

Eat your Invasives!

Want to do something about those pesky species invading Iowa?

Now is your chance! Take a look at this DNR approved list of edible invasive species. By consuming these populations, you can help control their spread and limit damage to natives!

Autumn Olive

Native to Asia, this plant has been known to shade out its competition and reproduce quickly through its berry production. Good news is that these berries are edible and tasty! These bright red and gold speckled berries are known to taste similar to cranberries. You can forage for these free on public lands, but be sure to contact the local park manager. It is recommended to cook them first to kill the seeds inside.



Rusty Crayfish

Unlike native crayfish species, these crayfish are larger in size and more aggressive so they outcompete smaller natives. They also reproduce quickly, creating a large threat to native populations. You can catch these crayfish at night, look for a dark brown crayfish with large black-tipped claws and fill up!

You can catch them by hand or trap, and 10-15 is usually enough for one serving.



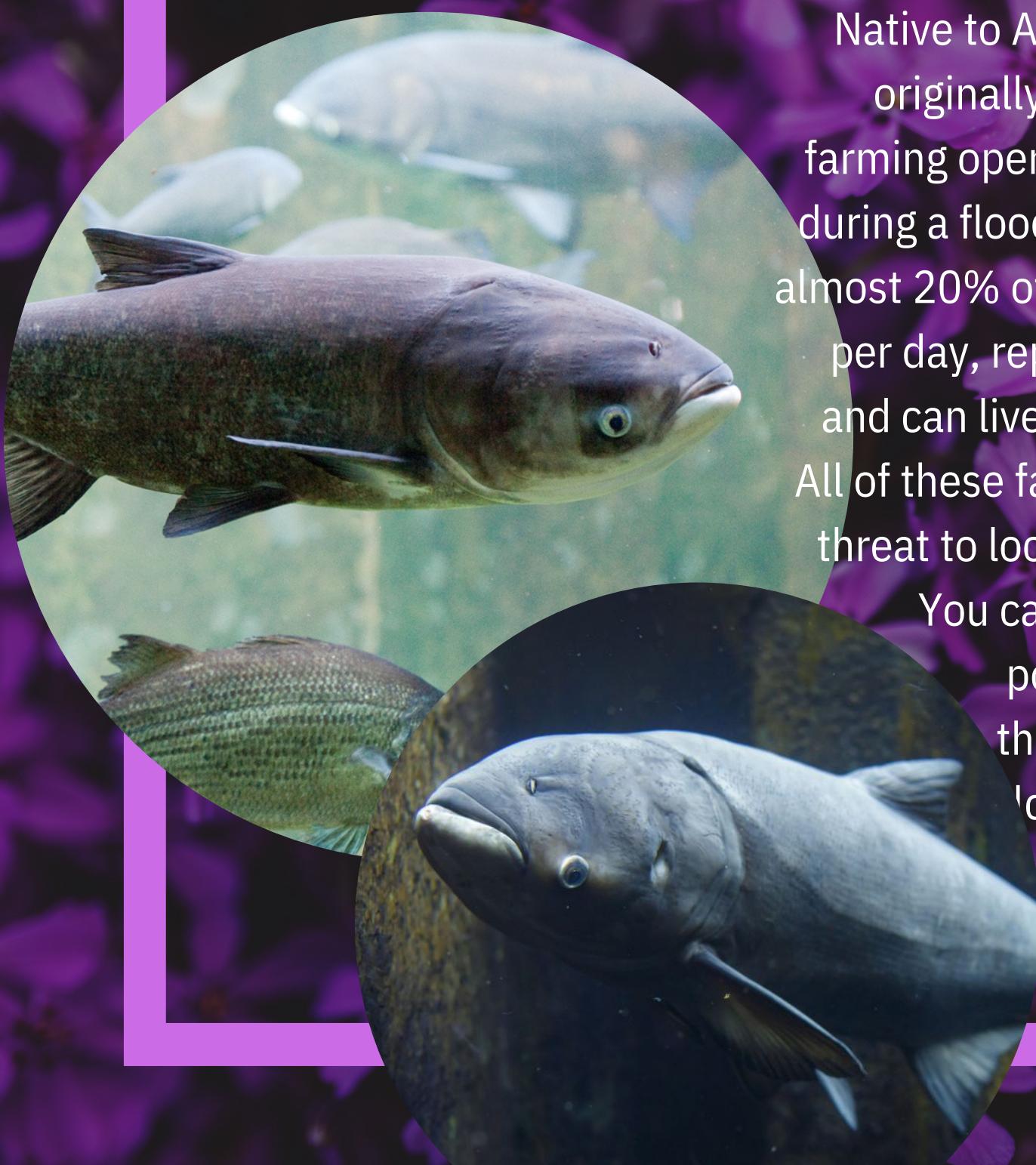
Garlic Mustard

Native to Europe, this plant was introduced in the early 1800s.

This plant produces lots of seeds, self-pollinates, can thrive in low light conditions, and is unpreferred by grazing species. This has allowed it to dominate forest floors, decreasing species diversity. You can eat all parts of this plant; flowers can go in salads, you can treat the roots like horseradish, stalks like asparagus, and the leaves can be made into pesto cooked like spinach!



Asian Carp



Native to Asia, these fish were originally introduced for fish farming operations but escaped during a flood incident. They eat almost 20% of their body weight per day, reproduce frequently, and can live up to 10-20 years. All of these factors make them a threat to local fish populations.

You can help control their population by eating them! They taste like 'Id, flaky fish and are little bony & they are great for making fish tacos!