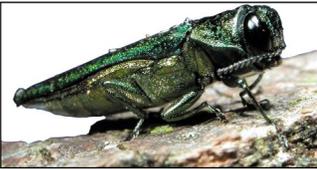


What is an Invasive Species?

You may have seen or heard the term ‘invasive species’ and wondered what exactly is meant by this term. By definition, an invasive species can be any kind of living organism that causes harm to an ecosystem by displacing one or more of the species in that ecosystem. In most cases, it’s a species that is introduced into an environment either by accident or on purpose. Many people assume that an invasive species comes from somewhere other than the United States, and in many cases, this is true, but not always. For example, an invasive species can be native or non-native to an area while a non-native or exotic species can be “non-invasive” depending how it interacts within the environment.

INVASIVE & Non-Native



The emerald Ash Borer is a perfect example of an “invasive species” which is non-native to the U.S. This invasive insect is causing damage to our Ash trees in many of our states and has even made its way into Canada.

A non-native species that is not invasive is the flower Chicory. It was purposely introduced from Europe for its use as a food flavoring and now grows all over the United States. It has become naturalized and does not cause any harm since it is not displacing or outcompeting any of our native species. Another example is lake trout, they are native only to the Great Lakes, but they are non-native in Yellowstone Lake in Wyoming where they compete with the native cutthroat trout for habitat.

Non-Native but not invasive



Native, can be **invasive** under certain conditions



Most people are familiar with our native white-tailed deer, but if their population exceeds the carrying capacity of the area it could destroy the habitat for birds and other species that are using those resources as well. In this case, the deer would be considered invasive, even though they are a native species.

The following sites are just a few of the many information sources out there about invasive species. Find out more about which ones are in your area!

<https://www.invasive.org/>

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/plantsanimals/invasive/>

<http://www.sleloinvasives.org/>

<https://www.nyimainvasives.org/>

<https://www.eddmaps.org/midatlantic/Species/>

<https://www.nwf.org/Educational-Resources/Wildlife-Guide/Threats-to-Wildlife/Invasive-Species>



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