



INVASIVE SPECIES ACTIVITY PACKET

Engage young people, the next generation of decision makers, to protect our natural resources with these critical thinking activities that show how non-native invasive species are affecting the forests and rivers that Tucker the Turtle and his friends call home.

Invasive Species

Definition: A non-native aggressive organism that is in some way harmful to either the environment, economy, or human health.

Zebra mussel



Native to Eurasia, these mussels outcompete and smother native mussels, clog intake pipes, and alter food webs.

Invasive Carp



Native to Asia, these four species alter food webs. The silver carp can jump ten feet out of the water, posing harm to people.

Eurasian Watermilfoil



Native to Eurasia, this plant outcompetes natives for light and space, changing habitat whole and making boating difficult.

Why do we care about invasive species?

- They take over – they don't play nice, and they kick out the other species. This means our entire ecosystems change, and we are at risk for losing some of our native species.
- Some of them are harmful to people. Some plants like wild parsnip burn your skin if you touch them; broken zebra mussel shells on beaches will cut your feet; and jumping silver carp can knock you off your boat.
- They can impact how we use our outdoor areas. Curlyleaf pondweed dies in early summer, and its decaying leaves lead to increased nutrient levels and subsequent algae blooms.

What can kids do about invasive species? *Kids are an important part of our solution!*

- Kids who fish should never release their bait (throw it out!).
- Kids whose families own boats can help check the boat and trailer for attached plants and animals to pick off before leaving the river or lake.
- Kids can learn which invasive species are in the area, and keep an eye out! Let an adult know if you see something.
- Finally... kids can talk about invasive species. Tell a parent or guardian. Tell a friend. Write about it in the school newspaper. The more people who know, the more we can protect our waters.



Contact information:

Maria Young, Invasive Species Coordinator
myoung@wildriversconservancy.org

Find the Pests that Damage Tucker's Home!!

Non-native invasive species can be introduced into an area for a variety of reasons but these organisms harm river, wetland, and forest habitats that native plants need to survive.

X E Z E B R A M U S S E L K J C Q F G E
N F E U K Z B W C I F F X N W H X E C M
E I J Q I W Q Q E U N C X S T I M O H E
V R S D K U E Q R U T D N N B N E B Y R
A T J A P A N E S E K N O T W E E D D A
E S C X C E O O I J U Q X F G S T R R L
H E M L O C K W O O L L Y A D E L G I D
F S L T V Q D G T V B E R I H M B T L A
O O B S D D K S Y G T L K F P Y C Q L S
E O K R Z U A I V U I G C B M S Z G A H
E L I V D S T Y N C U N Y N F T J V O B
R E I Z U P K I M M G V I P G E V R C O
T L U C Y Q M U S G S W V U S R S B S R
Y P D I J A S Q Z J B L K Z S Y L V R E
Z R U Q E T U H F Q M I R L K S M Q T R
K U F L A M S K R Y F J R M C N O O Y K
L P I R M H S I F D A E H E K A N S T N
V M D Z W V U N X W T A T O A I J L P H
W Y Q K N C D E P Z H L U R U L U R K O
S S A R G T L I T S E S E N A P A J T Y

Word Bank:

