

Don't Let it Loose!

Invasive Species



GEORGIAN BAY
BIOSPHERE
MNIDOO GAMII

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.

Fun Fact:

Many species of non-native plants and animals are not labeled invasive. Your dog, veggies in your garden, and common species like dandelions are called *alien species*. They are outside their normal range but don't pose a risk to other species.

1. Invasive Species Crime Scene

Visit www.invadingspecies.com to research common invasive species in eastern Georgian Bay and to identify the suspects for each crime in the crime scene report below.

Who am I?	Clues:	My Crime:
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grass, up to 5 meters tall • Large, dense seed head, beige stem • Grows in thick stands • From Eurasia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crowds out native vegetation • Reduces biodiversity • Doesn't provide food/habitat for wildlife
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mussel that attaches to docks, boats, and beaches • 2-4 cm long and triangular shaped • Black/brown with zigzagged pattern • From the Black Sea region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clogs pipes that take in water for power and water treatment plants • Filters plankton from water • Causes toxic algae to grow • Cut swimmers feet on sharp shell
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of zooplankton • Single dark eye, four pairs of legs • From Eurasia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce food supplies for small fish and young of larger fish • Harm fishing, tail spines clog nets
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small, bottom-dwelling fish • Large frog-like eyes on top of head • Black spot on dorsal fin • Brown/olive body with dark spots • From Asia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eats the eggs and young of native fish, and competes for food sources • Linked to botulism and spreads the infection to birds and fish

2. Detective Work: Tracking Invaders

Time to look for invasive species! Invasive plants and animals are found in the water and on land. Use the pictures below to help scout them out. Record where they are below.

Go one step further! Download the EDDMapS Ontario app to your phone.

This **Citizen Science** program allows people to share invasive species reports directly with scientists. Knowing invasive species locations allows scientists and researchers to manage and respond to invasive species. Learn more: www.eddmaps.org/ontario

Invasive Species



Gypsy Moth



Giant Hogweed

Don't Touch!



Beech Bark Disease



Japanese Knotweed

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

3. Help Out Native Plant Species

When trying to manage the spread of invasive plants, we should also be helping native plants! We can do this by choosing to plant native species in our gardens and yards. We can also do this by cutting less grass and allowing species to flourish in these spots instead. This is also great for many wildlife species! Visit www.gbbrc.ca/conservation-guides to see the Best for the Biosphere Guide. It lists the best species choices for eastern Georgian Bay.

Give yourself a pat on the back for helping native species!

Best for the Biosphere



4. Spread the Word, not the Invaders!

Let's help prevent invasive species from coming to the Georgian Bay area by promoting biodiversity education and awareness!

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*). Encourage your friends and family to do the same!

Be sure to show a picture of your poster to Biosphere staff on Facebook or by email!