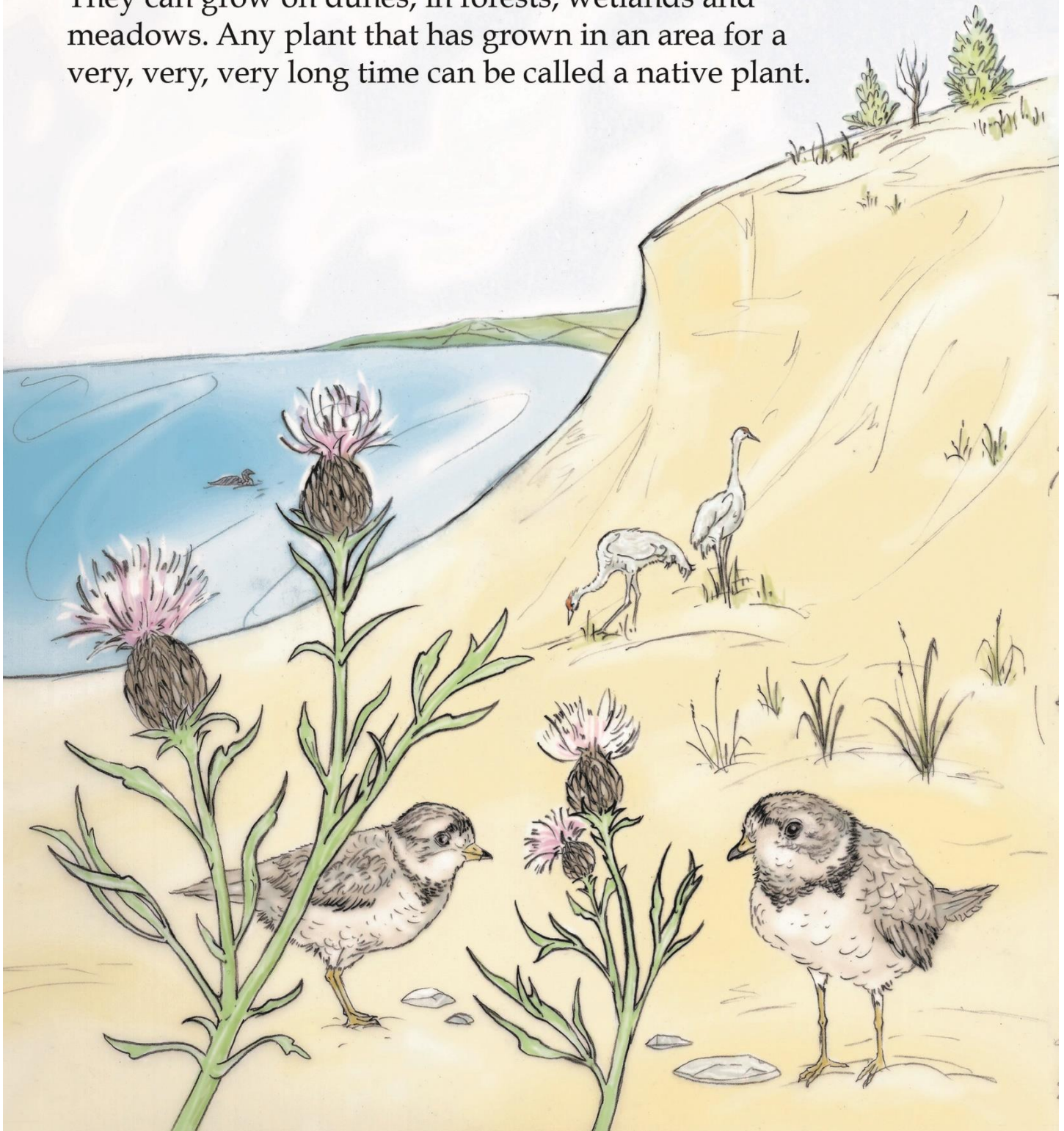


The background illustration depicts a coastal scene. In the upper right, a bird is shown in flight against a light sky. Below it, a sandy dune rises from a blue body of water. On the dune, a dog is sniffing the ground near a white heron. In the foreground, two shorebirds stand on the sand, flanked by two tall green plants with pink, spiky flower heads. The title text is centered over the upper portion of the image.

