



# Don't Let it Loose!

## Invasive Species



### What is an Invasive Species?

An **invasive species** is a type of plant or animal living in an **ecosystem** which it was unnaturally introduced to. Invasives take away food, energy and space from **native species**; the plants and animals normally found in an ecosystem. People transport invasive species accidentally or on purpose, for example gardening with a species from another country. Invasive species can be harmful to people and local **biodiversity** which means the variety of plants and animals in an ecosystem.

#### #1 Help Out Native Species

Invasive species are often the result of people's actions, on purpose or by accident. Once introduced, they spread and out-compete native species.

Give native species a boost with the native **Joe Pye Weed** seeds in your activity kit. Find a spot where the plants won't be disturbed and follow the planting instructions on the package; spring and fall are the best planting times. Give yourself a pat on the back for helping native species!

**FUN FACT:** Not all non-native plants and animals are **invasive**. Your dog, vegetables in your garden, even common species like daisies, dandelions and earthworms are called **alien species**. They are outside their normal range but don't pose a risk to other species.



**Bonus:** Visit the Kids in the Biosphere webpage to download a model of a potentially invasive species in the GBBR! Build the model and use it to be a spokesperson about invaders and biodiversity. Upload photos of your model on [gbbr.ca](http://gbbr.ca)!



Joe Pye Weed, A. Mills

## #2 Detective Work: Tracking Invaders

Time to look for invasive species! Invasive species are found in the water, air and on land. Use the pictures to help scout out these unwanted species.

Record where you find them in the blank space, then submit this **data** to [www.invadingspecies.com](http://www.invadingspecies.com). If you're unsure if what you've found is an invasive, you can check this website for more information or ask [kids@gbbr.ca](mailto:kids@gbbr.ca).

### Forest Invasive Species

### Aquatic Invasive Species



Gypsy Moth



Phragmites



Beech Bark Disease



Eurasian Water Milfoil



Giant Hogweed

**Don't Touch!**



Spiny Water Flea



Japanese Knotweed



Zebra Mussel

Photos: Phragmites -Kenton Otterbein, Japanese Knotweed -Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board, All others -Ontario Invasive Species Awareness Program

## #3 Spread the Word, not the Invaders!

Lets help prevent invaders from coming to the Georgian Bay area by promoting biodiversity!

Either on your own or with a group of friends, create a poster to tell people about invasive species, biodiversity, or both! Put the poster up where people can see it (*you might have to ask permission*).

Be sure to upload a picture of your art on [gbbr.ca](http://gbbr.ca)!