

Invasive Species

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Session Goals:

1. To introduce market-goers to the idea of invasive species and why they are problematic.
2. Help market-goers identify some common invasive plant species and distinguish them from common natives found in the same habitat in Minnesota.
3. Provide information on some of the ongoing research in Minnesota to track the spread of invasive species in MN and understand the risks of invasion under the current climate and under climate change scenarios.

Activities

Activity #1 – Which is the invasive species? ID game

Desired Learning outcomes:

1. Help market-goers identify some common invasive plant species and distinguish them from common natives found in the same habitat in Minnesota

Materials:

1. Flash cards with pictures on the front and species information on the reverse:
<https://drive.google.com/open?id=oBzRAtpf66okgWGowYnNIMGZwUlk>

Lesson:

Market-goers are invited to look at the flash card and chose which of the two pictures is the invasive species and if they are willing provide a reason. Then flip the card and see if they are correct and we discuss how to distinguish that species from other common species and why the invasive is bad for MN ecosystems.

Activity #2 – Make your own “Nature Alien”

Desired Learning outcomes:

1. Teach kids the basics of invasive species – what are they and how are they harmful and tie it to the idea of a nature invasion by “nature aliens”

Materials:

2. Paper, Glue, craft supplies (googly eyes, markers, etc.),
3. Natural materials small enough to glue to paper (e.g. moss, leaves, petals, twigs, acorn caps, seeds, etc.)



Lesson:

Kids come and talk about what is a “nature alien” and link the idea with invasive species while making their piece of art.

Activity #3 – Research on Invasive plant species of Minnesota

Desired Learning outcomes:

1. Exposure to current research in Minnesota on the invasion risk of new invasive species to Minnesota.

Materials:

1. Poster: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BzRAtpf660kgX1VRN2ZrMHBsTG8>

Lesson:

Poster is presented and people can ask questions.

Optional handouts

Why should I care about Invasive Species?:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BzRAtpf660kgS1NIb0MwM3RMcWc>

MN noxious weeds brochure:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BzRAtpf660kgemVfSoI5WIVReFE>

Wisconsin Invasive Plants Brochure:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BzRAtpf660kgT1Ewa0N1Vm92eHc>

MIPN Landscaping Alternatives to Invasive Plants:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BzRAtpf660kgODdoYTJtZoZldGc>

Recommended age range

Activity 1: 12 and up

Activity 2: 3-13

Activity 3: 12 and up

Recommended citation for this lesson plan:

Briscoe Runquist, Ryan. 2016. Invasive Species. marketsci.org

