

Climate Change and Invasive Alien Species Impacting Our Biodiversity

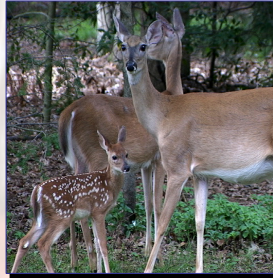
Invasive Alien Species and Climate Change represent two (2) main threats to biodiversity worldwide especially to small island states such as those in the Caribbean.

Climate Change will continue to facilitate more frequent and severe weather events such as tropical cyclones (hurricane), floods droughts and fires. The introduction and spread of Invasives and other species is aided by these weather events.



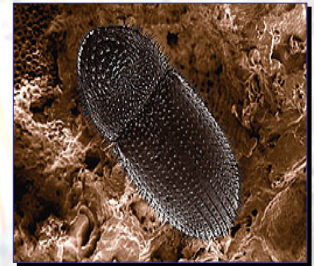
Lionfish
(*Pterois volitans & Pterois miles*)

Hurricane Andrew in 1992 is cited as a contributing factor to the introduction of the Lionfish to Caribbean waters. An aquarium used in the Pet trade was destroyed during this storm event and enabled the escape of this fish species which now poses a major threat to the fishing industry in Jamaica.



White-tailed Deer
(*Odocoileus virginianus*)

This deer is a major nuisance to farmers in the hills of Portland. This invasive species became a common place after floods from a storm system damaged pens and enclosures at a farm thereby allowing their escape. Farmers now suffer extensive crop loss due to the presence of the White Tail Deer which reproduces quickly and feeds on any vegetation available, including food crops.



Coffee Berry Borer
(*Hypothenemus hampei*)

The Coffee Berry Borer pose a major threat to Coffee farmers world wide. The Coffee Berry Borer is highly adaptable to a wide range of temperatures and thrives even at higher altitudes which are normally cooler but are now warming due to Climate Change factors. The Coffee Berry Borer is known to reproduce even faster during dry warm conditions. Coffee which is an important economic crop in Jamaica is negatively impacted by this pest.



Water Hyacinth
(*Eichhornia crassipes*)

This plant is found in tropical and sub tropical climates and has spread through global and flooding events. It reproduces rapidly and is among the fastest growing plants in the world. It blocks waterways affecting movement of motor craft and fish and, crushes native plants.



Coral Vine/ Coralita
(*Antigonon leptopus*)

The Coral Vine is an aggressive climbing vine which attaches itself to plants, poles, fences and any available support structure. It kills other plant species by smothering. The Coral Vine tolerates poor soil quality and drought conditions. Seed dispersal is widespread via animals and water sources.



The Indian Rubber Vine
(*Cryptostegia grandiflora*)

The Rubber Vine plant is a naturalized plant which relies on trees and other structures for support and grows quickly. It is designated among "100 of the World's Worst IAS. It is widely dispersed by wind borne seed capsules. These pods can survive for months in fresh or salt water before reproducing. The plant spread aggressively and smother's its hosts by blocking sunlight. Any weather event involving high winds and water (floods) will aid its spread.