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Biology 101-24

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Service Learning Project Reflection

On this cold, chilly morning parked within the Langston Golf Course, my group decided to take on this advanced-level project of clearing the overgrown vines off of various trees. Our task was to use pruning shears to cut deep to the root source of the vine so that it will eventually not grow back onto the tree. This was a key task in our eventful day because the invasive vine species was “taking over” the trees that were near the river, creating a harsh scenery and living space for the nearby plants and animals like eagles, beavers, and even otters.

In relation to the content taught in Biology 101, invasive species can alter the evolutionary pathway of native species, which will lead to reduced biodiversity. Our volunteer instructor lectured us on how the golf course used to feature and be home to various water-living animals. That was until the vine species was introduced and strangled the trees, taking away habitats and allowing trash to get captured within the intertwining arms of the vine. As places for the animals to stay were destroyed and disappeared, the animals ventured off in hopes of finding a new safe home to live in. Destruction of habitats, plus the introduction of invasive species are key threats to decreased biodiversity.

This raises the question of, *“So how can we prevent the reduction of biodiversity while also protecting the native species?”*

That's where I would like to introduce the team who partnered with us today to help tackle biodiversity loss, Anacostia Watershed Society. Their goal is to protect and restore the Anacostia watershed by hosting restoration projects, advocating and educating the community and future generations to come.

Overall, this service project has sparked my interest in taking better care of the community by learning more about invasive species, and what to do as an undergoing biology student.