

# Into the Weeds

## Wanted Poster

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**Grade Level:** 3 - 8

### Activity Description

After learning about invasive and native species with Rivers Are Alive, your students can continue developing their understanding through a fun and simple post-activity. Students should now have an understanding that invasive species are plants or animals that have been introduced to a new habitat, often by humans, and that they are harmful to that new environment. In this post-activity, your students will choose an invasive plant or animal that lives along the St. Croix River and learn more about it as they create their wanted poster.

Take a look at our example posters to get an idea of the criteria you might want to include to guide your students as they research the invasive plant or animal of their choosing. Some guiding research questions for your students could include:

- Where did your invasive species come from?
- How or why was it introduced to the St. Croix River or to the region?
- Where does it live now?
- How long has it been here?
- How does it harm the environment, other plants and animals, and the economy?
- Are scientists doing anything to control the spread or get rid of this invasive species?
- How can you help stop the spread of this invasive species?

Depending on grade level and time, you can keep this activity simple with just a couple guiding questions or make it more in-depth. You might even choose to have students make a flyer or brochure that has more information than the poster.

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Let us know if you enjoyed doing this post-activity with your class. If you send in photos of your students' finished posters, we might upload some as examples on our website!

Contact: Nicole Biagi, Outdoor Educator, [nbiagi@wildriversconservancy.org](mailto:nbiagi@wildriversconservancy.org)

# WANTED

## ASIAN CARP



BILLY THE "BIGHEAD"



THE "SILVER" BULLET

THESE TWO OUTLAWS HAVE BEEN REEKING HAVOC ON MANY AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS. THESE COUSINS HAVE YET TO BECOME ESTABLISHED IN THE ST. CROIX RIVER.

IF THEY DID, IT WOULD BE HARD TO GO BOATING AS THEY TEND TO FLY OUT OF THE WATER CAUSING INJURIES OR DAMAGES TO YOUR BOAT.





PHOTO: David Tenenbaum - UW Madison

## STOP THE SPREAD!



Buckthorn is often spread by birds who eat the plant's berries and poop them out miles away. We can't stop birds from eating and pooping, but we can help by learning to identify it and removing it from our yard. That way birds will have to find other native plants to eat and spread! We can also help by brushing our boots after we go for a hike so that we don't accidentally spread seeds to a new area.

## WANTED: BUCKTHORN

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**Problem:** Buckthorn is a shrub that quickly spreads through woodlands. Its leaves turn green very early in the spring so it creates a lot of shade, making it difficult for native plants like sugar maples to grow. Eventually, buckthorn will shade out all the smaller plants in the area.  
**Where did it come from?** Europe and Asia  
**Where is it now?** Buckthorn now grows in at least 35 states in the U.S.