

**Aims:**

Help explore and understand the characteristics that makes an alien species successful, outcompete native species and dominate in a new environment.

You will need:

- Paper, drawing and colouring materials

Instructions:

Watch: If you haven't already, watch the "What makes a successful alien" power-point presentation (**Activity 3.1**).

Recap: Ask the group to try and remember some of the things that make alien/non-native species successful – the invasive characteristics – and have a discussion as to what **adaptations** an animal or plant might have to make it capable of doing these thing (some examples on the right).

Go back to the power-point if you need some help remembering all the invasive characteristics.

The activity:

Challenge the pupils to each design and draw their own new invasive species. This is done individually but could be in small groups too. Imaginations should run riot!

It should have a name and they should label the invasive characteristics and adaptations and how these would help the creature be successful.

Once everyone has drawn their alien species, the group can come back together, and each person can present their alien species to the group. They should explain where their species came from, what its features are and how they help their alien species take over and compete.

Once everyone has presented their alien, discuss which of the aliens they think would be the most successful invasive overall and why. Have a vote for the most invasive species!

Handy notes:**No browsers / predators**

Adaptations; toxic sap, tough, taste bad, spines etc.

Good at seed dispersal

Adaptations; exploding seed pods, seeds with wings that fly in the wind, seeds that float etc.

Adapted for range of habitats

Adaptations; strong feet for running, webbed feet for swimming, thick fur to keep warm etc.

Survive in poor soils

Adaptations; deep roots, spreading rhizomes etc.

Good hunter

Adaptations; Keen eyesight, good hearing (big ears), big teeth, sharp retractable claws, poison filled stings etc.

Grows aggressively

Adaptations; Big leaves, grows tall, emits poisons, spreading rhizomes that put up new plants etc.

Do more:

Working in groups give each group two of the new alien species – can the group think up some ways that we might be able to control the aliens and get rid of them?