Why study invasion biology?

Many invasions have such idiosyncratic, bizarre effects that they cannot fail to get our attention simply as fascinating tales of natural history. Who would have thought that...

• Introducing kokanee salmon to Flathead Lake, Montana, and many years later, opossum shrimp to three nearby lakes would ultimately have led to population crashes of grizzly bears and bald eagles through a complicated chain reaction?

• Introducing a particular grass species would lead to hybridization with a native congener, subsequent polyploidization, and the origin of a new vigorous invasive species that would change entire intertidal systems?

• Competition for food with an Asian mosquito introduced to east Tennessee would render a native mosquito a more competent vector of La Crosse encephalitis?