

# Native Species

## Try It Out

Take one of the scavenger hunt sheets with you on your journey. See if you can spot all these Wisconsin-native plants and animals as you adventure through the neighborhood. Godspeed!

## What's going on?

A **native species** is something that develops in a particular area through natural causes. Because these plants and animals evolve in a region naturally, they are very well suited to life in that region. It also means that, more often than not, they tend to coexist very well with other native species in the area.

## What's the big deal?

Humans move organisms around all the time. Sometimes when we bring a non-native species into a new area the species will take over and spread rapidly and widely throughout the

area. When this happens, the spread can cause major harm to the native ecosystem or humans. When non-native plants, animals or pathogens rapidly take over a new location and alter the ecosystem, we consider them **invasive species**. (WI DNR)



*Bishop's Goutweed, an invasive species in most of the United States, and one of my personal least favorites. (Image: WI DNR)*

## Wonder While You Walk...

While you are completing your scavenger hunt, see if you can spot any invasive species. How might you recognize an invasive species? What signs would you look for?



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