



# Commercial Clippings

FOR THE NORTHEAST FLORIDA GREEN INDUSTRY  
*Serving Clay, Duval, and Nassau County*

February/March 2011

Issue 12, Page 1

## In this Issue:

Africanized Bees	pg 1
Upcoming Classes	pg 2/3
Featured Creature	pg 4
Do You Know?	pg 5
Bees, continued	pg 5
Pocket Gophers	pg 6
FNGLA Trade Show	pg 7
Contact Us	pg 8

## Africanized Honey Bee Update in Jacksonville

By Erin Harlow

Africanized honey bees (AHB) have had a lot of bad press lately in local media. Are they really a concern and what should we as pest control professionals tell people? According to the Florida Department of Agriculture Bureau of Plant and Apiary Inspection and the University of Florida, AHB has been found in the port of Jacksonville and potentially could be in other areas in Jacksonville.



There are over 100 traps at the port to help monitor shipments from other parts of the world that may harbor bees. AHB have been confirmed south of Marion County and according to the GA Beekeepers Association, AHB were found in Albany, GA in October 2010.

The Bureau of Plant and Apiary Inspection recommends that all wild colonies or swarms located in close proximity to people or animals be eradicated by a pest control operator trained in honey bee removal.

To eradicate or relocate bees you must be a licensed pest control operator in the category of general household pests. To become trained in bee removal and be placed on the state list for recommended companies you must complete an AHB training. The next training is at the Bee College, March 11-12, in Marineland FL. PCO training takes place on Friday the 12<sup>th</sup> and costs \$30.00. More information can be found at [www.afbee.com](http://www.afbee.com).

*Continued on Page 5...*



**All Classes Require Pre-Registration** unless stated otherwise.  
To register visit us at <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu> and click Commercial Horticulture/Training or call Becky Davidson at 904-387-8850.

*You can now pay for classes  
with a credit card on our website!*

**Jacksonville  
Landscape Show**

**February 10 and 11, 2011**

9:00 am – 5:00 pm – Thursday

9:00 am – 3:00 pm - Friday

\$10.00 for trade show entrance

\$10.00 per seminar; discount for all day seminars

Available CEUs:

7 FL Pesticide – L&O, LCLM, LL&O, Pvt, O&T

6 ISA

5 GA pesticide – Category 24

7 FNGLA

**Florida Green  
Industries  
BMP Training and  
Certification**

**February 17, 2011**

**August 18, 2011**

8:30 am to 3:30 pm

\$25.00

4 CEUs Total: 2 CORE, 2 O&T, 2 LL&O, 2 L&O, 2 LCLM, 2 PVT

**Florida Green  
Industries  
BMP Training and  
Certification  
(SPANISH)**

**February 18, 2011**

8:00 am to 3:00 pm

\$15.00

Location:

3125 Agricultural Center Dr. St. Augustine, FL 32092

4 CEUs Total: 2 CORE, 2 O&T, 2 LL&O, 2 L&O, 2 LCLM, 2 PVT  
Register with Claudia McLeroy at (904) 209-0430 ext. 4778

**Facilities IPM  
Workshop**

**February 23, 2011**

8:00 am to 5:00 pm

\$55.00

5 CEUs total: 2 CORE, 3 GHP, 3 LS

Register at <http://pmu.ifas.ufl.edu>

**All Classes Require Pre-Registration** unless stated otherwise.  
To register visit us at <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu> and click Commercial Horticulture/Training or call Becky Davidson at 904-387-8850.

**Landscape  
Professional  
Training**

**February 28, 2011  
March 7, 2011  
March 18, 2011  
March 25, 2011**

12:00 pm – 5:00 pm  
4 Part Series  
\$30.00 per class

Class provides basic preparation for the FNGLA Certified Horticulture Professional Exam.

