

# INVASIVE PLANT Student Video Challenge



*Students from Ms. Maggie McAndrew's 2009/2010 4th grade Science Club at Koa Elementary School created a video about rescuing native plants from the aquatic weed, hydrilla.*

The Osceola County Extension Office and the University of Florida/IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants (CAIP) are pleased to announce the debut of their **Invasive Plant Student Video Challenge** project. Over 250 students were challenged to create short videos on topics relating to hydrilla, hygrophila and other invasive aquatic plants infesting area lakes and ponds.

After learning about the impacts invasive aquatic plants are having on freshwater habitats in Osceola County, students were challenged to write, act and film their own short stories as part of their science studies during the school year. The raw video footage was then assembled and edited, with added special effects, by Phil Chiochio from the Ringling College of Art and Design. Coordination of the project and editing support was provided by faculty and staff from the Osceola County Extension Office and the University of Florida/IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants.

The student videos are being used to help spread awareness about invasive aquatic plants that threaten Florida's waters and cause economic hardship. They can be viewed at <http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/osceola/challenge>, the UF/IFAS Invasive Plant YouTube channel, <http://www.youtube.com/user/>

[UFInvasivePlantsEDU](http://UFInvasivePlantsEDU) and the event is also posted on Facebook™ (search for UF Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants – Education Initiative). Video story plots, written and acted out by the students, range from invasive plant invasions on an airplane flight to pond-side adventures of local anglers and/or citizens unwittingly emptying invasive plants from their aquariums.

The project is an outreach component of Osceola County's Demonstration Project on Hydrilla and Hygrophila in the Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes. Thanks to a \$2.881 million grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Osceola County is conducting a Demonstration Project which seeks to find new solutions for managing hydrilla and hygrophila.

For more information, please contact the Osceola County Extension Office at (321) 697-3000.



*Students from Ms. Judy McDonald's 2009/2010 8<sup>th</sup> grade class at Narcoossee*



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