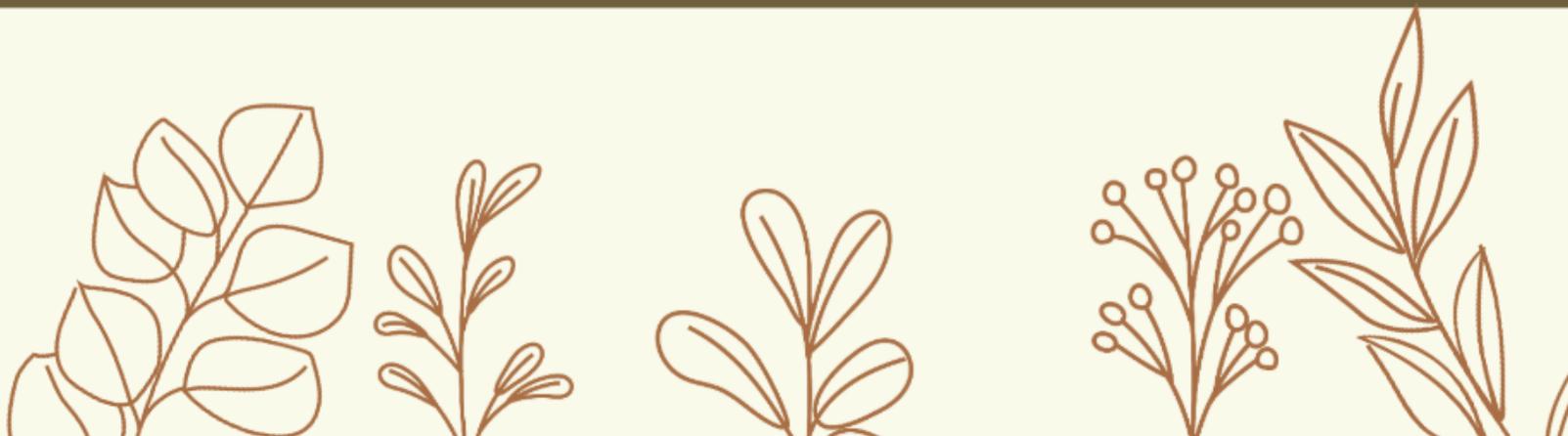




INVASIVE PLANTS

SCAVENGER HUNT

Instructions for Organizer



1.



This Girl Scout Gold Award program is meant to spread awareness to children about invasive plants and their effects on our environments, and is partnered with Chester Ridley Crum Watershed Association (CRC), a volunteer organization focused on restoring our local preserves and watersheds, and with GO Wilma!, an adventure program for young children that combines reading and outdoor fun.



2.

TOOLS NEEDED:

- **HIKING BOOTS/OUTDOOR SHOES**
- **PENCILS OR PENS**
- **WATER BOTTLES**
- **SCAVENGER HUNT WORKSHEETS**

3.



DIRECTIONS:

- Beginning at the Okehocking parking lot by Delchester Road, hand out the scavenger hunt worksheets and read the directions at the top aloud.
- While you are walking follow the blue trail arrows, looking for red flags identifying areas containing invasive plants. Once a plant has been found and observed, encourage your group to continue searching for invasive plants on the checklist that may not have been marked, sharing the fun facts listed on the next page or create your own!



FUN FACTS AND CONVERSATION STARTERS

Feel free to use these or any of your own!

- * People can spread invasive plants from seeds stuck to their shoes, or by moving firewood long distances to foreign environments, even birds and animals can transport plants through the seeds they digest.
- * There have been around 37,000 invasive species introduced worldwide.
- * Invasive plants infest more than 100 million acres of land in the US, and about 3 million acres are lost to invasive plants each year.
- * The majority of invasive plants are introduced primarily for ornamental and landscape decoration, while others have been introduced for food or agriculture
- * What makes up an ecosystem? (plants, animals, weather, soil, climate, atmosphere, etc.--when invasive plants are introduced, they can damage these conditions)
- * What types of environments can invasive species and plants develop in?
- * The annual U.S. cost from invasives is estimated to be \$120 billion
- * There are nearly 8,700 non-native plant species in the US

5. Invasive Plant Checklist



AUTUMN OLIVE



This plant has alternating, oval-shaped leaves that are green on the surface and silver underneath, and produces yellow-white flowers in the spring and red berries in the fall (NOT EDIBLE).



SHEPHERD'S PURSE



A small, thin plant with distinctive heart-shaped seed pods. In the spring and summer these plants produce small white flowers with four petals at the top of the stem.



BUSH HONEYSUCKLE



This species forms thickets of upright growth with opposite, dark green leaves, producing white-yellow flowers with a distinctive sweet scent.



MULTIFLORA ROSE



A thorny, multi-stemmed shrub with curved thorns and small saw-toothed leaves, produces clusters of fragrant white-pink flowers in the summer.



GARLIC MUSTARD



A herb that has garlic-scented, heart-shaped leaves, that produces small white four-petaled flowers.



WINEBERRY



A close relative of raspberries and blackberries, wine berry is a thorny shrub with reddish haired stems and leaves that produces bright red berries.



BORDER PRIVET



This deciduous shrub can grow up to 10 feet tall, with opposite, oval shaped leaves. It features small, white trumpet-shaped flowers that produces small, round black berries (NOT EDIBLE).



ORIENTAL BITTERSWEET



Oriental bittersweet is a deciduous vine with alternate, glossy leaves that produces green-yellow fruits that split open in the fall to reveal bright red berries (NOT EDIBLE).

6.

CONCLUSION MEETING:

Once the group has completed the trail, have a final meeting.

Reflection Questions:

- Why is it important to know about invasive plants?
- Why are invasive plants dangerous?
- How has your awareness of invasive plants grown?

What can you do to help?

- When using firewood for a camp, keep it local; firewood can contain invasive seeds that can spread easily
- When hiking clean your boots and equipment before and after you enter a trail (remind group to do so now)
- Use native or non-invasive plants for your gardens
- If you identify an invasive plant, remember to have an adult nearby. A plant may have thorns or deep root systems, making it difficult to remove. If the plant is too difficult, remove as much as you can, and safely dispose of in a trash can.

7.

Additional Resources



This program is partnered with CRC (Chester Ridley Crum Watershed Association), scan the QR code to learn more about their volunteering events and opportunities.

This program is also partnered with GO Wilma!, a free outdoor adventure program for young children. Scan the QR code to learn more!