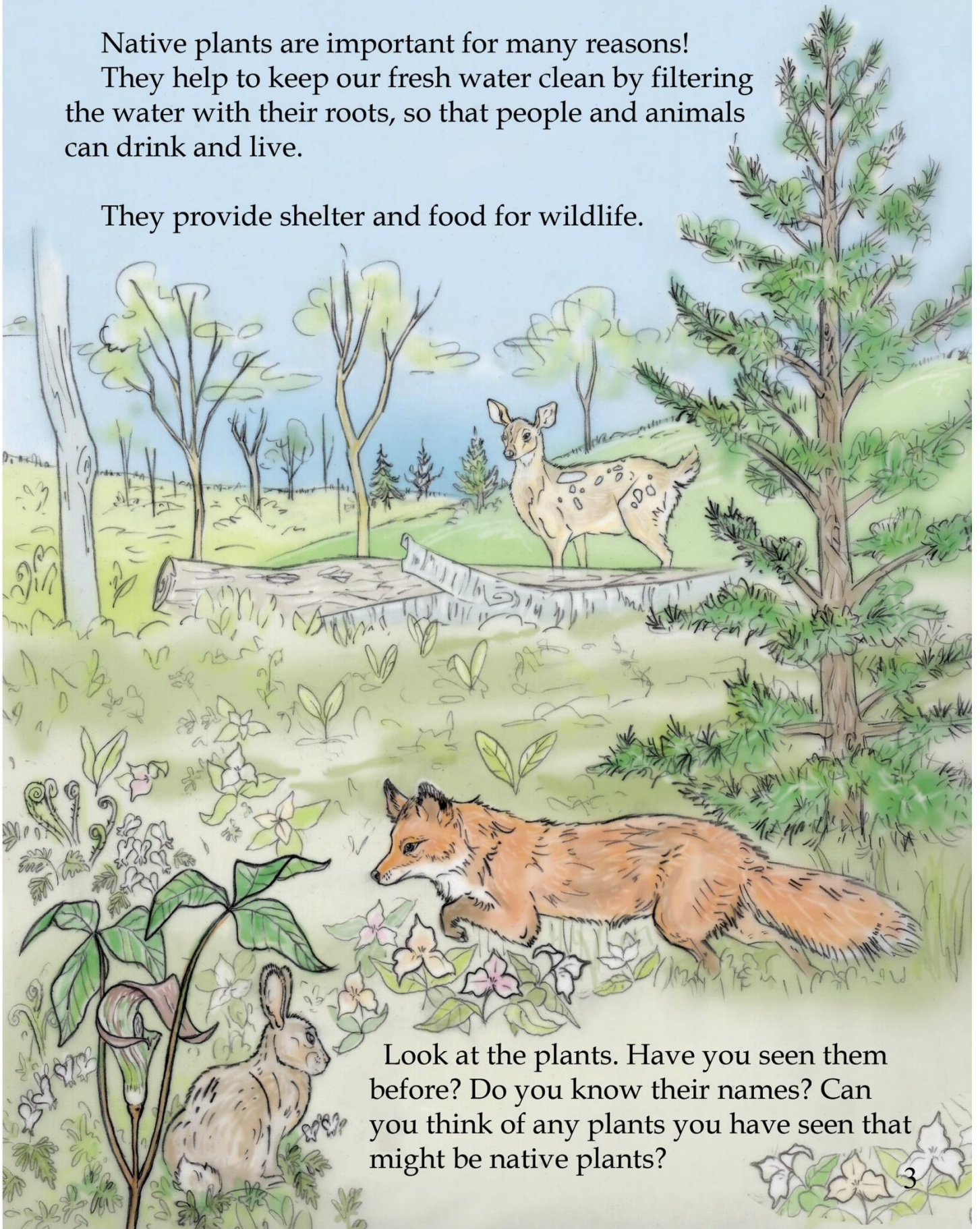
Habitat Matters: Let's Learn About Native and Invasive Plants!

Michigan is home to many beautiful and special plants that have grown here for hundreds of years. We call these plants “**native plants**”. Native plants can be trees, shrubs, grasses, flowers and more! They can grow on dunes, in forests, wetlands and meadows. Any plant that has grown in an area for a very, very, very long time can be called a native plant.



Native plants are important for many reasons!
They help to keep our fresh water clean by filtering
the water with their roots, so that people and animals
can drink and live.

