## How do invasive plants affect wildlife?

Invasive plants affect wildlife species in many ways. Following are some specific examples of adverse effects to wildlife caused by invasive plants. There are many other effects.

- Burdock causes direct mortality to bats and hummingbirds that get caught in its large prickly seed pods. Following are two photographs documenting this occurrence.

photo by Clay Grove, US Forest Service

photo by Rosa Wilson (National Park Service)

- Spotted knapweed invasion in Montana reduced available winter forage for elk between 50 and 90 percent (Duncan 1997).
- Spotted knapweed invasion in North Dakota reduced bison forage by 83% and deer and elk forage by 70% on parts of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park (Stalling 1998).
- Tamarisk invasions can eliminate surface water in springs and streams (Cooperider 1995).
- Spotted knapweed infested hillsides increased runoff 56% and sediment yield 192% over neighboring hillsides covered with native bunch grass (Lacey 1989).
- Russian knapweed infested areas had severely reduced populations of kangaroo rats and ground squirrels in Wyoming (Johnson et al. 1994).
- Exotic bush honeysuckle and common buckthorn in Illinois allow significantly higher nest mortality to American robins and wood thrushes than for nests constructed in native plants (Schmidt and Whelan 1999).
- Giant reed in California eliminates native streamside vegetation and dries up creeks that provide habitat for four endangered species; least bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, California red-legged frog, and unarmored threespine stickleback (Bautista 1998).
- Introduced species have adversely affected more than 50% of the species included on the Federal List of Threatened and Endangered Species (Flather et al. 1994).

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