

Some preparation is necessary prior to conducting the Aquatic Invaders program. This program is designed for adaptability among various regions and within different venues. Essentially you will stage a game of musical chairs, tell a story of inappropriate behavior, and use volunteers from your audience to illustrate how aquatic invasive species can change natural habitats.

I. Before getting started:

- a. Read the sample text for your region. Determine how you will adapt the story to suit your location. Identify the species that you will want to highlight as the “invaders.” Spreadsheets on the CD-ROM will help you identify species that are of high concern in various regions or you may want to use a species that is making national headlines.
- b. Gather props that will help you tell YOUR story. Such props not included in the kit would be an aquarium, as well as a toy or model animals and plants.
- c. Identify an area that can house an audience of at least 20. Possible venues include auditoriums, classrooms, amphitheaters, open outdoor areas and/or isolated or secluded floor space.
- d. Arrange six chairs, or circles on the ground, or some other designation of space to indicate spaces for game players that will represent habitat space, or niches.
- e. Affix the program banner, with Velcro panels attached, to a backdrop (stanchions, trees, anything that works for you!)
- f. Set up a CD player and queue the Biodiversity & Billy B. music CD to track 2: “The Biodiversity Song.”
- g. Set out laminated letters, which are included in the kit, and any additional props you decide to use for your story.
- h. Have bookmarks, fact sheets, and stickers available as prizes.

II. During the program:

- a. Select volunteers that are at least age seven or older. If younger children volunteer suggest a parent or guardian participate in the game with the youngster.
- b. If the program is in an appropriate venue, take advantage of the opportunity to project images of regional invasive species of concern.
- c. Expand as much as you can on program props. Fishing clothes and poles are a great addition!