They provide shelter and food for wildlife.

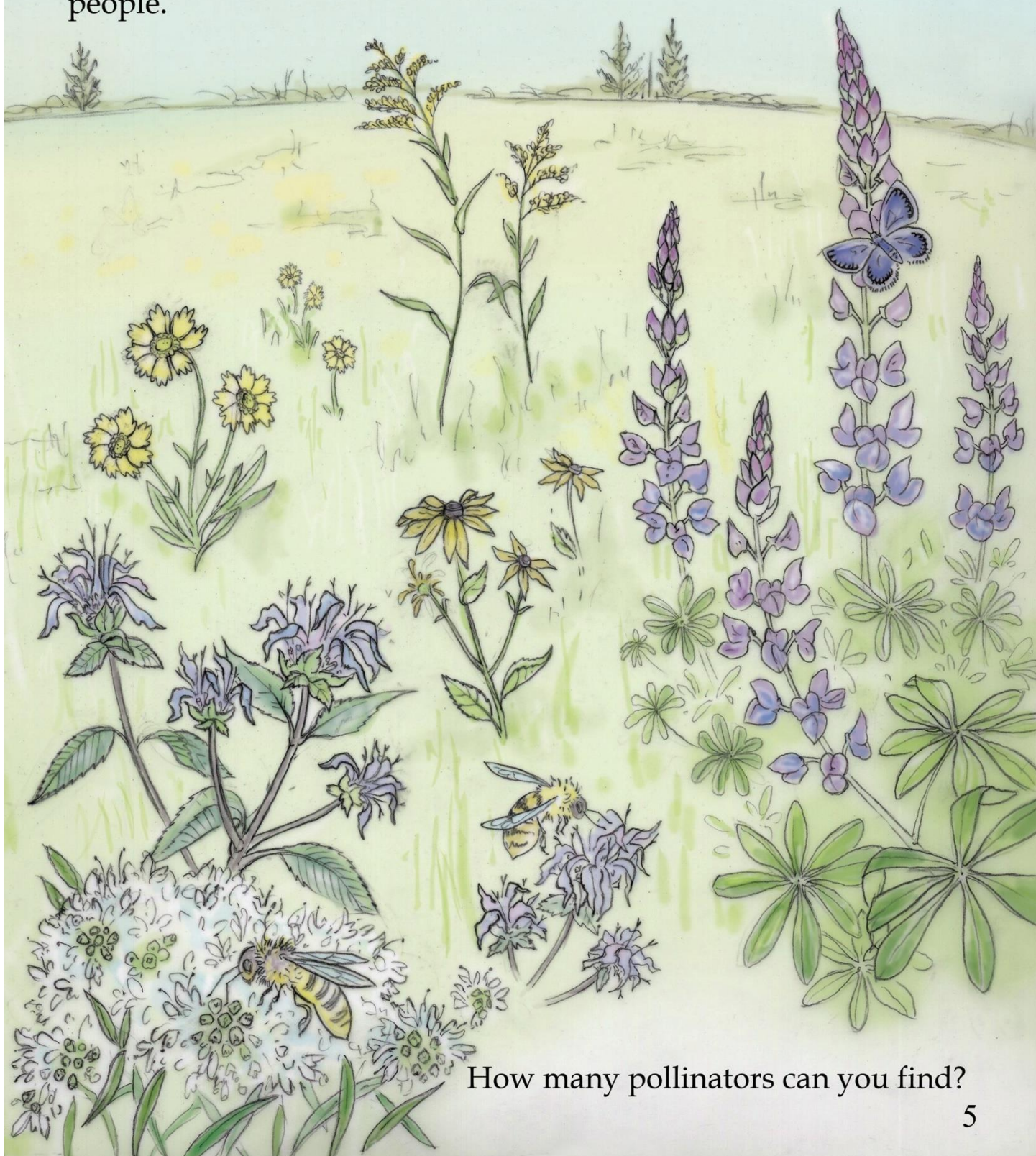


Look at the plants. Have you seen them
before? Do you know their names? Can
you think of any plants you have seen that
might be native plants?

Native plants are the best hosts for insects, which have evolved closely alongside the plants, and use them for food and places to lay their eggs. Other animals then eat the insects, can live and reproduce, and the food web continues.



