Why Should We Care About Invasive Species?

Invasive species can negatively impact some of your favourite foods, drinks, sports, and activities. Here are some examples and photos.

Click on the links for more information about some of the invasive species.

FOODS

- **Maple syrup**. Asian long-horned beetle larvae eat maple trees from the inside out, affecting the production of maple syrup.
- **Pasta**. The Khapra beetle threatens our grains, including macaroni, spaghetti, and other pasta.
- **Fruit**. The False codling moth and Brown marmorated stink bug are threats to our fruits, including apples and pears.
- **Jam**. The Brown marmorated stink bug feeds on the grapes used to make grape jelly. Spotted wing drosophila larvae eat berries.
- **Rice**. The Khapra beetle can infest stored rice.
- **Vegetables**. Japanese beetles will skeletonize the leaves of vegetable plants, including tomatoes, okra, and beans. Japanese beetle grubs feed on the roots of corn, beet, beans, asparagus, tomato, and onion.
- **Corn on the cob**. Japanese beetles can eat more than 300 types of plants. They will feed on corn silk tassels, preventing them from being pollinated and producing corn kernels.
- **Berries**. Spotted wing drosophila larvae devour garden and native fruits including blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, huckleberries, salmonberries, saskatoon, currants, and many other fruits.
- **Nutella**. Brown marmorated stink bugs are threatening 70% of the world's hazelnut supply, grown in Turkey.

DRINKS

- **Lemonade**. Citrus greening disease threatens citrus fruits.
- **Orange juice**. Mexican fruit fly maggots can ruin many of our fruits, including oranges.

- **Apple juice**. Japanese beetles eat more than 300 types of plants, including apples.
- **Grape juice**. The Brown marmorated stink bug puts the Okanagan grape industry at risk.
- **Mango lassi / smoothie**. Mexican fruit fly larvae attack at least 60 varieties of fruit, especially mangos.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

- **Hiking**. Emerald ash borer, Asian long-horned beetle, Spongy moth, and a fungus-like disease called Sudden oak death could kill trees along your favorite hiking trails. Giant hogweed can cause burns, and Burdock covers clothing and gear with sticky burrs. Puncturevine seeds are so sharp they can go through shoe soles.
- **Dog walking**. Puncturevine can hurt your pets' feet and Burdock burrs can get stuck all over their fur.
- **Gardening**. The Japanese beetle munches on more than 300 different types of plants, including rose flowers, tree leaves, and fruit and vegetable plants.
- **Camping**. Emerald ash borer, Asian long-horned beetle, and Spongy moth could kill the trees and bushes at your summer campsite. Your clothing and gear can get covered in burrs and if carpet burweed is found, the campground could shut down.
- **Biking**. Invasive insect pests could change the tree-lined scenery of your favorite bike route. Puncturevine seeds are so sharp they could give you a flat tire.
- **Bird watching**. Invasive insects, like Spongy moth, can destroy bird habitats and trees. European starlings and House sparrows are invasive birds that take over other birds' nest sites. Starlings will kill other birds' chicks.
- **Baseball**. Emerald ash borer has destroyed tens of millions of ash trees in the United States and could turn ash baseball bats into a luxury item.
- **Swimming, boating and water sports**. Zebra and Quagga mussels take over lakes and streams, their sharp shells cut bare feet, and they damage docks and water pipes. Their waste makes lakes smell terrible. Eurasian watermilfoil clogs lakes and streams, forming thick mats. Parks and swimming areas may be closed as people have drowned due to this plant.

TRADITIONAL AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

- **Berry picking.** Spotted wing drosophila larvae eat native fruit including blueberries, strawberries, huckleberries, salmonberries, saskatoon, currants, and many others. Invasive plants such as knotweeds, knapweeds, and Burdock can block access to areas where berries grow or can outcompete berry plants.
- **Hunting.** Hounds tongue and Common tansy have toxins that cause liver damage to wild and domestic grazing animals. Grazing wildlife, like deer, elk, and moose, don't like the taste of knapweeds and Blueweed, so they have to move to different areas to feed and leave traditional hunting grounds. Burdock and Hounds tongue

have seeds that stick to fur like Velcro, causing injuries and stress to wildlife.

» **Plant Harvesting** (e.g. Medicinal, Cultural, Foods)**.** Infestations of Oxeye daisy, Orange hawkweed, knotweeds, Blueweed, knapweeds, and Scotch broom can form dense patches that restrict access to harvestable species. These invasive plants outcompete native species and reduce biodiversity, including key harvest species and culturally important plants. Knapweeds and leafy spurge cause skin irritations, making it hard to harvest where they grow. Rush skeletonweed aggressively outcompetes medicinal plants such as sage, sweetgrass, and bitterroot.

» **Fishing**. Invasive fish, like Goldfish, Yellow perch, Smallmouth bass, and Largemouth bass compete with and eat native fish including salmon and trout. Eurasian watermilfoil can form a thick mat and get caught in your boat propeller and rudder. Knotweeds and Yellow flag iris growing along streamsides increases bank erosion, causing sedimentation. This negatively impacts salmon and other fish health and habitat, resulting in reduced harvesting.

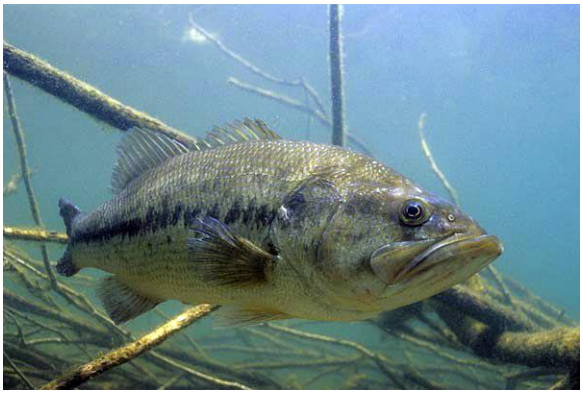
Some Invasive Species that Negatively Impact Foods, Drinks, and Recreational Activities

Spongy moth (Credit: H. Lemme)

Asian long-horned beetle (Credit: K. Law)

Spotted wing drosophila (Credit: M. Cooper)

Quagga mussel (Credit: A. Benson)



Largemouth bass (Credit: Wetaworm.com)

Brown marmorated stink bug (Credit: ISCBC)

Yellow perch (Credit: M. Herborg)

Japanese beetle (Credit: D. Cappert)

Eurasian watermilfoil (Credit: A. Fox)

Japanese knotweed (Credit: B. Stewart)

Burdock (Credit: K. Bissat)

Blueweed (Credit: J. Leekie)

Giant hogweed (Credit: FVRD)