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The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

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News from the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

App for Reporting Great Lakes Invasive Species Now Available for iPhone, iPad

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COLUMBUS, Ohio -- Your Apple mobile devices can now [fight invasive species](#).

[Ohio State University Extension](#), the outreach arm of Ohio State's [College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences](#), has released an iPhone and iPad version of its Great Lakes Early Detection Network (GLEDN) app, which was [previously available](#) only for Android devices.

The free app is aimed at citizen scientists, say its developers. By using it, a person who sees a suspected invasive species can take a picture of the specimen, record its location, upload the information to an invasive-species mapping website called [EDDMapS](#), and e-mail the data to scientists for verification.

Reports can be filed, for instance, while out fishing, hiking, walking, kayaking or birdwatching.

"By reporting sightings of invasive plants and other invasive pests, we can better assess the extent of the infestations and hopefully eradicate new infestations before they become huge problems," says the app's website. "The goal of (the Great Lakes Early Detection Network) is to make identification and reporting as easy and efficient as possible."

Invasive species are species that aren't native to a place but get there through human activity, either by accident or on purpose. They escape, tend to spread fast, and can reduce or eliminate native species by eating, shading, crowding, damaging, infecting or outcompeting them.

Besides reducing native biodiversity and weakening native ecosystems, invasive species cost the U.S. more than \$120 billion each year in crop losses, killed trees, control measures and more, the app's developers said.

Just a phone call away: Use OSU Extension's new Great Lakes Early Detection Network iPhone and iPad app to report sightings of invasive species, such as this Asian longhorned beetle. (Photo: USDA-APHIS.)

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Links for downloading both the Apple mobile version and the Android version, which is also free, are at <http://go.osu.edu/GLEDN>.

The app's developers were OSU Extension's Kathy Smith, Eugene Braig, Marne Titchenell and Amy Stone, and Chuck Barger of the University of Georgia's [Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health](#).

The [Great Lakes Early Detection Network](#) covers the states of Ohio, New York, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota and Pennsylvania.

The app divides sightings into the general categories of fish, insects, mammals, mollusks, crustaceans, plant diseases and plants, including trees, vines, shrubs, herbs, grasses and forbs such as wildflowers.

Asian longhorned beetle, white-nose syndrome in bats, thousand cankers disease in walnut trees and at least two Asian carp species -- the silver carp and the bighead carp -- are just a few of the region's recent or looming invaders.

Others include the fast-growing kudzu vine, the aquatic weed hydrilla, the lake-clogging zebra mussel and the tree-killing emerald ash borer.

The waters of the Great Lakes alone have already seen some 184 documented aquatic invasive species, said Braig, who works as OSU Extension's aquatic ecosystems program director.

For more information on the app, call Smith at 614-688-3136 or e-mail smith.81@osu.edu.

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