

Invasive Non-Native Plants

Non-native species are animals or plants that have been introduced (deliberately or accidentally) by humans into an area in which they do not naturally occur. Invasive non-native species have the ability to spread, causing damage to the environment, the economy, our health and access.

Why are invasive non-native plants a problem?

- Shade out native species (light, space and nutrients)
- Quick to spread and dominate
- Threaten natural habitats and native species
- Reduce bank stability, leading to erosion, water pollution and increased flood risk
- Restrict access to the river for recreation
- Costly to control
- Can harm humans and animals

What is the law?

It is illegal to plant or otherwise cause a plant to grow in the wild at a place outwith its native range. There is no legal requirement to control invasive non-native species that are already established in the wild. The aim of the legislation is to prevent the spread of invasive non-native plants from non-wild areas, such as gardens.

Who is responsible?

The owner of the land concerned is responsible for control. SNH has powers to enforce action where a landowner's inactivity may prevent the success of a coordinated eradication programme. However, voluntary action by landowners is the preferred course of action.

Who is involved in their control?

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) help to coordinate and regulate invasive non-native species control. The Forestry Commission controls invasive non-native plants on their land.

What Can You Do?

DOs and DON'Ts

DO learn how to identify the common invasive non-native plants (nonnativespecies.org).

DO check your garden and land for invasive non-native plants.

DO report any invasive non-native plants you see to the North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (nesbrec.org.uk) with details of what you have seen, where, when and your contact details.

DO seek advice if you are unsure of how to deal with plants on your land or need help with identification.

DON'T allow invasive non-native plants to spread from your land.

DON'T use weed killer near a watercourse without permission from SEPA.

DON'T compost your contaminated garden waste.

DON'T forget to clean your boots and equipment to avoid seeds being spread.

DON'T attempt to control any invasive non-native plants without reading the guidance available online first. Spraying licences, personal protective equipment, chemical use and follow up treatments may be required.

For further information on managing invasive plants:

Identificationnonnativespecies.org

Reportingnesbrec.org.uk

Business guidenetregs.org.uk

Legislationsepa.org.uk

Controlsnh.gov.uk

Code of practicegov.scot

Local informationdeepartnership.org

Helping The Rivers Dee and Don

The River Dee Trust and the River Don Trust charities are helping to control and eradicate the invasive non-native plants found along river banks within the Dee and Don catchments.

The success of the control project to date has been due to the hard work and enthusiasm of its valued volunteers. We welcome all levels of volunteering, whether it be assisting us for a day in hand pulling Himalayan Balsam to undertaking training in pesticide application to spray invasive plants

Are You keen to Volunteer?

By helping you can:

- Protect our native wildlife
- Restore habitat and protect river banks
- Improve instream habitat for fish
- Learn about rivers and wildlife

If you are interested in volunteering or would like any further information and guidance, please contact:

Invasive plants team

The River Office: (013398) 80411

Email: info@riverdee.org

Supported by:

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partnership

Controlling Invasive Non-Native Plants

Invasives are a serious threat to biodiversity.

What You Can Do



The River Dee Trust



THE RIVER DON TRUST



Giant Hogweed

(*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)

Native to: SW Russia and Georgia

Impacts: Contact must be avoided as the sap can cause blistering of the skin following exposure to sunlight. Out-competes native vegetation resulting in a loss of plant and invertebrate diversity. Winter die back exposes river banks to soil erosion and increases flood risk. It reduces access to the riverbank and is costly to treat. Waste must be removed from site by a licensed carrier.



- Identification:
- Plants can grow to 5m in height
 - Serrated compound leaves can measure up to 2m
 - Sharp bristles on the stem and undersides
 - Stems up to 10 cm thick.
 - Stout, bristled, hollow, blotched dark reddish-purple stem and spotted leaf stalks.
 - Umbrella shaped, white or rarely pinkish flower can measure 80cm in diameter



Himalayan Balsam

(*Impatiens glandulifera*)

Native to: West and Central Himalayas

Impacts: It forms dense stands that shade out native plants, reducing biodiversity and denuding river banks of understory vegetation. Winter die back of the plant exposes bank sides to soil erosion. Bumblebees are attracted to the nectar in the growing season, however the monoculture created by Himalayan Balsam reduces the range of native plants species available to bees and other insects, throughout the year.

- Identification:
- Plants are 1-2m in height
 - Stems are hollow and green early in the year turning pinky-red in the spring
 - Leaves are a shiny dark
 - green, slender and up to 15cm
 - Pink flowers appear between June and October, are slipper shaped and sweetly scented



Japanese Knotweed

(*Fallopia japonica*)

Native to: Japan, Taiwan, Northern China

Impacts: Japanese Knotweed is the most damaging invasive non-native plant species in Britain. It out competes all other plants in the summer but after autumn die back it exposes bare banks which are highly prone to erosion. Few native insects or animals feed on the plant and its dense thickets are deserts for wildlife. It can grow through tarmac and cause damage to properties. Waste must be removed from site by a licensed carrier.

- Identification:
- Plants can grow to 3m in height
 - Stems are ‘bamboo-like’, with obvious nodes/rings and purple speckles
 - Leaves shoot alternately, creating a ‘zig-zag’ pattern
 - Lush shield shape green leaves (red when young)
 - Creamy white spikey flowers in autumn
 - Mature stems are hollow and not at all woody



American Skunk Cabbage

(*Lysichiton americanus*)

Native to: Western Northern America

Impacts: Forms dense stands and impacts negatively on native plants, outcompeting them by shadowing. Can live for 80 years.

- Identification:
- Plants grow to 1.5m
 - Flowers have a strong skunk-like smell
 - The flower takes the form of a spike called a spadix, this is usually surrounded by a bright yellow leaf/petal called a spathe. The flower and spathe grow to about 30cm high
 - The large lance shaped leathery leaves grow to about 1m long and 30-80cm wide and continue until the end of the summer.
 - Green berries are produced in the summer
 - Grows in wet areas

