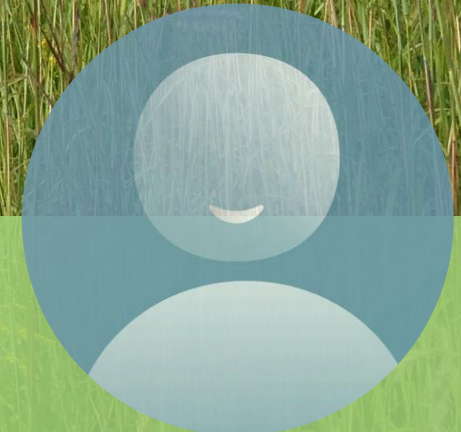


Fishers Island Native Plant Symposium: Invasives and the Food Chain



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Insects (and other Arthropods), “The Little Things That Run The World”



What does it mean to be 'invasive'?

- An invasive species is:
 - Non-native (not indigenous to its current location or range)



Black locust
(*Robinia pseudoacacia*)



Porcelainberry
(*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*)

- Causes ecological harm (negatively alters environment, negatively changes presence, health, or behavior of organisms)



How Do Invasive Plants Affect the Food Chain?

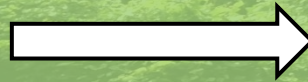
- Plant-feeding insects (herbivores) evolved to recognize native plants as food



- When invasive plants replace natives, native herbivores are lost in the food chain
 - Cannot recognize plant as a food source
 - Lack the ability to overcome plant toxins or defenses



How Do Invasive Plants Affect the Food Chain?



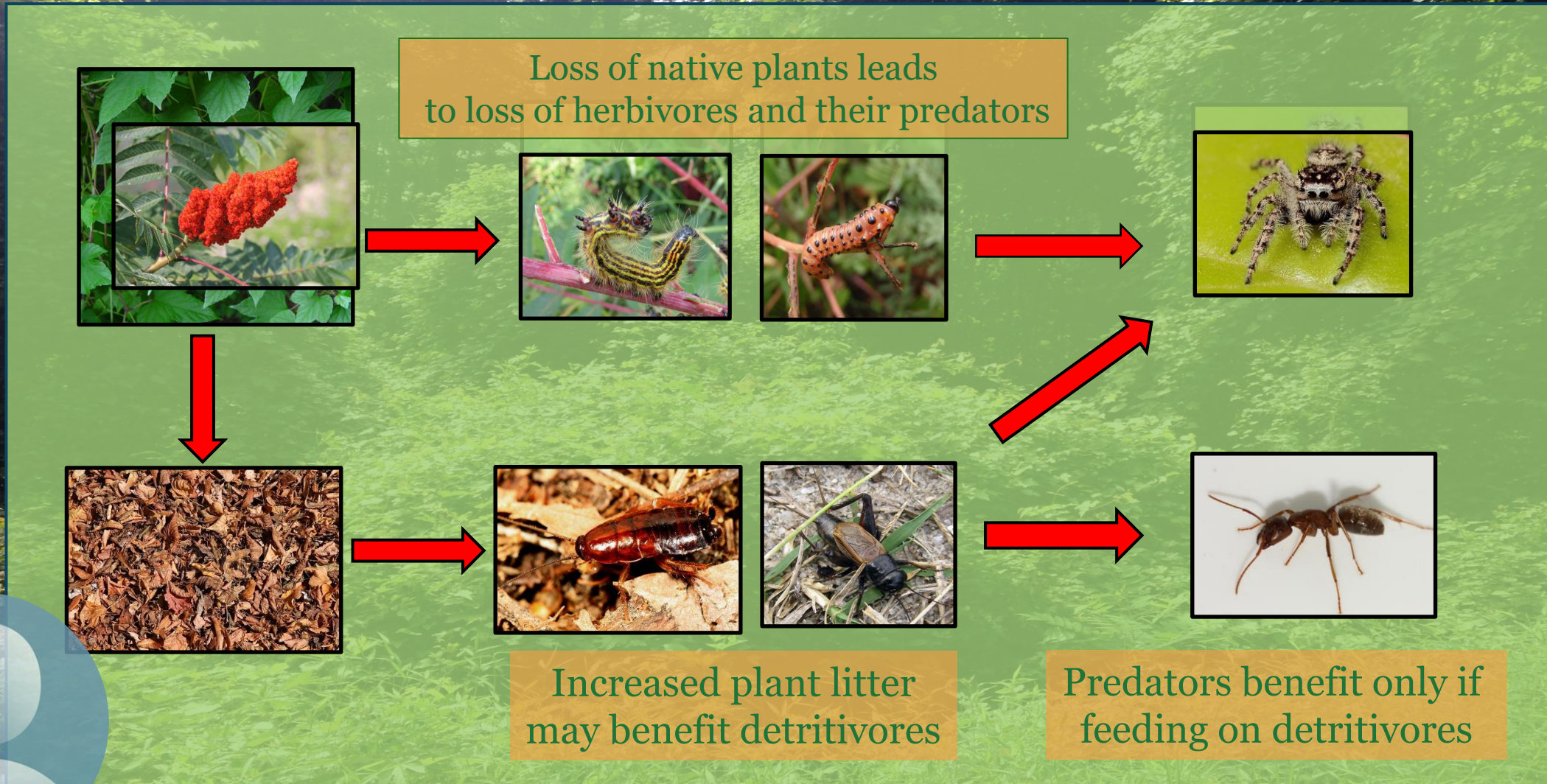
When plants are not consumed while alive, they accumulate as dead plant litter



Plant litter may become an abundant food source for litter-dwelling insects (detritivores)



How Do Invasive Plants Affect the Food Chain?



How Do Invasive Plants Affect the Food Chain?

Global index of invertebrate abundance

