

## A WEB SITE FOR TEACHERS

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Web sites about invasive species abound on the Internet. Teachers will welcome one of them, <http://www.nps.gov/invspcurr/alienhome.htm>, that presents engaging units on the theme of invasive species for middle school classes. “Aliens in Your Neighborhood” was developed as an enhancement to required curriculum about the life sciences, especially plant science. Activities provide opportunities for students to practice math, writing, mapping, photography, and collecting and preserving plant specimens. These lessons lead students to see more closely what’s going on in their immediate environment. For example, with woolly socks worn over their shoes, they take a walk at the edge of a forest or field. Then they examine the seeds stuck to the socks and understand how easily seeds are dispersed. Students plant a small piece of their sock in soil and watch what grows. This leads to investigation in many directions, such as how to identify the seedlings, how well the native species are competing with the exotics, how to reduce dispersal, and so on.

The project is sponsored by the National Park Service, funded by the Parks as Classrooms program, with additional support from the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit of the University of Idaho; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife NatureMapping Program; XID™ Services, Inc.; and CyberTracker World GIS Mapping Technologies. The author is Mark Goddard of the Nye Beach Montessori School in Newport, Oregon. Because the natural resource managers understand that invasive species are everywhere, they look to citizen scientists to help in containing the invaders. The lessons in these units are the foundation of the education of enlightened citizen scientists and, very likely, of some future professional scientists. —B. Blumberg