

Lifetime Achievement for Law Enforcement

By Brent Lawrence (USFWS)

On March 9, 2017, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) named Gary Young (USFWS) the 2017 National Guy Bradley Award winner for his outstanding lifetime achievements in wildlife law enforcement.

Young's 34-year career involved wildlife and natural resource protection, including marine mammal enforcement along the Alaskan coastline and 5 years of upholding fish, shrimp, and oyster commercial fishing regulations in Corpus Christi, Texas *See related story, page 10*. In 2012, Young was named Special Agent in Charge for the USFWS Pacific Region, which

includes Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Hawai'i and the Pacific Islands.

"Gary has been a tireless protector of our wildlife resources," said Jeff Trandahl, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of NFWF.

The prestigious award is presented to one State and one Federal agent each year and is named after Guy Bradley, the first wildlife law enforcement to be killed in the line of duty in 1905.

"Our wildlife resources have always played an important part in my life. But this huge honor isn't about me. It's about all the wonderful people I've worked with who helped me learn and progress, and it's about the agents who work so many long, hard days in the name of conservation. They make me proud to be a part of the USFWS Law Enforcement," Young said.



After a 34-year career in USFWS law enforcement, Young received the 2017 National Guy Bradley Award from the NFWF. Photo credit: USFWS

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Protecting U.S. Island Territories from Invasive Species

By Jhoset Burgos Rodriguez (National Invasive Species Council)

The ecosystems on U.S. island territories are particularly vulnerable to biological invasions caused by factors such as tourism and substantial importation of goods through air and sea. On island ecosystems, invasive species are the leading cause of documented extinctions and a leading threat to many other species. An estimated 45 percent of species listed under the Endangered Species Act and about 40 percent of all threatened species on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List are found on islands.

In addition to causing ecological and cultural harm, invasive species can cost billions of dollars in economic damages by threatening water and food availability, impairing human and wildlife health, compromising

infrastructure, and increasing wildfire propensity. Invasive species such as the Crown of Thorns starfish (*Acanthasteridae*) and lionfish (*Pterois volitans*) are examples of marine species that threaten U.S. island territories.

On December 5, 2016, Executive Order 13751, "Safeguarding the Nation from the Impacts of Invasive Species," was issued to address invasive species threats. Around the same time, the governments of the U.S. island territories of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, with Federal policy coordination by the DOI through the Office of Insular Affairs, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish the U.S. Territories Invasive Species Coordinating Committee (USTISCC). These steps offer promising improvements to addressing the challenges of managing invasive species.

The USTISCC works to prevent, eradicate, and control terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, and to

"Invasive species" means, with regard to a particular ecosystem, a non-native organism [including seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species] whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm, or harm to human, animal, or plant health.

—from Executive Order 13751

protect and restore natural and cultural resources from the effects of invasive species.

Currently, USTICC members are finalizing their territorial invasive species action plans and are strengthening or creating local invasive species councils. By coordinating invasive species management we can fulfill the mission of conserving invaluable natural and cultural resources in the U.S. territories, as well as reduce potential invasions to the continental United States.

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The brain coral boulder, 8 feet in diameter, stands 750 feet inland on Anegada, U.S. Virgin Islands. Geologists say that the coral was brought ashore, along with others, by an unusual tsunami or storm between the years 1200 and 1480 (<https://www.usgs.gov/news/enormous-caribbean-waves-1492>). These new findings reinforce precautions against coastal hazards. Photo credit: Brian Atwater, USGS

36th Nonnative Marine Fish Species Found in Florida

By Pamela Schofield (USGS)

A citizen scientist spotted and reported a nonnative blotched foxface (*Siganus unimaculatus*) offshore Dania Beach, Florida. Within 24 hours of the report, the USGS and Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) captured the fish.

The blotched foxface is a type of rabbitfish that is native to the western Pacific Ocean. This is the first spotting of the blotched foxface outside of its native range, and it marks the 36th nonnative fish found in Florida. The rabbitfish is popular in aquariums but is a venomous and voracious fish that preys on marine vegetation such as seaweeds, algae, and seagrasses. *See related story, page 12.*

“Nonnative fish compete with and prey on native marine life and can spread diseases,” said USGS Research Fishery Biologist Pam Schofield.

“Some can even be harmful to humans.” It is unclear if there are other blotched foxface fish in state waters since only one was found, but early detection and quick capture of nonnative fish is vital to preventing future invasions. The USGS and REEF have collaborated since 2008 by sharing reports of exotic fish between REEF’s online reporting with USGS researchers who maintain USGS’ Nonindigenous Aquatic Species database.

“Any organism outside its normal range has the potential to cause negative impacts,” said Lad Akins, Director of Special Projects for REEF. “If we wait to see what those impacts are going to be, it’s too late—they’ve already happened.” Together, the USGS and REEF have coordinated the live capture of 4 nonnative fish from Florida waters, including the blotched foxface.

See Nonnative Species page 14

The IUCN Red List

<http://www.iucnredlist.org>

Over the past 50 years, the IUCN Global Species Programme and IUCN Species Survival Commission have created a compilation of species conservation status, called the IUCN red list. The IUCN red list highlights species that are threatened to determine their relative risk of extinction and share information regarding their distribution.



The NPS killed 6,433 Crown of Thorns starfish over 3 weeks in an effort to protect coral reefs in American Samoa. The starfish, known as alamea in Samoan, can quickly consume a coral reef, leaving a field of coral skeletons in its wake. National park divers are killing the alamea by injecting them with sodium bisulfate, a common chemical used to balance swimming pool pH levels. While toxic to alamea when injected, the chemical is harmless to people or other marine life. Photo Credit: NOAA

Learn more:

National Invasive Species Council: <https://www.doi.gov/invasivespecies>

“Ecological and Socioeconomic Impacts of Invasive Alien Species in Island Ecosystems”: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0376892907003815>