

Invasive Species of Plants

0:05

Hello and welcome to the Kentucky 4-H Virtual Experience. My name is Joey Barnard and I am the Extension Specialist for 4-H Camping, a part of the University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment. Today, we'll be visiting North Central 4-H Camp where Jake, the Interim Camp Director, will be sharing with us a video about invasive plant species. After you watch the video, leave us a comment in the comments section, and let us know what invasive plant species you can identify in your local community. We hope you enjoy!

0:38

Introduction

Hello there! My name is Jake Farmer and I am the Acting Camp Director out here at North Central 4-H Camp, and today I'm going to be talking with you a little bit about invasive species of plants. I'm going to teach you what an invasive species is, why we should remove these plants, how to identify them, and how to safely remove these invasive species.

1:01

What is an Invasive Species?

Okay, first things first, let's talk about what an invasive species of plant is. Invasive species of plants are plants that are not supposed to grow within our ecosystem, but they have certain characteristics and adaptations that allow them to grow at a much faster rate than native plants are. So, if you like right here, this plant is a bush honeysuckle plant, and one of the adaptations it has is that its buds leaf out early in the spring, in mid to late march. Now, this is earlier than most native plants get their buds on their limbs. So what this means, is it develops its leaf system early on, which allows it obtain sunlight more quickly than the native plants. Now, as we all know, plants need sunlight in order to grow. But, when the bush honeysuckle plant fully leafs out, it blocks sunlight from reaching the forest floor, which doesn't allow our native plants to grow.

1:54

Why do we want to remove them?

So, now that we know a little bit more about what an invasive species is, let's talk about why we should remove these plants. If you look behind us right here, this whole valley used to be covered with invasive species. But we've taken the effort to clear out these invasive species. And, if you can notice, grass and native plants have started to come in and grow in the areas that we have removed these invasive species. However, if you look to the other side of the forest, where we haven't targeted, you'll notice this area is cluttered and choked out with plant life from invasive species. Boo.

2:33

Invasive Plant Species Identification

Bush Honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*)

Let's get into HOW to identify invasive species of plants. I am going to target 5 of the most common or well-known invasives here in Kentucky. First up, is Bush Honeysuckle. This plant has been used as my example throughout this entire video. It is the most common invasive we have here at North Central. It's broad leaves make it ideal for stealing sunlight, and it also releases a chemical that prevents other plants from growing around it. If you look at its bark, you can identify this plant by its wrinkled appearance.

3:05

Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*)

Next up is an invasive known as Burning Bush. This invasive is so named because of the bright red color it turns in the Fall. The winged appearance of its bark also makes it look as if it were on fire. This plant also grows rapidly in forests, and while it has a beautiful red color, it is lethal for other native plants.

3:26

Autumn Olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*)

This invasive is known as Autumn Olive. An easy way to identify this plant is its bright green leaves, and pale, almost silver, color on the underside. This plant is often found near bodies of water such as lakes or ponds. At the base of the leaves, this plant also has a defensive sharp barb to protect it from being destroyed.

3:49

Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)

Multiflora rose is the name of this sharp looking invasive. It can wrap itself around native plants and choke the life out of them, all while being protected by its many thorns. Its flowers are typically white, with 5 symmetrical petals. These flowers grow in clusters on the tips of the branches.

4:09

Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*)

Lastly, this invasive is known as Kudzu. Thankfully, it isn't found at North Central. But it has found its way into Kentucky, and it is most commonly found in the southern region of the state. It has arrow shaped leaves the grow in threes. This vine grows very fast, and it can take over forests, buildings, and powerlines if left unchecked.

4:32

Invasive Removal Methods

Once you've learned how to properly identify these invasive species of plants, then you can get down to the removal of these invasive species. Now, if you look right here, we have different stages of the invasive plants. We have what we might call a seedling, we have one that has been cut before but not properly treated, and one that has been growing for a while that has not been touched. So, we're going to take you through the three different steps of how to remove an invasive species. So, one way you can

remove an invasive species is to remove it by pulling it from the ground, with the root and all. So, all you do, is you reach down, with gloves, grab it close to the base, and then pull it from the soil. Removing the root and the plant in one pull.

5:23

Now, the reason you want remove the root of an invasive plant, or use the chemical to kill the root, is because if any part of the root remains in the ground and alive, that invasive species can grow back much more aggressively. So if you see right here, this bush honeysuckle plant has been cut originally. However, it was not treated well enough, so it has begun to sprout like this, leafing out much more aggressive than it was as just a regular bush honeysuckle plant. Now, if you pull the plant—its root and all—or treat it with the chemical, that root will be killed. Thereby, totally negating that invasive species.

6:02

Another method of removal is called the cut-stump technique. Now, it's important to remember before you use any types of tools or chemicals that you have adult supervision on hand. OK? So now, what we are going to do is the cut-stump technique on this bush honeysuckle plant. What you do, is you take a lopper, go down to the base or the stump of the plant, and you're going to cut the plant, just like that, and you're going to take an herbicide (what we use is Tordon). We make sure we coat the entire stump, which will help to kill the root of that plant.

6:43

Conclusion

Thank you for joining us out here at North Central 4-H Camp to learn a little bit about invasive species of plants. Now get on out and there and help save our forests!