Biodiversity can easily be protected!

When you set off on a journey or return home, make sure you do not carry plants or animals with you as you could cause serious damage to the environment, biodiversity, agriculture and your health!

Before returning home, check that your luggage, clothing, pets and food are free of seeds, parts of plants, insects and earth. You might be bringing home unwanted guests!

If you intend to bring pack plants or animals, please contact the Plant Protection Service, the Forestry Police or the airport authorities. If you intend to carry plants, seeds, fruits, vegetables, flowers or animals, declare them at Customs.

natura che vale
BIODIVERSITÀ, RICCHEZZA DELLA LOMBARDIA

ECOLOGICAL INVADERS

Aliens do not come from space, but from your suitcase

What can you do?

What are invasive exotic species?

Invasive exotic species (also known as alien species) are plant and animal species introduced by man, voluntarily or involuntarily, outside their natural distribution area. Some of these species spread in their new territories, where they affect the local biodiversity and ecosystems and cause social, health and economic damages, thereby becoming invasive.

How do they spread?

Many invasive exotic species come from other countries quite by chance, through the transportation of goods by air or by land (e.g. along with fruit and vegetables, water in ships' ballast tanks, etc.). Others are consciously introduced into gardens, plant nurseries, wildlife parks and aquariums, where they manage to escape, or are released into the environment for recreational purposes (e.g. hunting and fishing). Yet more spread through man-made pathways, such as artificial water canals.

Which are the most dangerous?

The European Union, and Italy, are working to prevent the spread of invasive exotic species. EU Regulations no. 1143/2014, 1141/2016 and 1263/2017 contain a list of species in relation to which there is a ban on **trade, transport and possession.**

What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity is the set of all living organisms (fungi, plants, animals, etc.) naturally present on Earth, and is an essential asset for Man.

SOME ALIEN PLANTS IN EUROPE

Pueraria lobata
(Native to East Asia)
... ...
Introduced as an ornamental species and in some cases as fodder

Reduces biodiversity and alters ecosystems

Elodea nuttallii
(Native to North America)
... ...
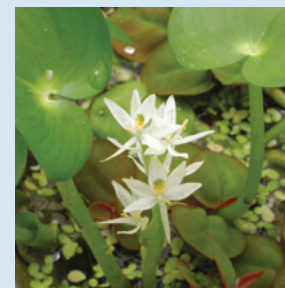Introduced in aquariums, it spreads naturally through watercourses and avifauna

Changes the balance of aquatic ecosystems and may hinder the normal flow of water

Heteranthera reniformis
(Native to Central America)
... ...
Introduced accidentally with rice

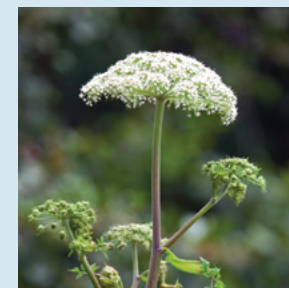**A pest in rice fields, it has a negative impact on agricultural productivity**

Heracleum mantegazzianum
(Native to the Caucasus)
... ...
Introduced as an ornamental species, it spreads naturally by entrusting its seeds to the wind and water

Causes serious photodermatitis upon contact

SOME ALIEN ANIMALS IN EUROPE

Xylosandrus crassiusculus
(Native to East Asia)
... ...
Introduced by plant material collected around agricultural areas, fruit or cultivated plants

Causes damage to broad-leaved forests and orchards

Orconectes limosus
(Native to the United States)
... ...
Introduced for food and ornamental purposes
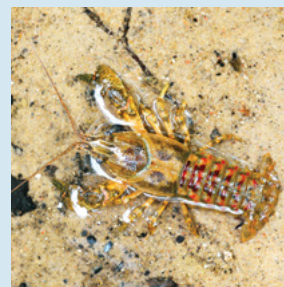
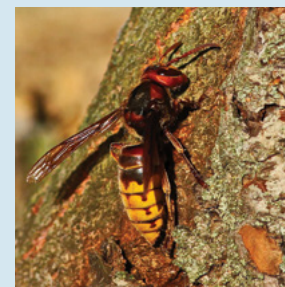**Greatly reduces the biodiversity of wet environments (ponds, rivers and lakes)**

Vespa velutina
(Native to South-East Asia)
... ...
Introduced by ornamental plants, bonsai trees and plant material

Causes considerable damage to beekeeping, as it is a predator of bees

Diversibipalium multilineatum
(Native to Japan)
... ...
Introduced by ornamental plants

May contain potentially toxic toxins and cause serious damage to soil biodiversity