Some insects, called "**pollinators**", move pollen to and from different plants, allowing these plants to make seeds or fruit, like cherries and apples. These foods are important to animals and people.



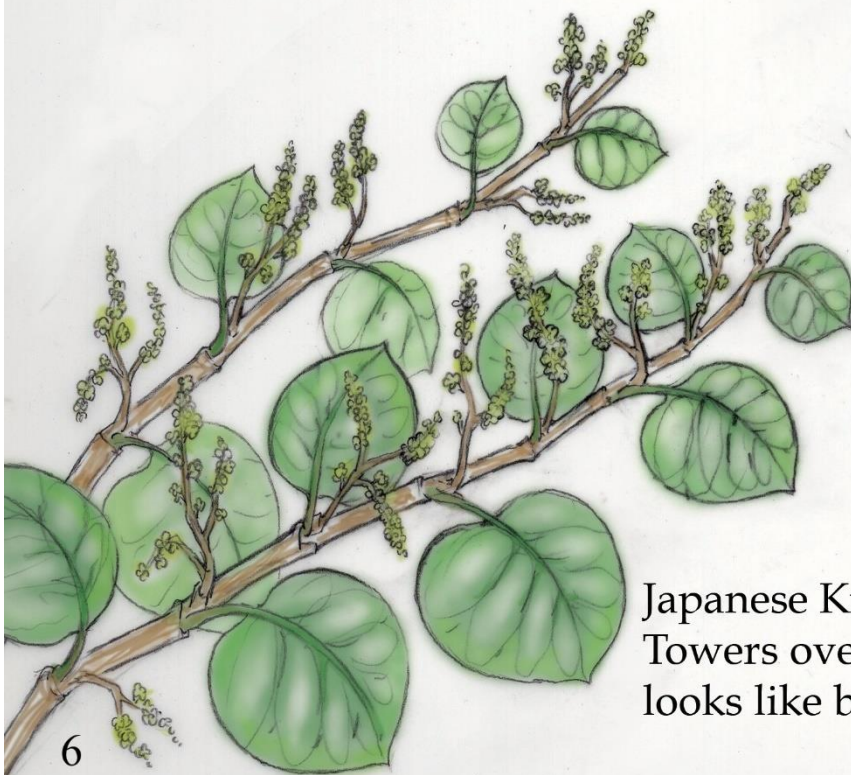
How many pollinators can you find?

Some plants growing in Michigan today are not native plants.

People have brought plants from other countries- or other places in America- to use in their yards and gardens because they were beautiful or hardy. Some were brought here by accident as seeds.

Some non-native plants can grow in many soil types and weather conditions. They can grow quickly and produce many seeds to make more plants. Local animal and insect predators are not familiar with the plants and do not keep them in check by eating them. When this happens, the non-native plants become a serious problem, because they crowd out native plants and disrupt habitat. We call these harmful plants "**invasive plants**".

