



A plague of rats and rubbervines [the growing threat of species invasions /

Baskin, Yvonne

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Monografía

The human love of novelty and desire to make one place look like another, coupled with massive increases in global trade and transport, are creating a growing economic and ecological threat. The same forces that are rapidly "McDonaldizing" the world's diverse cultures are also driving us toward an era of monotonous, weedy, and uniformly impoverished landscapes. Unique plant and animal communities are slowly succumbing to the world's "rats and rubbervines"--Animals like zebra mussels and feral pigs, and plants like kudzu and water hyacinth--that, once moved into new territory, can disrupt human enterprise and well-being as well as native habitats and biodiversity. From songbird-eating snakes in Guam to cheatgrass in the Great Plains, "invasives" are wreaking havoc around the world. In *A plague of rats and rubbervines*, Yvonne Baskin draws on extensive research to provide an engaging and authoritative overview of the problem of harmful invasive alien species. She takes the reader on a worldwide tour of grasslands, gardens, waterways, and forests, describing the troubles caused by exotic organisms that run amok in new settings and examining how commerce and travel on an increasingly connected planet are exacerbating this oldest of human-created problems. She offers examples of potential solutions and profiles dedicated individuals worldwide who are working tirelessly to protect the places and creatures they love. While our attention is quick to focus on purposeful attempts to disrupt our lives and economies by releasing harmful biological agents, we often ignore equally serious but much more insidious threats, those that we inadvertently cause by our own seemingly harmless actions. This book takes a compelling look at this underappreciated problem and sets forth positive suggestions for what we, as consumers, can do to help

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