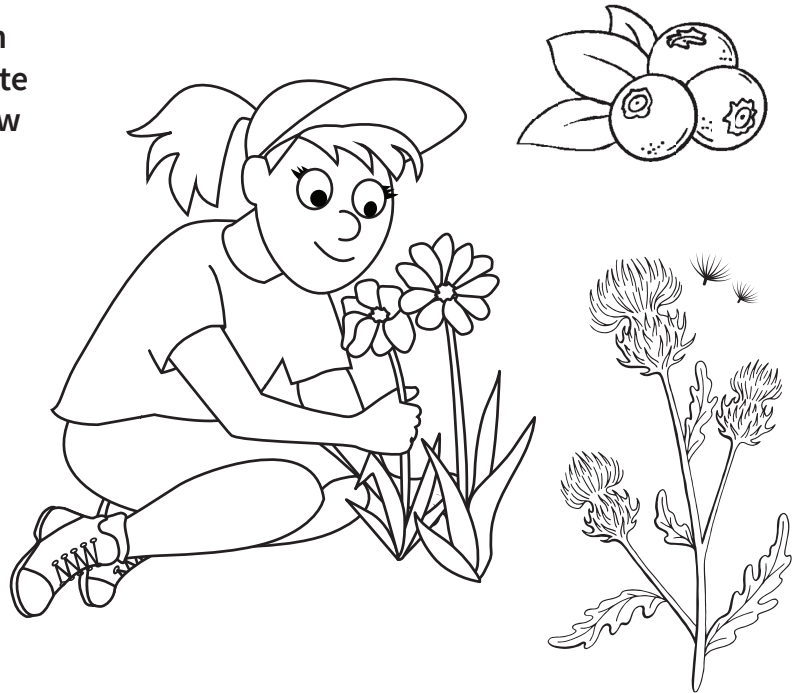


A WEEDY SCAVENGER HUNT!

Agriculture is an important industry in the Cariboo, and invasive species are a big problem to producers. A changing climate may increase their spread, and even allow new species to move into the region!

There may be invasive plants in your own backyard, school ground, field or favourite park! Go on a scavenger hunt and see how many of these clues you can check off!

1. Find at least five different plants.
2. Find a plant whose seeds are spread by the wind.
3. Find a plant that has spines, hairs or thorns.
4. Find a plant whose seeds are spread by burrs (hairy or sticky seeds).
5. Find a plant that has a seed or fruit that might be eaten by an animal.
6. Find a plant that smells good.
7. Find a plant that smells bad.
8. Find a plant that grows alone – has no other plants growing next to it.
9. Find a plant growing on rocky or dry sandy ground.
10. Find a plant with yellow flowers.



Clues and explanations:

- » A healthy ecosystem has many different plant species growing in an area. Invasive plants often take over from native plants and create an area where there is only one type of plant growing... the invasive one! Some invasive plants like spotted knapweed produce a chemical that prevents other plants from growing nearby. (#1 and #8)
- » Invasive plants have lots of seeds, and the seeds are very good at getting around! E.g. thistle seeds that blow in the wind or burrs that stick to your socks. (#2 and #4)
- » Some invasive plants have spines or thorns that stop animals from eating them, like prickly thistles, or blueweed that has a hairy stem. (#3)
- » Animals and birds can spread plants by eating their fruit and then depositing the seeds in their droppings, or carrying the seed to store for later. (#5)
- » Plants that smell good or bad attract different kinds of insects that eat them and often pollinate them: bees are attracted to flowers that smell sweet, while flies may be attracted to flowers that smell unpleasant (#6 and #7). Many invasive plants have yellow flowers (#10) – try and identify the plants you find!
- » Invasive plants are very adaptable and can grow in many different habitats: weeds that grow in dry areas include diffuse knapweed, blueweed and burdock. Invasive plants that like wet areas include purple loosestrife, yellow flag iris, and marsh plume thistle. (#9)

DID YOU KNOW?

There are already dozens of invasive species in the Cariboo region? Be an “Invasive Detective” – report them using the FREE **Report Invasives** phone app: www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species