

Biological Invasion Terminology

Biological invasion

The expansion of a species into an area where it did not previously live. This can refer to both human-caused introductions AND natural range expansions, and it implies that there is some harm caused by the species.

Native range

The area where a species naturally occurs.

Native species, indigenous species

These terms refer to species that occur naturally in an area, and have NOT been introduced or transported there by humans (on purpose or by accident).

Introduced species, non-indigenous species, non-native species, alien species

These terms generally refer to species that have spread beyond their native range. These terms are typically used to describe species which are established (there is a population reproducing in the wild). However, they do not specify whether or not a species is “invasive” (and therefore considered harmful).

Invasive species

Generally, this term refers to a species that is introduced to an area outside its native range which survives and reproduces, AND causes economical and/or environmental harm in the area of introduction.

Vector, pathway

The way in which a species is moved from one place to another. The term typically refers to objects or materials, such as soil, ballast water, hiking boots, boat hulls, etc. It can also refer to an action, such as intentional stocking.

Disturbance

A change in the environment or ecosystem that alters the biological community. This can occur on a large or small scale, and can be natural (such as a hurricane or forest fire) or a result of human activity (such as urbanization or agriculture).

Invasibility

This term describes how easily a habitat or ecosystem is invaded by introduced species.

Propagule pressure

Describes how many individuals of a non-native species are introduced, how many times they are introduced, and in how many locations in a given ecosystem.

Resources for more information on invasive species

National:

USDA invasive species website

<https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/index.shtml>

Center for invasive species and ecosystem health

www.invasives.org

USGS invasive species website

https://www2.usgs.gov/ecosystems/invasive_species/index.html

State:

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

<http://ohiodnr.gov/invasivespecies> and <http://ohiodnr.gov/invasiveplants>

Ohio Invasive Plants Council

<http://www.oipc.info/invasive-plants-of-ohio.html>

Ohio Plants

<http://ohioplants.org/invasives/>

Kentucky Exotic Pest Plant Council

<https://www.se-eppc.org/ky/>

Local organizations involved with invasive species eradication:

Western Wildlife Corridor

<http://westernwildlifecorridor.org/>

Great Parks of Hamilton County

<http://www.greatparks.org/discovery/projects/removing-invasive-species>

Cincinnati Wildflower Preservation Society

<http://www.cincywildflower.org/>

Wild Ones Greater Cincinnati chapter (many educational materials)

<http://www.cincinnatiwildones.org/>