Non-native Phragmites:
Grows very dense and looks like grass



Japanese Knotweed:
Towers over other plants and
looks like bamboo

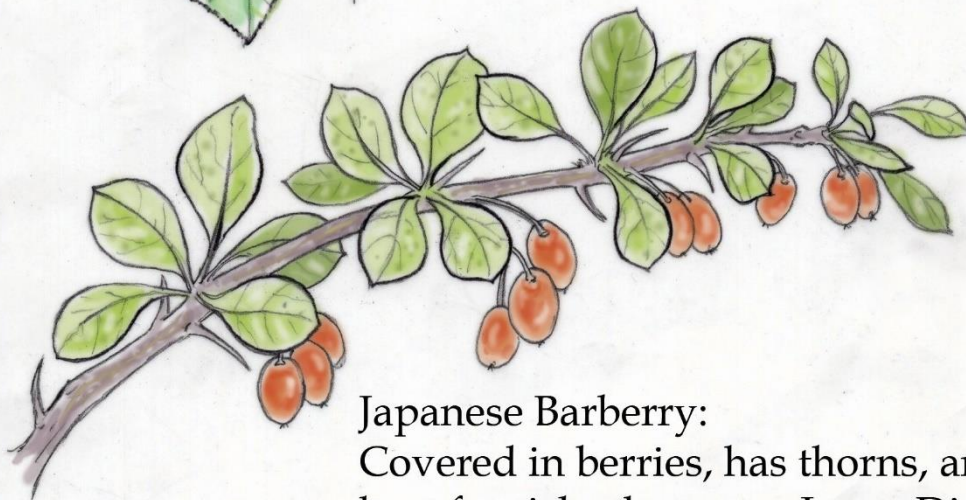
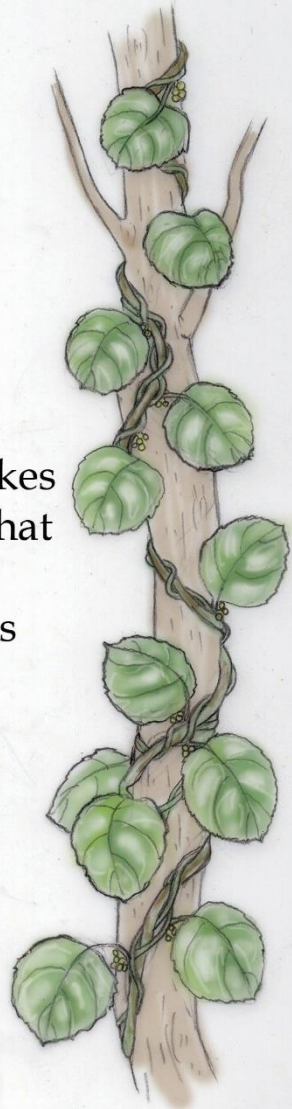
Sometimes, Michigan insects cannot use invasive plants as food and hosts for their eggs.

If native plants disappear because of invasive plants, insects will not be able to thrive, and the animals that eat the insects will suffer, and may disappear as well.



Garlic Mustard:
Allelopathic roots, deer
won't eat it!

Oriental Bittersweet:
Climbs trees and chokes
them, creates shade that
stops sunlight from
reaching native plants

