
A Study of Yukon Invasive Plants

Grade 11

Science

Overview

This lesson introduces students to Invasive Plants of concern in the Yukon in the context of course curriculum objectives.

Objectives

Students will gain an understanding of the following:

- Why invasive species are a problem: impacts on ecosystems & people
- Evolutionary adaptations that make IP successful
- What can be done stop them (early detection & reporting)
- How to identify 10 IP of greatest concern in the Yukon
- How to use a taxonomic dichotomous key
- The work of the Spotter's Network

Activities

This program, estimated to be approximately 60-90 minutes, will involve:

1. Watch ~4 minute Youtube video introducing IP, major concepts
2. Break into ~6 groups of ~5 students- discussion questions: "Evolution & Invasive Plants: Secrets to Success?"- summarize as whole class
3. Plant taxonomy- groups examine dried plant specimens and use dichotomous keys to identify Yukon's 10 IP of concern
4. Short intro to YISC Spotter's Network & Weed pulls
5. New Yukon IS board game (about 1 additional hour will be required for this game)

Flow of the class: Students will watch the video together. Once video is over, students will break into groups of about 5 students each. They will pull desks together to form their groups. Instructor (Jen) will distribute a discussion handout [attached]. Each group of students will discuss the ONE of the topics for 5 minutes. "Answers" will be discussed together for 10-15 minutes. Instructor will then hand out taxonomic keys to each student and place dried plant specimens on group tables for viewing. This will be a 'musical chairs' event, with students being timed with each plant. 2 minutes to view each plant and work through the key in their groups. 10 plants will be on display- can gauge by class interest, but could view all 10 plants, for a total of 20 minutes. [if they are getting bored we can end earlier]. Jen will then discuss the Yukon Invasive Species Council's Spotter's Network, the opportunity to participate in weed pulls. Show a few fun pictures of Yukon College students from the Renewable Resources program, participating. Program ends after 60-90 minutes. Another hour can be added to the program, in which our new Yukon board game is played. A professional game designer (Gaël Marchand, ED Yukon Aboriginal Sports Circle) designed this game, with input from local botanists (Jen and others). Students will play in groups of 5 or 6.

Materials

Learning tools may include:

- Short Youtube video (Overview)
- Yukon Invasive Species Council brochures & pamphlets
- Plant Identification Dichotomous Key
- Herbarium specimens [dried pressed plants on paper]
- Small Group Inquiry (worksheet- evolution & IP)
- New Yukon IP Board game

BC Curriculum Competencies

See Attached

Key Web Resources

Yukon Invasive Species Council:

<http://yukoninvasives.com/>