

Invasion ecology is the study of the causes and consequences of the introduction of organisms to areas outside their native range. Interest in this field has exploded in the past few decades. Explaining why and how organisms are moved around the world, how and why some become established and invade, and how best to manage invasive species in the face of global change are all crucial issues that interest biogeographers, ecologists and environmental managers in all parts of the world. This book brings together the insights of more than 50 authors to examine the origins, foundations, current dimensions and potential trajectories of invasion ecology. It revisits key tenets of the foundations of invasion ecology, including contributions of pioneering naturalists of the 19th century, including Charles Darwin and British ecologist Charles Elton, whose 1958 monograph on invasive species is widely acknowledged as having focussed scientific attention on biological invasions.

A companion resources site for this book is available at:
www.wiley.com/go/richardson/invasionecology

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Cover image: One of the biggest contributions by Charles Elton in his 1958 book *The Ecology of Invasions by Animals and Plants* was to show the true global scale and the severe and escalating implications of biological invasions for life on earth.

In his chapter on 'The invasion of the continents' he wrote: 'If we were to build six great tanks, fill them with water and connect them all to each other by narrow tubing blocked by taps; then fill these tanks with different mixtures of a hundred thousand different chemical substances in solution; then turn on each tap for a minute each day; the substances would slowly diffuse from one tank to another. If the tubes were narrow and thousands of miles long, the process would be very slow. It might take quite a long time before the system came into final equilibrium, and when this happened a great many of the substances would have been recombined and, as specific compounds, disappeared from the mixture, with new ones from other tanks taking their places. The tanks are the continents, the tubes represent human transport along lines of commerce ...'

The original artwork on the front cover (by Lorraine Blumer of Stellenbosch) depicts Elton's imagery. © DST-NRF Centre of Excellence for Invasion Biology.

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