

Invasive Species Awareness  
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**Introduction to Stewardship Project**

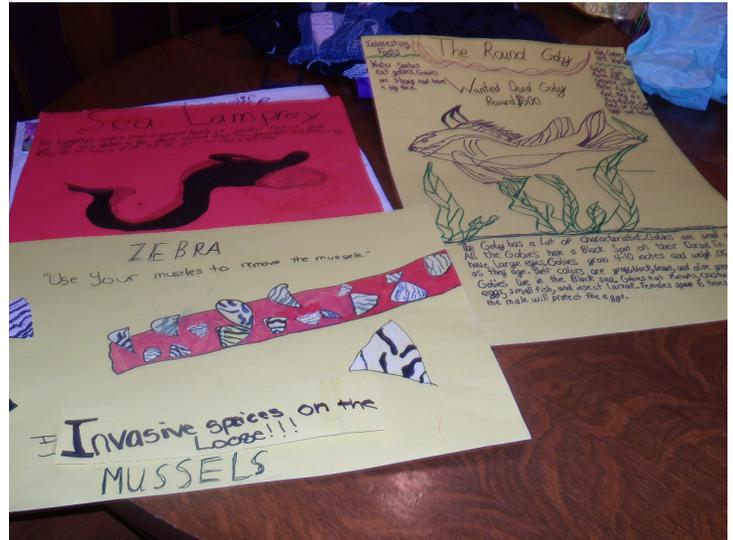
The 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Class project allowed students to become aware of the invasive species located in their community. Since Grand Island is completely surrounded by the Niagara River the students created posters to further educate the local public about the specific invasive species found within their community. Beaver Island State Park, located just down the road from the school, is in the process of establishing an educational display for the public and they were very excited about using some of the work created by students. The students focused on making educational posters about zebra mussels, purple loosestrife, and increasing awareness of possible contamination from bait and boat trailer movement from the rivers to nearby inland lakes.

**Objective**

The students studied the different characteristics of invasive species, how they are spread, the consequences of their introduction and future prevention. After learning about several types of invasive species, the students researched which invasive species are commonly found in their area and how to identify them. They then spent time gathering information and produced numerous informational posters about their removal/prevention. The stewardship project was a great way for students to see how the information they learned in the classroom could be shared to increase community awareness.

**Student Activities**

The students participated in an introductory lesson on invasive species and then further concentrated on those organisms that impact their area. They used various websites, including the Nab the Aquatic Invader website, Understanding Invasive Aquatic Weeds published by the Aquatic Plant Management Society, the Great Lakes Invasion Publication from the NOAA Sea Grant, and even Scholastic News! The students then gathered information on the appearance and identification of these species and created eye-catching posters for display at Beaver Island State Park, and possibly Big Six Marina, in order to share their newfound knowledge with people in their community.



## Outcome/Impacts of the Project

The students not only were able to identify some of the local species, they also passed vital information on to the community in their creation of educational posters. They shared the information they learned with their families, and three of the students were able to identify and remove purple loosestrife growing on their own property boundaries!