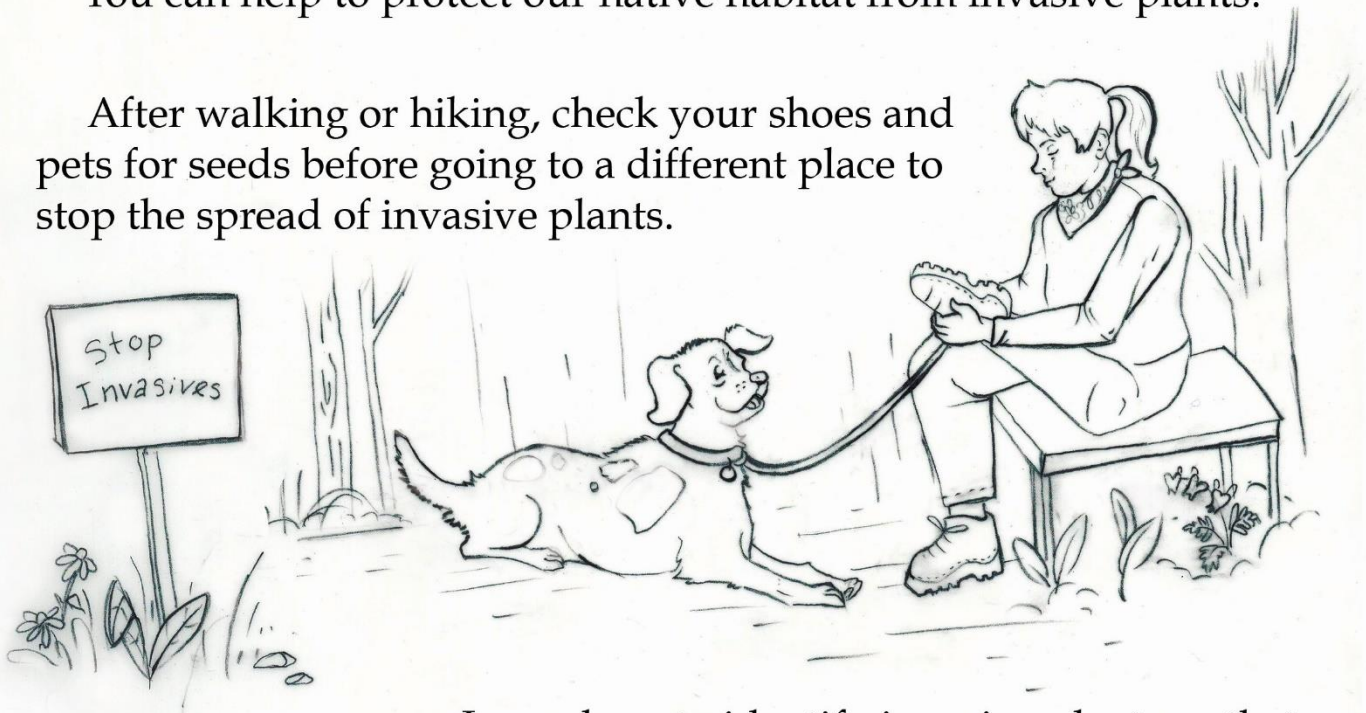


Japanese Barberry:
Covered in berries, has thorns, and are a perfect
host for ticks that carry Lyme Disease!

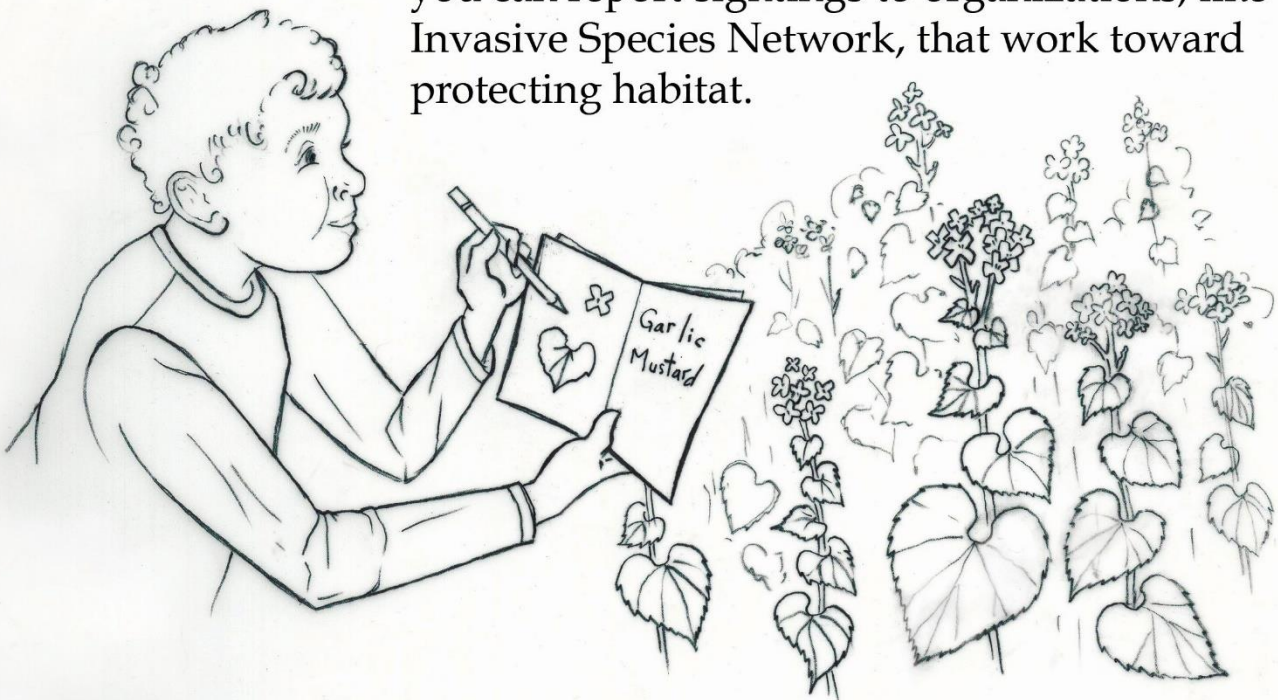
What do you notice about these plants? What shape are the leaves? Do they have berries or flowers?

You can help to protect our native habitat from invasive plants!

After walking or hiking, check your shoes and pets for seeds before going to a different place to stop the spread of invasive plants.