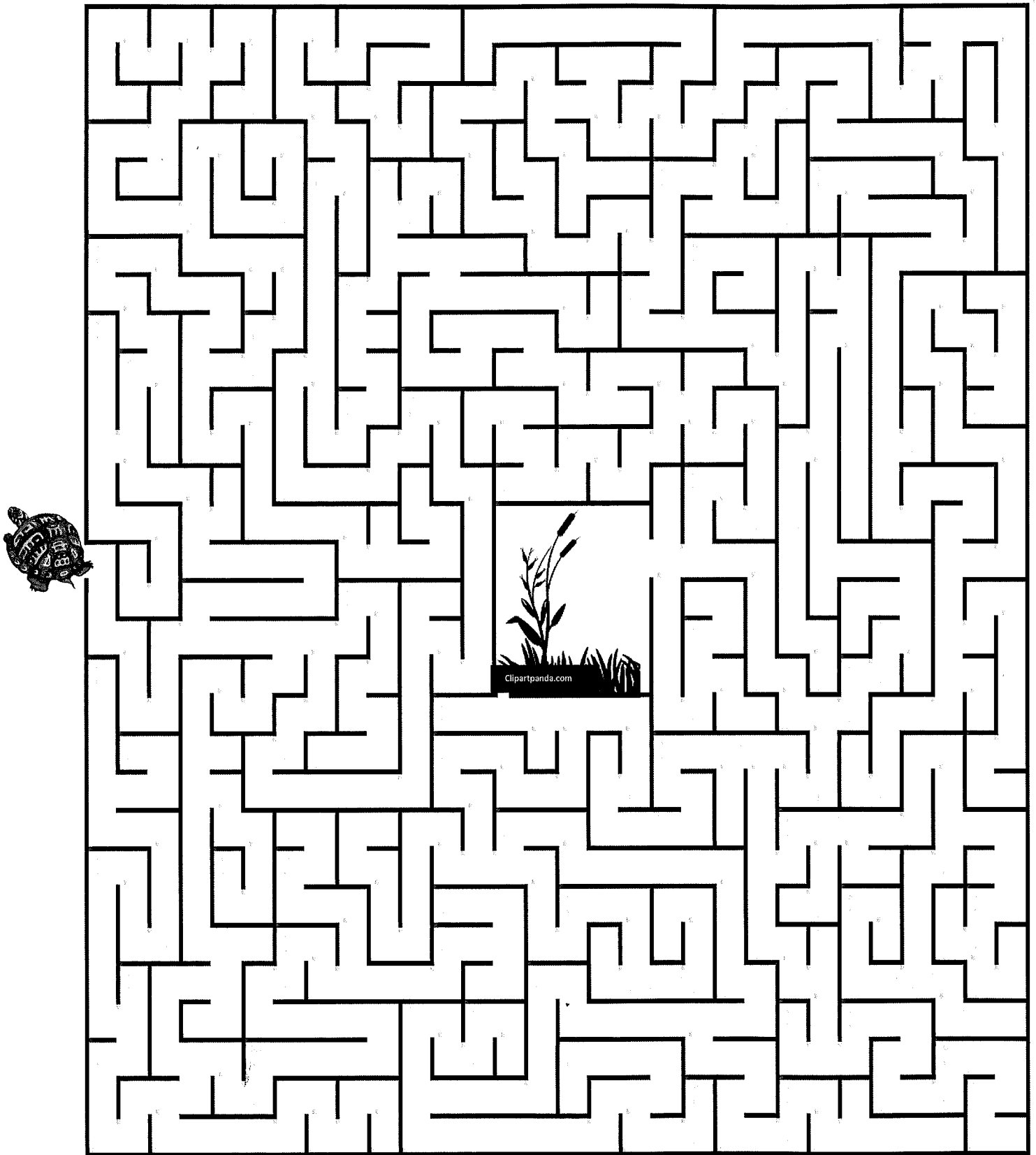
CHINESE MYSTERY SNAIL
EMERALD ASH BORER
GARLIC MUSTARD
GYPSY MOTH
HEMLOCK WOOLLY ADELGID
HYDRILLA
JAPANESE KNOTWEED

JAPANESE STILTGRASS
KUDZU
MILE-A-MINUTE
PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE
SNAKEHEAD FISH
TREE OF HEAVEN
ZEBRA MUSSEL



Learn more about Tucker the Turtle at <http://www.phcwpma.org/Tucker/>.

Tucker Loves Wetlands!



Tucker loves to explore the beautiful wetlands around his home. But his favorite spots are quickly being taken over by purple loosestrife, a non-native invasive species. This plant may have beautiful purple flowers but it grows quickly! We must work to protect Tucker's favorite areas from disappearing!

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This is *Garlic Mustard*. It was brought here to flavor people's food, but now it's getting in the way of my food!



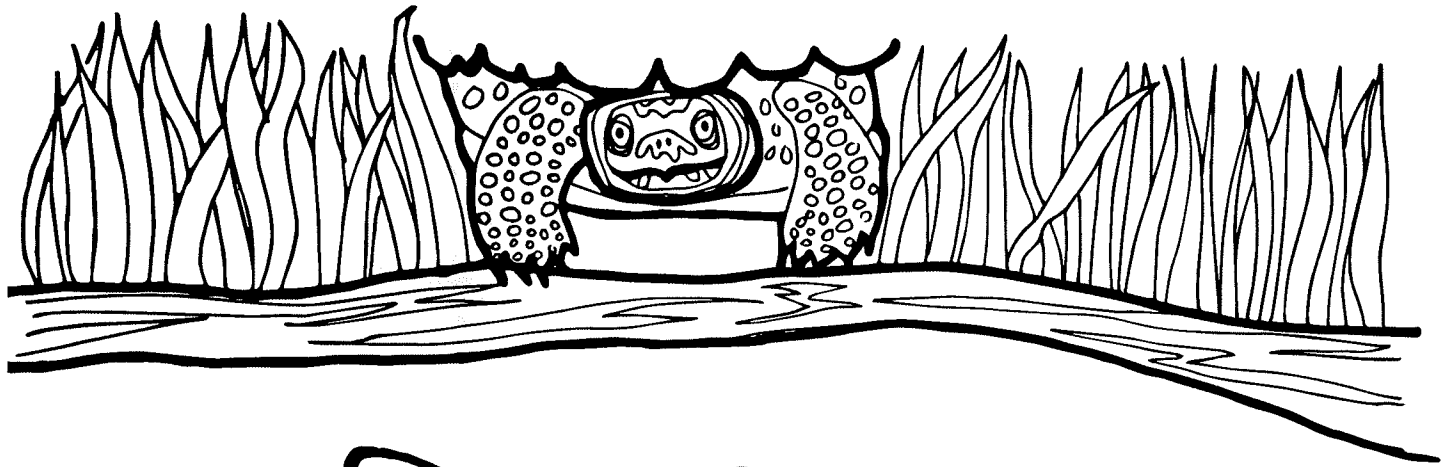
These Gypsy Moth Caterpillars are eating all my beautiful oak trees!
What will my forest friends eat without oak acorns?



