

Not Welcome Here

Average Program Length: 45+ minutes, depending on public service commitment

Meeting Location: Ballast Point

Total material list:

--Speaker or Boombox

-- Chairs

--Park Map (Park Provided)

--List of invasive plants with photos (Park Provided)

--Green and red native or invasive species cards (Park Provided)

--11x17 paper and Markers/Colored Pencils/Crayons

Activities by Scout Level

Girl Scout

Daisies and Brownies- pick at least 2 of the steps below

Juniors and Cadettes- pick at least 3 of the steps below

Seniors and Ambassadors-pick at least 4 of the steps below

Boy Scout

Lions, Tigers, Wolves, and Bears- pick at least 2 of the steps below

Webelos, Scout Rank, and Tenderfoot- pick at least 3 of the steps below

Second Class, First Class, Star Scouts, Life Scouts, and Eagle Scouts-pick at least 4 of the steps below

Background

Introduce scouts to the idea of invasive species, and explain how these organisms can harm an ecosystem. The USDA defines Invasive species as plants, animals, or pathogens that are non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause harm. These animals compete with the native animals for food, water, and shelter, and push native species to loose their resources. Introducing a new organism to an ecosystem can alter the entire ecosystem, not just the animal it competes with, because all things are tied. For example, feral cats are invasive at the Park, and they often eat song birds. Not only does this make the songbird population decrease unnaturally, but it makes less food for birds of prey, whose population might also decrease. Bird of prey also eat rodents, so the lack of raptors cause an increase in rodents. Increase rodents may cause an increase of fleas and ticks, and therefore an increased level of lymes disease in the whole community. This could decrease whole populations of many animals, just because someone let their cat outside! According to the National Wildlife Federation, "42% of threatened or endangered species are at risk primarily due to invasive species". Invasive species that we have at the Park are listed below:



Sargassum



Argentine Ant



Feral Cat



The Virginia Opossum



The House Mouse



Iceplant



Common Grackle



Australian Saltbush



European Starling

Matching Badges



Juniors-Animal Habitats



BSA-Nature

Correlates to Next Generation
Science Standards for LS2:
ECOSYSTEMS: INTERACTIONS,
ENERGY, AND DYNAMICS

Program Activities

1. Play the Invasive Species musical chairs game! Each scout will be given a card. If the plant or animal on your card has green writing, you're a native animal. If it has red writing, you're an invasive. Have 40% of the Scouts start as California native species, and each one will have a chair (it's habitat). During the first round, send in one invasive species member. During the second round, send in another. You do not need to remove the chairs, but you should add another invasive each turn. If a scout does not get a chair when the music turns off, his or her species is extinct in that area, and has to sit out.
2. Draw "Wanted Posters" of invasive species we have in San Diego. Hang these up at your local school or club. Our ecosystems are all tied, and combating invasive species in other areas can help fight them at the park.
3. Scouts will be given a list, with photos, of invasive plant species in San Diego county. Go out into the park, and see if you can find any invasive species, and identify which ones they are. Mark on a map where you found the invasive species, and turn in into the visitor center.
4. Volunteer with our Natural Resources department to help remove the invasive plants in the Park. This must be organized with our Volunteer Coordinator in advance.
5. Select an invasive species that we have at the park. Find a way to monitor them over a period of time (i.e.: charts of growth, cameras for identification, etc.), and see if they are declining, stable, or increasing in population. Turn your data into the visitors center to help monitor ecosystem health.
6. Create your own local plant garden in your community, using only native plants!