*You can now pay for classes  
with a credit card on our website!*

**Limited Commercial  
Landscape  
Maintenance  
Workshop**

**March 29, 2011  
June 29, 2011 (Yulee)**

8:15 am - 3:00 pm - Full Day  
\$30.00

8:15 – 12:00 pm - Half Day  
\$30.00

6 CEUs Total: 3 CORE & 3 LCLM, 3 LL&O, 3 L&O  
Lunch Included; textbooks not included  
Optional LCLM or LL&O Exam at 3:00 pm  
You must have all required paperwork to take the exam.  
For more information about the exam or books or to register, please visit <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu> and click on Commercial Horticulture.

**Tree Basics -  
Pruning and  
Planting**

**March 31, 2011**

9:30 am – 12:30 pm  
\$5.00

Snacks will be provided.  
Location: Ed Austin Regional Park,  
11751 McCormick Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32225

**Pest Control  
Operator CEU Day**

**April 21, 2011**

8:00 am – 9:40 am – L&O  
10:00 am – 11:40 am – CORE  
12:30 pm – 2:10 pm – GHP  
2:25 pm – 4:05 pm – WDO  
\$5.00 per CEU session

## PEST OF THE MONTH – Nutria

by Raymond Zerba, Clay County Extension

So what's the picture of a "drowned rat" doing in this article? Actually it's a picture of a very wet Nutria – a member of the Rodent Family. Its nighttime call has been described as the "scream of a very terrified person," and we're starting to hear it in Northeast Florida.

The Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*) is a semi-aquatic rodent of South America that was imported into Louisiana for fur farming in the 1930's. They then escaped to the wild and have since become a major problem in wetland communities in the South, because they feed on marsh plants, eating them to the root so they die. With the interest in fur no longer there, Louisiana now offers a bounty program. Trappers can get up to \$4.00 per tail (<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2002/nov/20/20021120-101839-5250r/print>) and, if they can find the market for it, may sell the meat and fur for added income.



### So why are we concerned here?

I've been aware that Nutria are in Clay County for a number of years, but only recently did I receive a complaint from a Fleming Island resident whose property was adjacent to a Marsh area and had observed a Nutria feeding on their freshly laid St. Augustine sod at night. Being from Louisiana, they were familiar with this animal. This was the first time I realized that this animal had a potential to be a problem for the homeowner. I have since seen them by my doctors office on Fleming Island (during the day even) so they are starting to establish here and so don't just assume when you have some animal damaging a freshly sodded St. Augustinegrass lawn it is an armadillos, deer, or raccoon. It may be Nutria if it has a pond nearby which has high vegetation bordering it?

Nutria are smaller than beavers but larger than a muskrat. Unlike beavers and muskrats, its tail is round and slightly hairy. They are capable of running quickly overland, but are good swimmers as well and are nearly always found living near wetlands if they are in a community. Female Nutria have their mammary glands toward their sides (rather than on their belly) so their young can nurse with their nose out of the water while the mother is floating. They are thus better protected than if they had to live on the land. Nutria breed all year and can produce 2 litters a year (1-13 babies in each).

Their most active feeding periods are just before sunrise and just after sunset. Right now there is no organized control effort to control them in Northeast Florida (that I could find in my web search). Most of my information comes from a site maintained by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries at <http://www.nutria.com/site.php>

They're here! They are eating some of our lawns! What else are they eating? Trapping is our best control (unless alligators were to develop a taste for them), but we may have to go to Louisiana to find a person that knows how to do that. The only thing I could find in my search was the mention that "steel snap traps" had been used – illegal in Florida without special permitting.



**Please Note: Photos were taken from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries website. I did go to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's website ([http://www.myfwc.com/WILDLIFEHABITATS/Nonnative\\_Nutria.htm](http://www.myfwc.com/WILDLIFEHABITATS/Nonnative_Nutria.htm)) but could not find control info on them – they are not even listed as occurring here.**



## Do you know what this is?

I had this brought to me for identification years ago and would you believe I knew what it was! I remember learning about it nearly four decades ago at the University of Florida – who said I am losing my mind?

