



## Day 12 : Invasive Species

### An Innocent Vine?

The vine below looks pretty normal, right? It's green. It has leaves. Looks like a lot of other vines. This vine, called Kudzu, is native to Japan. In its natural



habitat, it grows normally, lots of bugs eat it, and in the winter it dies because of the cold weather. It's a very pretty vine to look at, and, in Japan, it helps make soil healthy for farming. So, back in the 1900s, someone thought it would be a good idea to bring Kudzu to farms in the southern part of the

US. They thought it would be nice to look at and that it would help farmers have nice soil. When Kudzu was planted in the U.S., though, it invaded! There are not many bugs who eat Kudzu in the South and it doesn't get cold there in the winter, so Kudzu is constantly growing. Many trees and plants have been killed because Kudzu grows over them and they can't get enough sunlight. Look at the picture below, that entire house has been swallowed by the Kudzu vine!



Invasive species like Kudzu don't cause problems in their native habitats because they adapted to live there, but when they are introduced into a

different **ecosystems**, they can cause a lot of damage.

Not everything brought here from a different ecosystem becomes invasive, though. Some non-native wildlife fits in just fine when it's brought somewhere new. You know those lizards you see scampering up walls around Cincinnati? Those guys are actually originally from Europe. They don't overly compete with other wildlife, though, so they aren't considered to be an invasive species.

### Invasive Species Scavenger Hunt

Unfortunately, there are a lot of invasive species that exist in Ohio. For today's Ranger activity, we put together an invasive species scavenger hunt. On the next page, you will find pictures of common

invasive species we see in Ohio. Take a walk around your neighborhood and see how many you find. Another fun activity you can do today is make a fort out of a common invasive species: honeysuckle! Since invasive species are



harmful to our ecosystem it's okay to cut them down and pick their flowers. With adult permission, you can cut down branches from honeysuckle bushes and make a cool fort.

**Journal Prompt:** Invent a superhero who fights invasive species. Create a comic about them in your journal.

**Share your Findings or Creations** with us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)

**Tomorrow's Theme:** Indoor Gardening

**Time to Explore!**

Miss Mo, Nature Lover

