INVASIVE WEEDS.
What are they and why should we care about them?

Presented by the
Los Angeles County
Weed Management Area
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By John Hurley
One day Allie heard some people talking about invasive weeds. Later she asked her Dad what they were and why people cared about them.
Dad said, “That’s a good question, Allie. Someone once said a weed is any plant growing where you don’t want it.”
A dandelion in a weed lot is just another plant...

...but a dandelion in a lawn is a weed."
There are two kinds of weeds, non-invasive weeds and invasive weeds.
Non-invasive weeds are simply plants growing where we don’t want them. Sometimes they can be a nuisance to farmers, gardeners and landscapers, but they are almost never a problem in natural areas.
Plants that cause problems here...
...are not always problems where they come from.
Invasive weeds are brought in from somewhere else. When they get here they can spread very quickly. Since they are not from here, they may not grow in harmony with the native plants and animals.

That is why we call them “invasive.”
Some invasive weeds taste bad.

Yuck!

Animals won’t eat them. They eat the other plants. Pretty soon the whole field is full of plants the animals won’t eat.
Ouch!

Some invasive weeds have stickers and the animals can’t eat them.
Some invasive weeds are poisonous.
Hey, where am I?

Some invasive weeds grow so tall and thick the animals can’t get through. The animals have to find somewhere else to live.
Invasive weeds don’t just live on the land...
Hey, where Am I?

...some invasive water weeds grow so fast and thick the fish can’t get through them. If the fish can’t move to another pond they may die.
Invasive can come from other parts of the United States, or from anywhere in the world. Because they come from somewhere else, people also call them “non-native” or “exotic” weeds.
They get brought in by trucks moving dirt,

or by boats with water weeds on them.

They can come in with house plants or are brought in by people who want to plant them around their homes.
Invasive plants can come in as whole plants or seeds.

Some only need a piece of stem or root to get started.
There are many people trying to keep these invasive weeds from coming here. They work for the city, county, state, or federal government. They are forest rangers, nursery growers, farmers, ranchers, and conservationists.
And they are just regular people like you and me who like to play in the park and hike in the hills.
WEBSITES

Los Angeles County Agricultural Commissioner/Weights & Measures Department.
http://acwm.co.la.ca.us

California Native Plant Society
http://www.cnps.org

California Exotic Pest Plant Council
http://www.caleppc.org

California Department of Food and Agriculture weed page
http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/wma
The LOS ANGELES COUNTY WEED MANAGEMENT AREA is made up of the following members:
County of Los Angeles
Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District
California Department Of Fish & Game
California Department of Food and Agriculture
California Native Plant Society
California State Polytechnic University, College of Agriculture, Pomona
Las Virgenes Institute for Resource Management
Mountains Restoration Trust
National Park Service/Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area North East Trees
Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains
San Gabriel Mountains Regional Conservancy
United States Bureau of Land Management
United States Forest Service