

# Don't Pack a Pest!

Help protect Antarctica's unique environment from non-native species.



## USAP Participant Responsibility

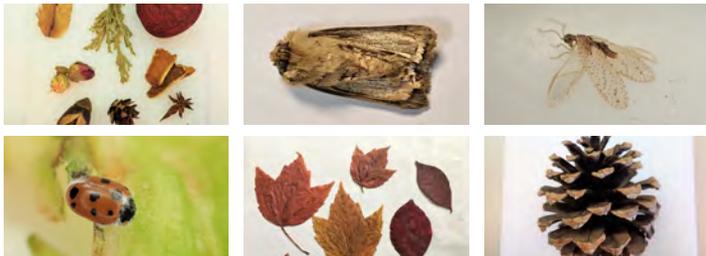
The Antarctic Treaty and United States federal law prohibit introducing non-native species to Antarctica. As a USAP participant, you have an essential role in protecting Antarctica's unique environment. Thank you for doing your part!

### Antarctica at Risk

Non-native species are organisms that do not naturally occur in an area and are most frequently associated with human activity. They have both direct and indirect impacts on the Antarctic ecosystem which has been documented in many regions in the Antarctic.

Examples of non-native species and related items include, but are not limited to:

- **Plants**  
Seeds, flowers, roots, leaves, dried plants
- **Animals**  
Rodents, insects, feathers
- **Soil**  
Mud, dirt, rocks
- **Microscopic organisms**  
Bacteria, yeast



\*Actual non-native species recovered in Antarctica

### Before You Arrive: Inspect & Clean Your Gear

Thoroughly examine and clean everything you plan to bring. Non-native species can hitch a ride on many types of gear including:

- Boots and shoes
- Pants cuffs
- Pockets
- Velcro®, fleece, and outer clothing
- Backpacks, camera bags
- Outdoor equipment, including research gear
- Hiking poles, tripods

Inspect and clean your belongings before you leave home to adhere to strict bio-security measures in countries you will travel through and also before your flight or cruise to Antarctica.

### Important to Note: Food & Keepsakes from Home

Do not bring food that contains active cultures of non-native species (yeast, bacteria), such as yogurt or kombucha.

Do not bring items from nature as keepsakes from home, consider bringing photographs instead.



### When in Antarctica: Prevent Cross-Contamination

It's important to avoid transporting any species between locations within Antarctica.

*When traveling between field locations or stations*, always inspect your gear between locations and clean it to minimize the potential to inadvertently spread species.

*When traveling on a research vessel* and participating in shore landings, utilize the on-board "boot wash" station to clean boots, clothing, hiking poles, traction devices, etc., prior to going ashore and when you return to the ship.

*Non-native species can be microscopic* and can't be seen with the naked eye so please do your best to clean thoroughly.

*Be careful when walking* in areas that contain organic matter as this can be easily transported to other sensitive areas.



### In Summary: Four Steps to Protecting the Antarctic

#### 1. Clean Your Gear Regularly

This includes boots, equipment cases, day packs, clothing, and anywhere else that non-native species could hide.

#### 2. Follow Cross-Contamination Prevention Procedures

If you are moving between field sites or stations, clean clothing and gear thoroughly before leaving the site and use a disinfectant wash.

#### 3. Report a "Pest"

All non-native species are considered "pests" to the Antarctic environment. Please contact [environmental@usap.gov](mailto:environmental@usap.gov) to report finding any non-native species and to learn about proper disposal methods.

#### 4. Spread the Word

Share this information with others. We all contribute to the health of the Antarctic environment!

