

Definitions Related to Exotic Invasive Species

Adapted from USDA Plants database (<https://plants.usda.gov/java/>):

- **Native:** An organism that is a part of the balance of nature that has developed over hundreds or thousands of years in a particular region or ecosystem. Only plants found in this country before European settlement are considered to be native to the United States.
- **Non-native/exotic:** An organism introduced with human help (intentionally or accidentally) to a new place or new type of habitat where it was not previously found. Note: Not all non-native plants are invasive. In fact, when many non-native plants are introduced to new places, they cannot reproduce or spread readily without continued human help (for example, many ornamental plants).
- **Invasive:** An organism that is both non-native and able to establish on many sites, grow quickly, and spread to the point of disrupting plant communities or ecosystems.
- **Opportunistic native:** A native organism that is able to take advantage of disturbance to the soil or existing vegetation to spread quickly and out-compete the other organisms on the disturbed site.
- **Weed:** A weed is a plant (native or non-native) that is not valued in the place where it is growing.
- **Noxious:** - An organism that is particularly troublesome. *It is illegal to import federally listed noxious weeds or transport them across state lines.*