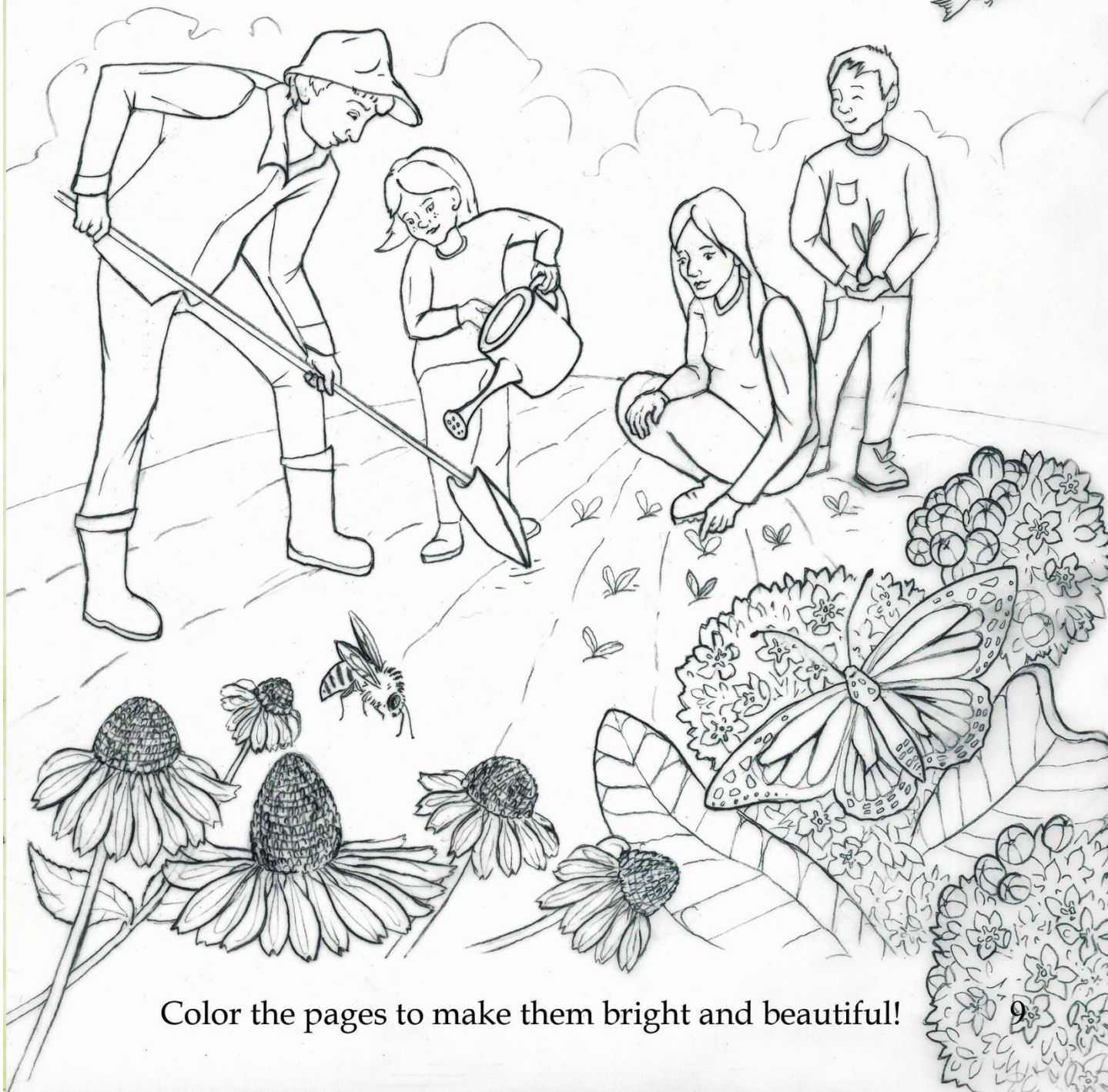
Learn how to identify invasive plants so that you can report sightings to organizations, like the Invasive Species Network, that work toward protecting habitat.



Join efforts in your own community by volunteering to help remove invasive species! Help pull garlic mustard from the forest or dig baby's breath on Lake Michigan's dunes.

Talk to your families about native and invasive plants. Together, you can plant native plant gardens to create habitat for pollinator insects, like butterflies and bees. You just might have non-native or even invasive plants in your own yard that could be replaced with native plants!

