



3. Invasive Species

When we venture outside, we may see a multitude of plants. We have started to identify them but with identifying them come a very tough question. Are these plants native?

***Native Plants** are plants that from the very beginning were found in Indiana. Some of these plants are wild ginger, golden rod, and spicebush.*



Wild Ginger- is found all over the Eastern half of the U.S. It grows in rich soils and shady forests. When hiking on any path in Indiana State Parks, clumps of Wild Ginger can be found. The Wild Ginger leaf is heart shaped and at the center has the letter “U”.

Goldenrod- Is a plant that can grow between 3-7ft tall. At the top it has yellow flowers that almost seem golden. The leaves are smooth with jagged edges.



Spice Bush- is a stout, aromatic shrub that is found in damp woods. The leaves are oval shaped and when crushed start to smell like spices. During the spring you can find them by their yellow flower and during the fall they will have clusters of tiny red fruits.

***Invasive Species** are plants that were brought to Indiana, are not originally found here, and spread or invade other native plant habitats. Some of these plants are Amur Honeysuckle, Autumn Olive, and Garlic Mustard.*



Amur Honeysuckle- Is a fast growing shrub. It will colonize its area and prevent other plants from growing. To identify this plant, look at the leaves. They will be 3 inches long and have tiny red berries. Don't eat them they are poisonous to humans.

Autumn Olive- Is a medium to large shrub. The leaves will be green on top and a grayish-green on the bottom. Among the twigs on the shrub will be small yellow flowers.



Garlic Mustard- When it first starts growing, it is very similar to wild ginger. But as it grows larger the leaf becomes more pointed and jagged around the edges. At the top will be a cluster of white flowers.

ACTIVITY: Go outside and try to identify different invasive and native plants. Place a check mark beside each plant you find:

____ (1) Amur Honeysuckle

____ (4) Autumn Olive

____ (2) Wild Ginger

____ (5) Goldenrod

____ (3) Spicebush

____ (6) Garlic Mustard