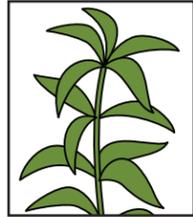


Invasive Species are plants or animals that make their home in places where they are not usually found and are not wanted. When they move into a new area, they can harm the lands and waters that native plants and animals need to survive. Invasive species can threaten the well-being of all living things that exist in their new home.

Worldwide, the damage from invasive species totals more than \$1.4 trillion dollars – five percent of the world’s economy. This is why stopping the spread of invasive species is very important to protect native plants and animals across Alaska. In some cases, it is a matter of survival.

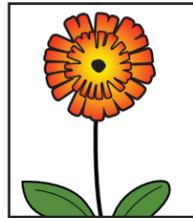
Below are descriptions of six different Invasive Species either already found in Alaska or at high-risk for spreading into Alaska.



Elodea

This leafy plant grows in the water and is often called a water weed. It is a common aquarium plant that people dump into lakes and streams. Elodea grows very quickly and can even survive when frozen in ice.

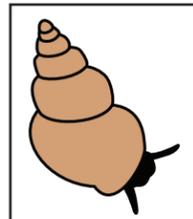
Elodea gets so tangled and messy that native plants cannot grow and fish cannot move around or find food. Elodea makes it hard for people to boat, swim or fish in the water.



Orange Hawkweed

This plant was first planted because it has a pretty, red-orange color. Now the plant is a problem because it grows very quickly and takes over the other plants around it. New hawkweed plants grow from seeds that fly through the air, and from their stems that run along the ground. Once hawkweed starts growing it is VERY hard to get rid of!

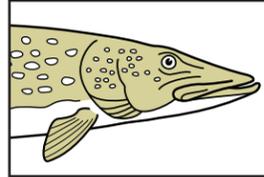
that fly through the air, and from their stems that run along the ground. Once hawkweed starts growing it is VERY hard to get rid of!



New Zealand Mud Snails

These snails are not yet in Alaska, but are a high-risk invader. The snails are tiny (about the size of an apple seed). Their numbers can grow very quickly. They would eat all of the

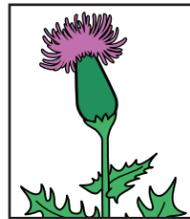
food that Alaskan snails and water insects need in order to survive. Then Alaska fish and birds would suffer, because the native snails and insects they eat would be all gone.



Northern Pike

These fish are native to most of Alaska. They become invasive when they are put into lakes and rivers where they don't naturally belong. Sometimes

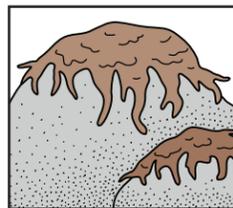
people use live pike as bait for fishing. Pike eat other fish that people eat, too, like salmon and trout. When there are no salmon and trout to catch, fishing is not fun, and animals, like bears, won't have any food to eat.



Canada Thistle

This plant doesn't need a seed in order to grow. New thistle plants can grow from little buds on its deep roots! These buds grow into more thistles and spread very easy. The thistle grows in thick patches,

choking out native plants. Its sharp, prickly leaves are no fun to walk through.

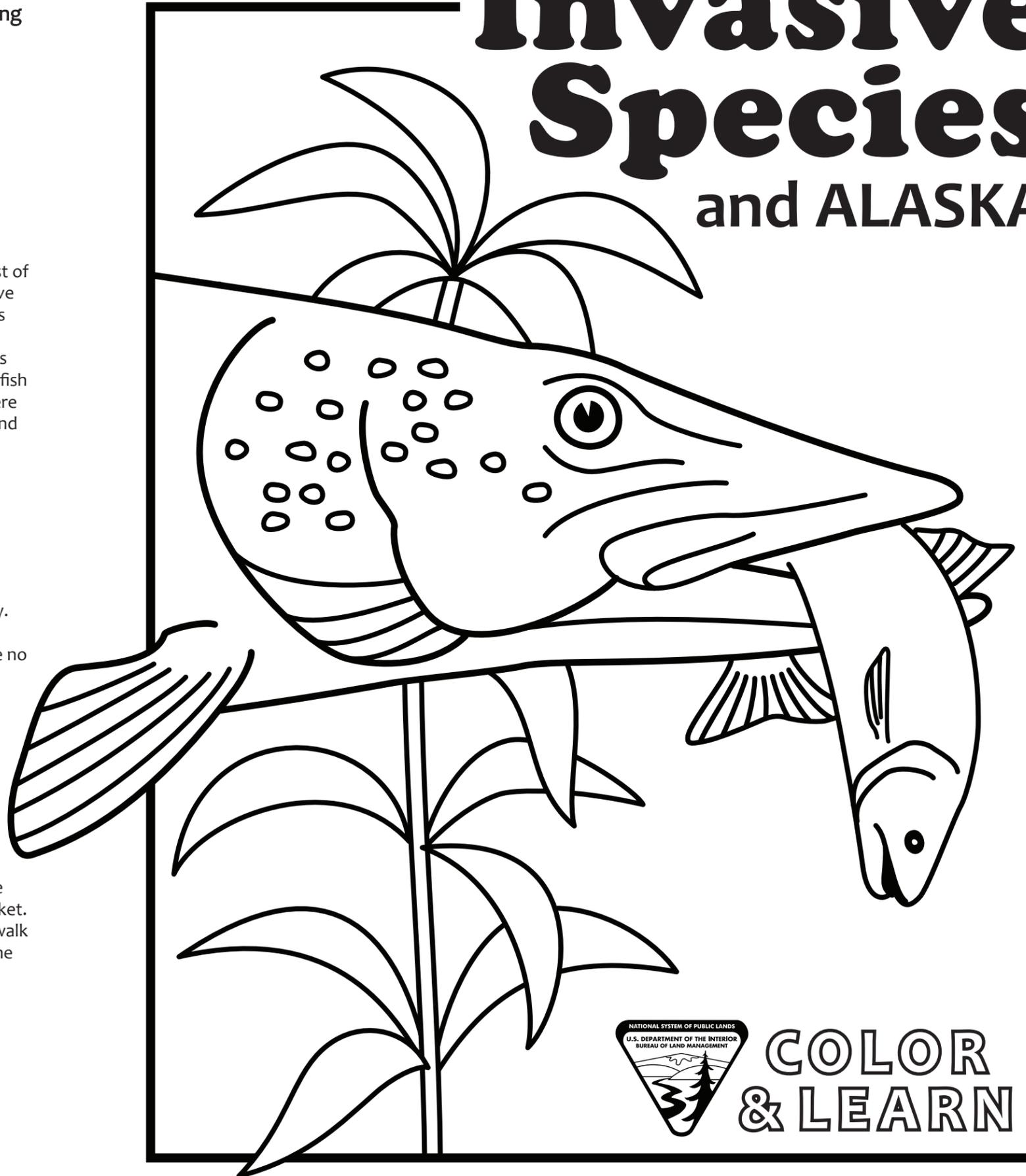


Didymo

Didymo, also known as “Rock Snot,” is an algae that lives in cold fresh water. It is native to some areas in Alaska, but is a high-risk species for spreading to other areas and becoming

invasive. In late winter, Didymo grows and covers the rocks on the bottom of rivers and streams like a blanket. This hurts stream areas and the food fish eat. If you walk on it you can slip and fall. Didymo can spread from one place to a new place in a single drop of water.

Invasive Species and ALASKA



For more information go to

<http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/INV/noxweeds.html>

http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/fisheries/Aquatic_Invasive_Species.html



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COLOR & LEARN

Can you find 6 different Invasive Species?

(Answers on back)