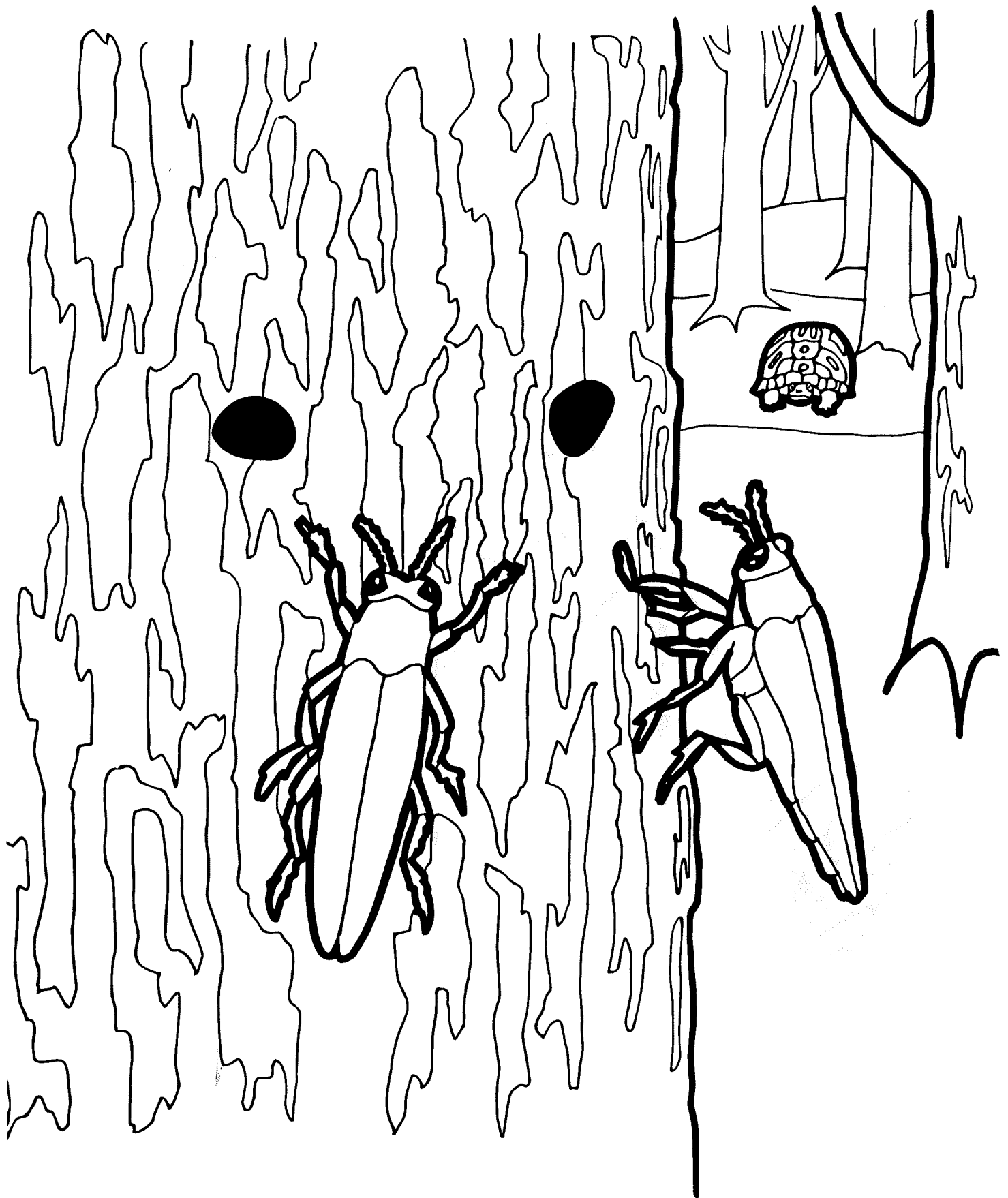
It's no mystery why the Chinese Mystery Snail is a problem—my neighbors and I can't eat them or they'll give us diseases!



