

ALIEN INVASION



Invasive species

are the number one threat to forest health in New York State. Non-native pests and diseases are more likely to cause damage because they don't have any natural enemies. When they left their homeland, the invasive species left behind their predators and diseases. With nothing to control their populations, they can quickly take over an area.

Purple loosestrife and Norway maple are non-native plants that have been sold at garden centers for use in landscaping. Their seeds traveled away from the gardens, and the plants "escaped" and spread into wild areas. They crowd out native plants and don't provide food for native wildlife.

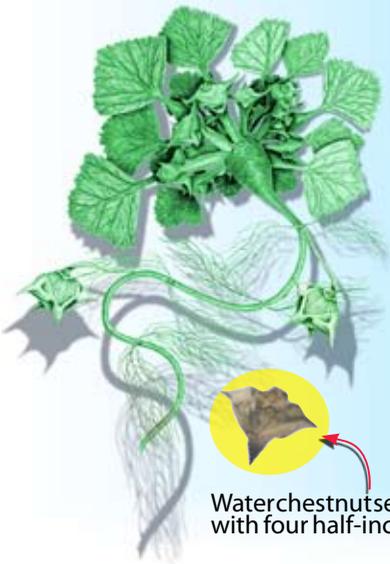


Asian longhorned beetles attack many kinds of trees but prefer maple trees, especially sugar maples. This tree is infested and probably will not survive.



WATER CHESTNUT

The roots of this plant anchor it in the mud at the bottom of waterbodies while a long stem stretches to a clump of leaves floating on the surface of the water. Water chestnut can become so plentiful that their leaves prevent sunlight from reaching underwater plants that need it for photosynthesis. To help limit the spread of water chestnut, people should completely clean their boats and all of their gear before moving from one waterbody to another.



Water chestnut seeds are hard nuts with four half-inch barbed spines.



Thick floating mats make it difficult for boaters and swimmers to enjoy the water.

To limit its spread, teams of people cut garlic mustard down or pull it up before the seeds form each year.

GARLIC MUSTARD

Garlic mustard was brought here from Europe in the 1860s to be used for food and medicine. It escaped from garden plantings into nearby woods. It comes out early in the spring, and shades native plants by growing 2-3 1/2 feet tall. The native plants have trouble getting enough sunlight to grow. Garlic mustard produces many seeds, so the plants can spread far in just a few years.



SPINY WATER FLEA



This tiny crustacean from northern Europe and Asia arrived in the Great Lakes in ballast water of ocean-going ships. It has spread to inland lakes, including Great Sacandaga Lake. Spiny water fleas disrupt food chains in the areas they invade by competing with native zooplankton (microscopic aquatic animals) for food, as well as eating native zooplankton.

Did you know...

There are more than 900 million ash trees in New York, about seven percent of all the trees in the state.

Many baseball bats are made from New York State-grown ash trees?

Foresters set traps to catch and study EAB. If you see a trap, leave it alone!

Leaf and seeds of an ash tree



It's really only this big!



After the larvae pupate, EABs emerge as adults.

EMERALD ASH BORER (EAB)

The name says it all—it's emerald green and it eats ash trees. Adult emerald ash borers are about 1/2-inch long. Females lay their eggs on ash trees. When the eggs hatch, the larvae chew through the bark and live between the bark and the wood, eating the inner bark, disrupting the flow of water and nutrients. Eventually they cause enough damage that the tree dies. In June 2009, EAB were found for the first time in New York State, in Cattaraugus County.