



Management Measures for Widely Spread Species (WSS) in Northern Ireland

Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*)

As per Article 19 requirement of EU Regulation 1143/2014
on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

Himalayan balsam <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	
Description	Himalayan balsam is an invasive non-native terrestrial plant. It is a tall annual plant, reaching 2m in height; it has translucent fleshy stems, pink-purple slipper-shaped flowers and large oval pointed leaves. Flowers produce seed pods, 25mm in length, and as they mature and dry, they explode if touched. Each parent plant can produce about 2,500 seeds, which can float downstream to a new site.
NI Status	It is widespread across Northern Ireland. It is frequently seen along water courses in thick continuous stands, as well as damp woodlands, flushes and mires. For current distribution visit NBN Atlas Northern Ireland .
Pathways	Originally ornamental, but became a garden escapee. Flowers produce seed pods, 25mm in length, and as they mature and dry, they explode if touched. Each parent plant can produce about 2,500 seeds, which can float downstream to a new site.
Aim	To contain, and reduce the extent of Himalayan balsam, with localised eradications being carried out in high priority areas.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure strict biosecurity when working in proximity to <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i> to avoid further spread. 2. Eradicate small populations of <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i> locally, prioritising especially vulnerable sites (e.g. ASSIs) and in areas in which seed will be spread by water 3. Where populations are discovered in new, high priority sites (e.g. ASSIs) attempt eradication, and revisit later in the season and in subsequent years. 4. Reduce distribution across N.I. by 50% by 2030. 5. Widespread restoration of native species and habitats
Prevention	
Border and pathway actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Himalayan balsam is already widely established across Northern Ireland. - Under the EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation it is an offence to plant this species or allow it to grow in the wild. - Under the EU Invasive Species Regulation, it is also an offence to import into the EU, keep, grow or cultivate, transport (to, from or within the EU; except to facilitate eradication), place on the market, use or exchange this species – unless there are specific exemptions or permits.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ID sheet developed and deployed to border staff – Border Force, Portal Inspectors and Plant Health Inspectorate (FS), etc. - Liaison with Wildlife Crime Northern Ireland (PAWNI) to ensure species is not being traded.
<p style="text-align: center;">Stakeholder communications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to raise public and other stakeholder awareness of invasive non-native plants and provide advice including guidance on control methods and identification information. - Northern Ireland versions of awareness raising campaigns - Check Clean Dry (http://invasivespeciesni.co.uk/what-can-i-do/check-clean-dry/); Be Plant Wise (http://invasivespeciesni.co.uk/what-can-i-do/be-plant-wise/); to alert gardeners and retailers to the threat the species poses. - Traders are not permitted to purchase or sell this species. - Gardeners and land owners must act responsibly and not allow Himalayan balsam to spread. They must initiate management measures to remove it from their land. Owners should consider the removal and disposal of this plant. It can be composted in situ prior to being in seed.
Early detection and rapid response	
<p style="text-align: center;">Surveillance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new, dedicated surveillance mechanism is not necessary as a number of existing recording schemes allow reporting of this species: - In Northern Ireland species records are entered to CEDaR online recording via www2.habitas.org.uk/records/ISI or via the Invasive Species Northern Ireland website - http://invasivespeciesni.co.uk/report-sighting/. Entering a record generates an email to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Team. - The Botanical Society of the British Isles Map Scheme also compiles comprehensive distribution maps for plants across the UK - The Biological Records Centre (www.brc.ac.uk) collects presence records of all wildlife species in the UK through a network of voluntary recorders on iRecord online or by the iRecord app. The BRC provides the opportunity to download distribution data and visualise it as customisable maps, via the National Biodiversity Network Atlas Northern Ireland (https://northernireland.nbnatlas.org/). - Relevant Government agencies such as DfI Roads/Rivers, AFBI, Loughs Agency, Forest Service and Northern Ireland Environment Agency record the presence of invasive non-native species as a part of their work and will then initiate management measures for WSS on their own sites. - Non-Governmental Organisations (e.g. Rivers and Fishery Trusts and Boards, Wildlife Trusts, etc.) undertake surveys of freshwater habitats and report incidental sightings of invasive

	<p>non-native species and will then initiate management measures for WSS on their own sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All N.I. Councils to also record and report presence of invasive non-native species on their estates and initiate management measures for WSS on their own sites.
Rapid response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In certain areas of N.I. a rapid eradication following a confirmed sighting may be appropriate, particularly in cases where it is first discovered in a new catchment. Once widely established sustainable control is more difficult.
Long-term management	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When Himalayan balsam is not yet widespread within a catchment it must be managed to reduce its impacts and to avoid further spread. - Mechanical control – repeated cutting/mowing – needs to be cut below lowest node to stop regrowth. Hand pulling, after it has flowered but before seed heads develop for small infestations. - Mowing and grazing can also be successful in eliminating existing infestations but, to be successful, it would need to be repeated annually and on a catchment scale. - Wherever possible avoid the use of herbicides, especially as this is a riparian species. - If adjacent to water and if herbicides are the only option, they must only be applied by PA6Aw qualified operatives. - Due to the downstream transportation of seeds, control measures in the catchment area of a river must start at the upper reaches and move on downstream. - Guidance on the management of Himalayan balsam is available on the Invasive Species Northern Ireland website - http://invasivespeciesni.co.uk/species-accounts/established/terrestrial/himalayan-balsam 	
Research	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CABI was asked by Defra, the Environment Agency and the Scottish Government to find a natural enemy to help control this destructive weed. They have been trialling the rust fungus <i>Puccinia komarovii</i> var. <i>glanduliferae</i>. since 2006 - https://himalayanbalsam.cabi.org/scientific-research/ 	

Photo © Great Britain Non Native Invasive Species Secretariat (GBNNS)



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