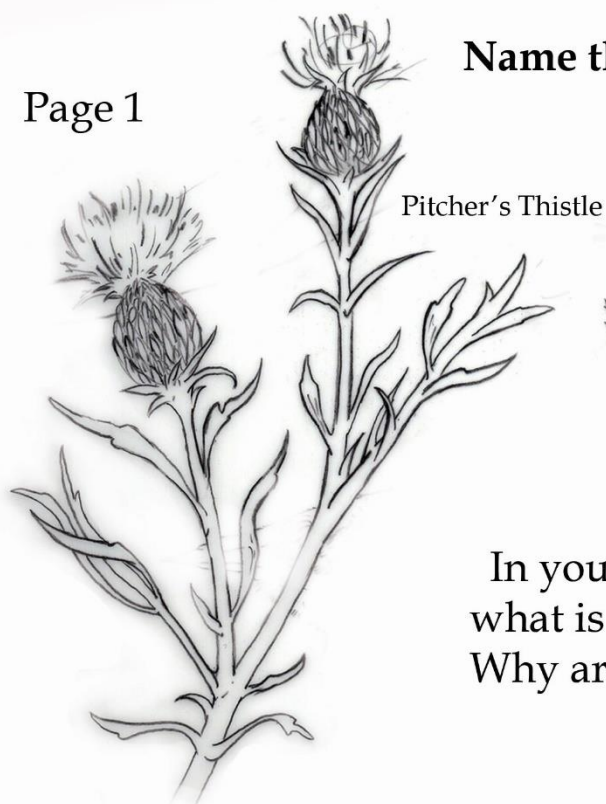
We love our native plants!



Color the pages to make them bright and beautiful!

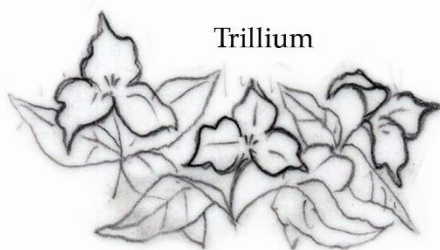
Page 1

Name that native plant!

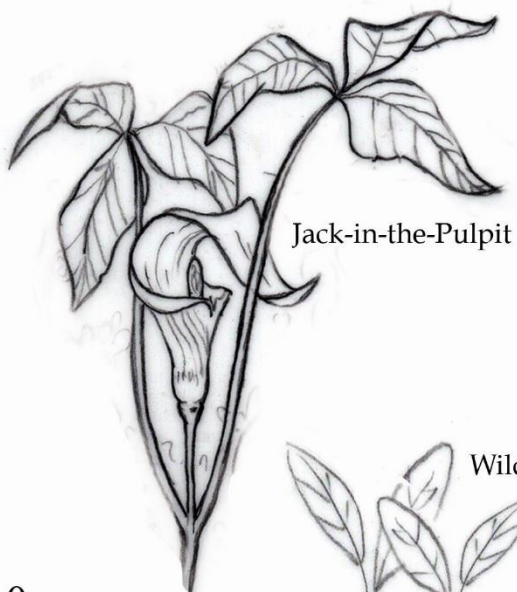


In your own words,
what is a **native plant**?
Why are they important?

Page 2



White Pine



Dutchman's Breeches



Page 3



Milkweed



Purple Coneflower

New England Aster



Cup Plant



Goldenrod



Page 4

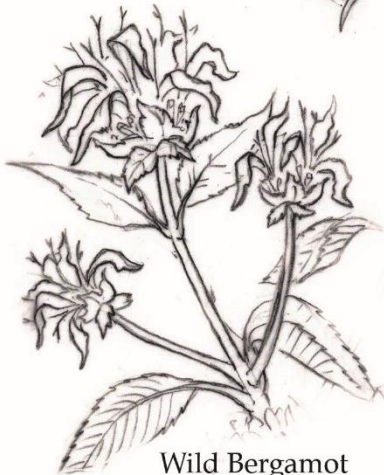
Sand or Tickseed
Coreopsis



Wild Lupine



Black-eyed Susan



Wild Bergamot

In your own words, what is an **invasive plant**? Why are they a problem for native plants, insects, animals, and people?

The Northwest Michigan Invasive Species Network (ISN) is a Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA). Serving four counties - Benzie, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, and Manistee - ISN works to protect, enhance, and promote northwest Michigan's natural communities through terrestrial invasive plant management and outreach. This project was funded in part by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

Learn more at:
www.habitatmatters.org

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