

It's just a weed! so what?

Sure, its just a weed, many of them are quite pretty and look like beautiful wildflowers. How bad could they be?



Well, the problem with plants transported from other environments is that they out-compete native plants for water, light and space. Many times animals can't or won't eat the invasive plant, which can result in them not eating enough to survive the winter. Or worse yet, sometimes invasive plants are poisonous to native animals. The yellow-starthistle is so poisonous to horses, that if a horse eats this invasive plant, it will probably die. Many invasive plants, such as cheatgrass, come up earlier in the spring, using available water and resources, but then dry out quickly and become very flammable, increasing the chance and/or size of a wildfire. These weeds also increase the frequency of wildfire which prevents other more beneficial native species from becoming reestablished after wildfire.

"Invasive species are the second leading cause-after habitat loss-of species being listed as endangered or threatened, and infest more than 100 million acres across the United States," said Lori Williams, executive director of the NISC. (National Invasive Species Council)

The photo shows a hummingbird that became trapped in some cocklebur, an invasive species that can act like velcro.