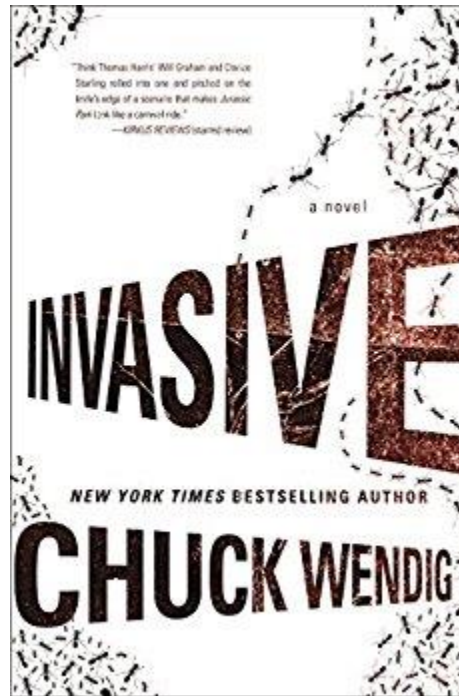


Diana Gallagher, ENTO 896- Outreach

*Invasive: A Novel* by Chuck Wendig, Harper Collins Publishers, New York:2016.

This is a stand-alone novel.



Chuck Wendig is a Pennsylvania-based author of thrillers, comics, young adult books, and Star Wars novels. He also writes about writing and has a blog at [terribleminds.com](http://terribleminds.com).

Warnings- Moderate amount of swearing; one sex scene that is not too graphic; considerable death and violence.

### **About the Book**

When we meet Hannah Stander in the airport, she is heading home, somewhat reluctantly, to see her parents. A phone call from FBI Agent Hollis Copper changes her plans and she instead flies to upstate New York to investigate a very odd murder. With the help of Ez Choi, an old friend who is an academic entomologist in Arizona, she begins to unravel the mystery. This

murder involves biologically engineered ants and this leads Hannah to visit the labs and compound of Arca Labs, based on one of the Hawaiian Islands and owned by the brilliant Icelandic entrepreneur Einar Gerritsson. The scientists are hostile to Hannah because they believe she is trying to pry into their work. As Hannah learns more about what is going on at these labs, she comes to understand that something is about to happen that is much larger than one murder.

As events unfold, Hannah is in danger from someone on the island and does not know who to trust. Very quickly, the novel becomes an exercise in survival not only for Hannah but for nearly everyone on the island. Hannah must use skills she learned as a child to escape a grisly death. The entomologists contribute their knowledge to overcome the problems they face but some of them are not working toward the same goal as the others. Meanwhile, the ants have been released on some of the other islands and people are dying.

Agent Copper is also working with entomologists to sort out what is happening on the islands and sends his data to Ez Choi. Between them can they help determine how this is being accomplished and what to do about the lethal ants?

## **Discussion Guide**

1. This novel is frequently compared to *Jurassic Park*. Is this a valid comparison? Why or why not?
2. Does Hannah's unconventional upbringing help her, hurt her, or both? Would she have survived without it? Can we understand her parents' motivations through her interactions with her mother in the course of the plot?

3. Entomologists are depicted as both heroes and villains in this story. What, for example, in the characterization of Kit Reed is different from that of Will Galassi? Is Ajay Bhatnagar's role a surprise?
4. Who does Einar Geirsson remind us of? Narcissistic, brilliant, and charming billionaires are often used to speed the plot and provide a foil for the other characters. What is the purpose of his sexual encounter with Hannah?
5. Hannah is not an entomologist but rather a futurist who undertakes consulting work. How might the novel have been different if she had been an entomologist? Would this have provided her character with better motivations or would it have revealed plot devices too quickly since the reader is kept in the dark along with her character?
6. How does the design of the labs and living quarters on the island contribute to the panic the reader is meant to feel at the coming of the ants?
7. What chance do you give Ray Espinosa and Hannah's relationship? Does it change how you perceive Ray's character?