



NISAW

NATIONAL INVASIVE
SPECIES AWARENESS WEEK

NISAW 101: National Invasive Species Awareness Week 2020

Welcome to NISAW! We are so glad you found us. Now in its tenth year, National Invasive Species Awareness Week is a nationwide event occurring in the spring to raise awareness of invasive species and how people can prevent their spread to protect natural ecosystems for future generations. If you're new to NISAW, this document will help catch you up and give you the tools to create awareness in your community. Thank you for your support!

We hope you make NISAW your own. Nobody knows your community's invasive species challenges and potential solutions like you do. Share your success with the hashtags #NISAW and #InvasiveSpecies and tag us @InvasiveSpeciesWeek on Facebook.

What is NISAW?

- NISAW 2020 takes place in two parts across North America:
 - Feb 24-28: focus on advocacy & education
 - May 16-23: focus on local events & awareness
- The goal of the first week is to educate elected officials and the public about the threat of invasive species and what can be done.
- The goal of the second week is to connect individuals and public officials with local organizations who *offer invasive species removal, restoration, or awareness events and opportunities. We provide tools to help organizations connect with their elected officials to see invasive species work being done and to learn what invasive species*

management involves. Ultimately, we want to create positive outcomes in habitats through education, legislation and local action.

- NISAW is led by the [North American Invasive Species Management Association](#)
- Everyone is invited to participate, including:
 - professional invasive species managers and researchers to share their work
 - venues and organizations to host volunteer, education and outreach events
 - general public to amplify the message for their neighbors and elected officials, and elected officials to amplify the message for their constituents
- The campaign hashtag is **#NISAW** and **#InvasiveSpecies**
- All campaign materials are online at <https://www.naisma.org/programs/nisaw/>

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How can organizations and agencies participate?

Organizations and individuals are encouraged to *join together in projects, events and activities that promote stopping the spread of invasive species* — everything personally preventing the spread of invasive species to reporting invasions to authorities.

The creativity local organizers bring to NISAW is what gives this week its energy. We love seeing all the different ways you find to engage your community.

But hey, we can't be inventive all the time, especially if we're already busy doing the hard work of managing invasives in the field. To you invasive species managers, we salute you -- and humbly offer these 13 suggestions of things individuals, organizations, or agencies can do to participate in NISAW. Remember to use **#NISAW** and **#InvasiveSpecies** in your publicity so we can celebrate our achievements together!

1. Learn about invasive species, especially those found in your region. Your [county extension office](#) and the [National Invasive Species Information Center](#) are both trusted resources. Share what you know on social media (use the [NISAW social media images to get started](#)).
2. Clean hiking boots, waders, boats and trailers, off-road vehicles and other gear [to stop invasive species from hitching a ride to a new location](#).

3. [Avoid dumping aquariums](#) or live bait into waterways.
4. [Clean your fishing equipment and don't dump live bait](#).
5. [Don't move firewood](#). Instead, buy it where you'll burn it, or gather on site when permitted.
6. [Slow the spread of invasive pests](#) by taking extra care when traveling, gardening or moving recently killed plant material.
7. Buy forage, hay, mulch and soil that are [certified as "weed free."](#)
8. Plant only [non-invasive plants in your garden](#), and remove any known invaders.
9. Report new or expanded invasive species outbreaks to authorities. Here is a [state-by-state list of contacts](#).
10. Volunteer to help remove invasive species from public lands and natural areas. [Find an event near you](#).
11. Ask your representatives at the [state](#), [local](#) and [national](#) level to support invasive species control efforts.
12. If you can't have field days or your work efforts get cancelled, try these other ideas:
 - a. Online: Host virtual events highlighting invasive species. Try to focus on identifying the species most abundant in this season and how participants can safely prevent their spread.
 - b. At local trails/parks: Post educational signs for self-guided invasive species tours.
 - c. At home: Remove invasive plants in your own backyard, or identify invasives and flag them for later removal. Share what you're doing with friends and followers via text message and social media. (Don't forget to use the hashtags #NISAW and #InvasiveSpecies!)
 - d. Online and at home: [Engage local officials](#). Writing letters and op-eds that express your concern about invasive species and ideas to slow their spread is a good place to start.
13. Publicize your work (use the [NISAW media templates](#)).

**Remember: Use the hashtags #NISAW and #InvasiveSpecies
in your publicity during May 16-23!**

What materials are available?

The partners at NISAW offer several resources to get started in your invasive species awareness efforts:

- National campaign news release template
 - [Download .pdf](#)
 - [Download .docx](#)
- Local event press release template
 - [Download .pdf](#)
 - [Download .docx](#)
- Radio PSA templates
 - [Download .pdf](#)
 - [Download .docx](#)
- [Images and messages to use on social media](#), including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- [NISAW webinars](#)
- [Get your invasive species event listed on the NISAW event map](#) (in partnership with PlayCleanGo). Prevention, removal, and educational events are all welcome.

Why should elected officials care about invasive species?

Invasive species impact everyone. When not monitored or controlled, invasive species can cause harm to our economy, environment or human health. **The term "invasive" is used for aggressive species that grow and reproduce rapidly, displace native species, and cause major disturbance to the areas in which they are present.**

Invasive species, if left uncontrolled, can and will limit land use now and into the future.

The longer we ignore the problem the harder and more expensive the battle for control will become.

Thankfully, there are solutions. By learning about invasive species and participating in events across the nation, elected officials and the general public can work together to solve invasive species issues at local, state, tribal, regional, international and national scales.

Through education, legislation, and getting out there to stop the spread of invasive species in the nation's lands, waterways, and everything in between, we can create positive outcomes in habitats. Every year NISAW aims to protect natural ecosystems from invasive species for the benefit of everyone.