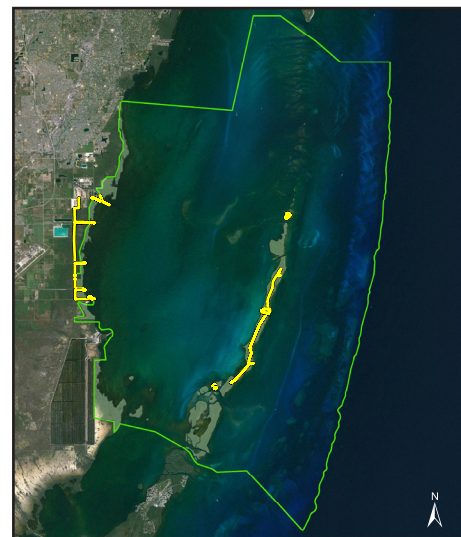
Results

A pilot study and protocol were completed and the first year of official field work was initiated in Biscayne National Park (BISC) in 2011.

A total of 35.71 miles were surveyed in BISC and 32 species of exotic plants were found. Of these 32 species, three were new to the park. With the assistance of the EPMT crew, these three species were treated on the spot.



The protocol is undergoing review and should be finalized this year.

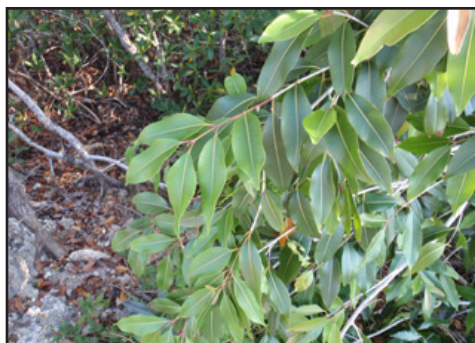


Map of the areas surveyed within Biscayne National Park in 2011.

3 New Exotics to Biscayne National Park



Karum Tree (*Pongamia pinnata*)



Java Plum (*Syzygium cumini*)



Bo Tree (*Ficus religiosa*)