

Protecting florida's
original ecosystem by
taking the invasive
species out of the...

[Environment](#), [Nature](#)



Research Essay

Worldwide, there are invasive species that are non-native to their environment, which can eventually ruin a whole ecosystem. To begin, Florida is known for having exotic plants and animals in their invasive species kingdom. If you are unaware, Florida has had an invasive species problem since the late 1800's ("Brazilian Peppertree"). Although this problem has been around for hundreds of years, people still struggle to find a safe solution. A couple of invasive species in Florida are the Lionfish and Burmese python. While an invasive species and non-invasive species can live together, over time there is always one species that overrides the other; most of the time it is the invasive species that wins. There are countless causes, effects, and solutions but only the significant ideas will be elaborated on.

Invasive species have been terrorizing ecosystems for thousands of years, not to mention the money that goes into the removing of the invasive species. Many approaches have been taken to stop invasive animals and plants, such as killing them in various ways such as pesticides, hunting and trapping. Despite the effort to stop non-indigenous species, they still seem to find a way to overcome various obstacles.

The Lionfish is a fish used in many aquariums mainly for its unique look, but this unique looking fish will soon be a problem. The Lionfish was introduced to the Atlantic in the early 1990's and since then it has slowly expanded its habitat. The first recorded sighting of a Lionfish was in 2009 in the Florida

Keys (" Non-Native Fishes in Florida Freshwaters). The only problem with the Lionfish living in the Atlantic is that they have no natural predators in that region. Ecologists see the Lionfish as a threat because they can spawn year-round, The Lionfish's diet consists of crustaceans and other native fish that live there. This will soon be a problem mainly because the lack of predators to the Lionfish. The fish will soon deplete the ecosystem causing an imbalance that can later destroy the whole ecosystem.

The Burmese Python is an exotic reptile known for its large size and being able not to eat for weeks or even months, as it grows its prey can be the size of a deer. This exotic reptile is sometimes even kept as a pet. These snakes are the largest of the snake family. They originated from Southeast Asia and they have been imported by planes or ships. The Burmese Python is more familiar to the Everglades (" Not Seeing Is Not Believing"). The python does not have any known predators, but the python is a predator to a large part of the Everglades ecosystem which can cause a problem in the balance of the ecosystem. They eat anything from mammals to birds and on rare occasions even an alligator. Since 2002 there has been over 2, 000 pythons removed from the Everglades, which was only a small percentage that was removed. This problem most likely occurred when pet owners accidentally or purposefully released the python to the wild due to its size (" Burmese Python"). On some rare occasions, many people will release their python because it will eventually try to eat the owner. The Burmese Python is known as an invasive species to the Everglades because it is eating the same animals that the National park is trying to protect. The National park has

worked a bit over a decade to stop these reptiles, but not much seems to work.

Although an invasive species is not a problem in an ecosystem at first, it is never wise to ignore them and let them grow, because they can eventually be a problem too big to handle. Invasive species have been a problem for hundreds of years. We are still learning on how to deal with the problem, in some cases costing people millions of dollars. The Lionfish is becoming a bigger problem, but we can also look at it a different way and use them for food or sports fishing. The Burmese Python is a problem, but we might be able to use a few to kill an invasive species in a different ecosystem; such as the black rat. This could potentially fix a few problems with them. We need to act now to save the depleting ecosystems that we have.

There are many causes why we have an invasive species problem here are three specific reasons. The first cause is when people have exotic animals as pets such as a Burmese python. When the Burmese python get to big in size or the family cannot simply afford to feed the pet, they usually release the animal which later becomes an invasive species. The next reason is that animals are brought from different countries as pets. Many of the pets brought along with them have no natural predator if released into the wild but usually have plenty of animals to prey on. The last reason, is that an invasive species can sometimes be stopped by a different species of animal that can either kill or eat the invasive. In rare cases, the animal used to stop the invasive species may become an invasive species because they do not have any predators in that ecosystem.

As there are causes, this also means that they have effects. Here are the three main effects that result from invasive species. The initial effect is that an invasive animal can result in thousands of dollars in damages, such as ruining wiring, cooling systems, and lighting. Anything from a size of a rodent or something as large as a bear can do the same amount of cost worth in damages. The succeeding effect is when an invasive species does not have any natural predator they can end up taking over a native species habitat. The invasive can either take over homes of a native species or simply eating or destroying their homes. The Tartarian effect is the worst thing an invasive species can do is ruin an ecosystem. If an invasive species thrives in an ecosystem where they have no predators, they can simply eat one animal in the food chain and cause every other animal to starve because lack of food.

Many solutions can be used to solve these problems but on hand there are a trio of solutions that can be used. The opening solution is feeding the invasive species birth control at random intervals. This is a very cheap method to solve a problem. Animals can be fed birth control and it can slowly solve an invasive species problem within a company. This method is commonly used in businesses that have an invasive species problem. An alternative solution is by eating the invasive species if possible. Such as the lionfish although they are an invasive species we can still eat them. The only precaution we must learn how to handle the invasive without hurting ourselves. The concluding solution is to raise awareness of an invasive species problem. If we raise the awareness that an area has invasive species problem, it can prevent people from releasing or feeding an invasive species

that helps them thrive (Awareness, 3) Much of these efforts may seem small but if it is taken serious they can help with the invasive species problem over time.

These solutions are all excellent, however there is one that is more prominent than the others. The best one is to randomly put birth control in invasive species food which could prevent them from expanding. This method is not only effective it is very cheap at the same time. This method can also be used to stall to if a different solution is needed. Many researchers are always searching for a more efficient, cheap, and convenient solution, see if you can come up with a better solution.