If you have taken out dead trees in deep-draining sands in our area and dug their roots out or you have done much land clearing and wondered what they were when you uncovered them from beneath the ground – you can learn about them by reading the Commercial Clippings March and April 2011 issue. At that time I'll tell you the name of this sclerotial growth from a parasitic root rotting fungus of oak and pine in our area.

It's not an earth shattering article, but won't you look like the "all-knowing-one" the next time you see one and can tell your client what it is? Talk to you about it next issue – **RZ**



### Africanized Honey Bee Update continued from Page 1

There is no way to tell Africanized honey bees apart from European honey bees. If there is a concern then bees can be sent to the lab for identification, but 30-50 fresh bees in 70% ethanol or isopropanol alcohol are needed and may be sent to Gainesville. Call the Apiary Inspection service prior to sending samples to make sure they are needed at 352-382-3505. The address for sampling is

Florida Department of Agriculture/ Division of Plant Industry  
1911 SW 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
P.O. Box 147100  
Gainesville, FL 32617-7100

Make sure customers understand that honey bees in boxes are not Africanized, are monitored closely, and are beneficial to the environment. There is an active Northeast FL Bee Keepers Association many whom have completed the Master Bee Keeper Program and follow the Honey Bee Best Management Practices (BMPs).

For more information about Africanized honey bees check out these sites:

<http://www.freshfromflorida.com/pi/plantinsp/apiary/apiary.html>

<http://www.afbee.com>

## Southeastern Pocket Gophers

By Erin Harlow

Have you been getting questions about strange mounds appearing in customers' lawns or open areas? These large mounds that appear to have no entrance or exit holes belong to the Southeastern pocket gopher (*Geomys pinetis*). The pocket gophers excavate mounds of soil giving them the name "sandy-mounders" which in some areas has been changed to "salamanders" in parts of Florida, Georgia, and Alabama.

The Southeast Pocket Gopher has fur in varying shades of brown and can range from 9 to 13 inches long. They are burrowing rodents that have fur-lined pockets on their cheeks. These pockets can also be turned inside out to carry food.



This furry creature creates tunnel systems underground that may have 6-12 mounds or more associated with each system. Typically there is one gopher per mound except for mating season. Pocket gophers generally inhabit sandy, well-drained areas. Mounds are most noticeable during the cool months when the gopher may have to venture closer to the surface for food. They are nocturnal animals and most people have never seen a pocket gopher for this reason. Pocket gophers are herbivores and eat plant material. They eat mostly tubers, roots, bulbs and rhizomes such as torpedo grass, Florida betony, bahia grass, yams, potatoes, carrots, beets, turnips, and more. Pocket gophers keep their tunnels closed for protection against predators such as snakes. Tunnel systems will include nesting chambers, food areas, and desiccation areas. Tunnels may be as shallow as 4" from the surface or may go as deep as 5 or 6'.

As of 2008, it is now legal to use Florida registered baits for control of pocket gophers. Pocket gophers are native animals and if possible the best solution is to leave them alone. If the customer chooses to use baits then make sure you are licensed in the appropriate pesticide category.

### References

Kern, Bill. 2009. Southeastern Pocket Gopher. University of Florida. EDIS publication.

Kern, Bill. 2011 (January). "Identifying mounds and holes in your Customers' Landscapes". Florida Pest Pro.

The Pocket Gopher Project by FAMU @ <http://www.famu.org/gopher/index.html>

Case, R. Extension Website. University of Nebraska. 2008. Pocket Gophers. [http://www.extension.org/pages/Pocket\\_Gophers](http://www.extension.org/pages/Pocket_Gophers)





Trade Show CEUs Available:

- 6 ISA
- 5 GA pesticide, Category 24
- 7 FL Pesticide – 7 L&O, 7 LCLM, 7 Pvt, 7 O&T, 7 LL&O
- 7 FNGLA

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