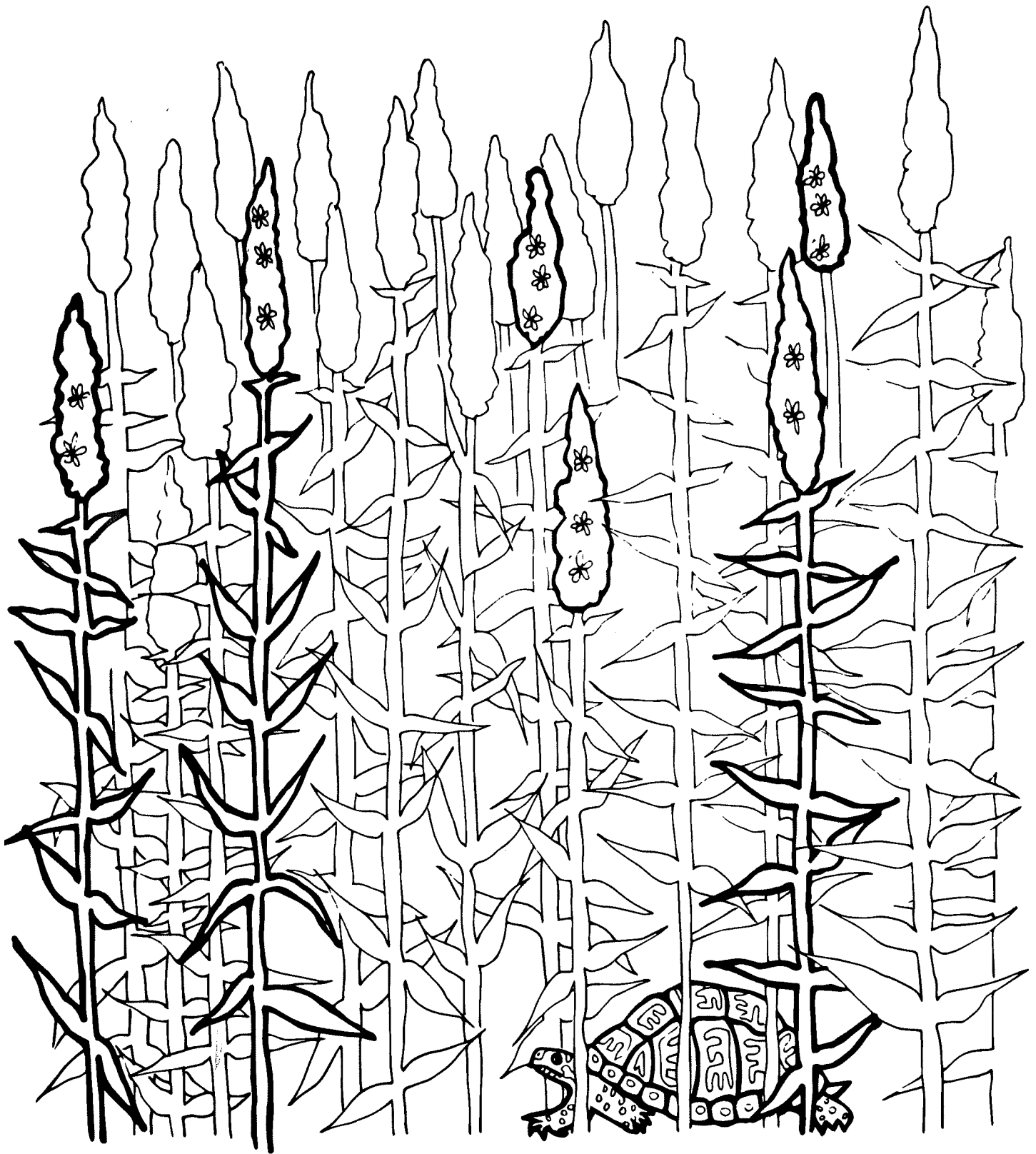
Japanese Knotweed looks like harmless bamboo,
but don't be fooled—it's a danger to our streams and trout!



Zebra Mussels are very aggressive and pick fights with my neighbors,
the native mussels. They're bullies!



The Emerald Ash Borer hitched a ride here on firewood, and now they're bugging our ash trees. What horrible visitors!



Purple Loosestrife may look pretty, but it takes over wetlands from other wildflowers. Didn't anyone tell it "sharing is caring?"