

Introduced to Britain in 1839, it escaped from gardens and rapidly colonised river banks and areas of damp ground.

Distribution map - Himalayan Balsam
Source: Botanical Society of the British Isles (2010)

A downloadable identification sheet for this species is available at www.nonnativespecies.org

Separate leaflets are available outlining the legal requirements and responsibilities for landowners.

The correct disposal of plant material is vital because there is a high risk of spreading the problem further. Contact the Environment Agency (England and Wales) or SEPA (Scotland) for advice on disposal.

Environment Agency - Tel: 08708 506 506
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Tel : 01786 457 700 www.sepa.org.uk

Further information may also be found on the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology web pages:
http://www.ceh.ac.uk/sci_programmes/AquaticPlantManagement.html

A local project is currently underway with the aim of tackling Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) in the Tame Valley Wetlands Scheme area.

We are asking local landowners and other interested parties to help us in this task to prevent the spread of these invasive species and promote native flora.

If you would like to know more about our Project, need advice or help with management, we would like to hear from you.

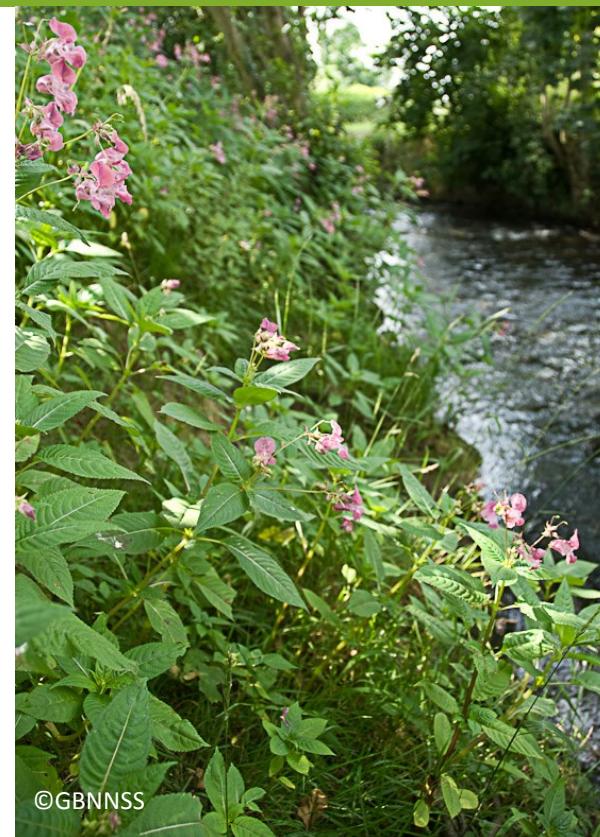
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Control of invasive non-native species

Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*



Himalayan Balsam plants grow in dense stands that suppress the growth of native grasses and other flora.

In autumn the plants die back, leaving the banks bare of vegetation, and therefore liable to erosion.

Control methods for Himalayan Balsam



The image above shows the early spring growth, or rosette stage. The mature stems are also pinkish-red, hollow and jointed, often with some branching. Leaves and side branches originate from stem joints. The stem is sappy and brittle. The shiny dark green leaves are lance-shaped, have serrated edges, a dark red midrib and can be up to 150mm long. They grow on the stem in whorls of three. Purplish-pink flowers, held on long stalks, appear from June to October.

Control

Control measures should aim to prevent flowering, and are best carried out before June for maximum effectiveness.

Non-chemical control

Cutting

Cut at ground level using a scythe, machete, flail or strimmer before the flowering stage in June. Cutting earlier than this will promote greater seed production from plants that regrow. Cutting should be repeated annually until no more growth occurs.

Pulling

Shallow-rooted plants can be pulled up very easily and disposed of by burning, or composting unless seeds are present.

Grazing

Grazing by cattle and sheep is effective from April throughout the growing season. It should be continued until no new growth occurs.



The characteristic purplish-pink slipper-shaped flowers appear in June. When the seed pods mature, they explode when touched, scattering the seed up to 7m away. Seeds are also spread by water and they may remain viable for up to two years.



The white, brown or black seeds are produced from July to October and are 4-7mm in diameter.

Chemical control

Glyphosate

Treat with a weed wipe in mixed stands, or by foliar spray in dense stands, before flowering. If all plants are controlled, then spraying should only be required for two to three years.

In general

It is essential to establish vegetation quickly after control measures have been applied. A dense grass sward is ideal as it tends to discourage seed germination. Control should be undertaken on a catchment basis, working from the upstream end to prevent seed recolonisation.