

Activity 9: Aliens Among Us



Invasive species may cause environmental and economic harm. They can out-compete the native species with a very aggressive reproduction system or because they lack natural predators. Invasives can also pose a significant threat to the biodiversity of the new area and create enormous costs to agriculture and forestry as well as the health of animals (including humans). Research studies indicate that more than \$120 billion is spent yearly in the United States to control about 900 invasive species and repair their damage. The environmental losses, extinction of native plants and animals, and reduced biodiversity and natural beauty are incalculable.*

* The Washington Post, January 2010



Natives vs. Non-Natives

Tool Kit

- Internet or library resources
- List five native and five non-native insects. Research to find if they cause significant economic damage.

NATIVES VS. NON-NATIVES SURVEY DATA SHEET

Insect	Native	Non-native	No. Damage	Causes Damage
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

- Make a chart (can be in your journal) with 10 rows for the insects and five columns titled: Insect, Native, Non-native, No. Damage, Causes Damage.
- Complete the chart for the 10 insects you studied.
- Next, choose a non-native insect that is a problem in your area. Research to find out the following:
 - Country of origin.
 - Method of entry into the United States.
 - A comparison of ecological factors in the country of origin and those in your area.
 Write a report or make an informational poster

Life Skills

ENTOMOLOGY SKILL: Distinguishing between native and non-native species.

SCIENCE STANDARD: Understand and explain the significance of introduced species and describe the consequent harm to native species and the environment in general.

SUCCESS INDICATOR: Finding five native and five non-native insect species.

Talk It Over

SHARE WHAT HAPPENED: Was it easier to find native or non-native insects?

APPLY:

- How can competition for resources cause conflicts between species?
- Who should decide which species should be protected and what factors should be considered in making this decision?

GENERALIZE TO YOUR LIFE: What non-native, invasive species are a problem in your area?
