

Untangling Invasive

Exotic or aggressive?





Native

Native plants are the indigenous species that have evolved and occur naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, and habitat.

Invasive

An "invasive species" is a species that is non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. Nandina is an invasive plant.



Aggressive

Aggressive plants can be native, non-native, naturalized, invasive, or even cultivated plants. Trumpet creeper is an aggressive native plant.



Exotic

An exotic plant is one that is not native to our area, but which may survive and reproduce here, displacing native. Purpleheart is a relatively benign exotic plant.



Non-native

Non-native species are organisms that do not occur naturally in an area but are introduced as the result of deliberate or accidental human activities. Non-native species do not necessarily hinder or prevent the survival of others within the ecosystem.



How do invasives thrive?

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Favorable
conditions

Lack of control

Lack of
competitors

Rapid
vegetative
growth

Spread by
rhizomes,
runners, stems

Allelopathic—
inhibit native
growth

Abundant
seeds

High
germination
rate

Negative effects of invasives



Alters hydrology, soil, minerals

Creates monocultures

Reduces biodiversity

Impacts the food web

What can we do about natives?

Prevent—don't buy and plant

Eradicate

Contain

Manage

Sing to *If you're happy and you know it*

If you want to keep things
native be alert, (pointing to
eyes)

No invasives or exotics in the
dirt, (pointing to ground)

Think about aggressives too,
(pointing to head)

So, they don't sneak right by
you, (hands over eyes looking
out)

Keep the balance so the
natives don't get hurt!
(clapping)



Examples



Nandina is an invasive plant.



Chinese tallow is an exotic invasive plant.



English ivy is an aggressive plant.



Trumpet creeper is a native aggressive.



Rescuegrass is non-native.



Invasive plants can be exotic, non-native and aggressive, but not all exotic plants are aggressive or invasive, and native plants can be aggressive as well.



Invaders beware!

- Draw a picture of one of the common invasive grasses.
- Look for KR bluestem, Rescuegrass and Johnson grass in the park.
- Try a native plant snack—pecans!