

NON-NATIVE PEST PLANTS

An introduction to our services

Due to the negative impact of non-native pest plants their control needs to be managed integrally. It is illegal to facilitate the spread of over 40 listed non-native pest plant species into the wild (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981).

Key issues include:

- Non-native pest species are one of the main causes of biodiversity loss
- Many endangered species are negatively impacted by non-native pest plants
- There are over 40 non-native pest plants the presence of which can expose landowners to criminal prosecution, fines and bad publicity
- Many financial institutions won't lend on properties containing certain pest plants
- The presence of these plants can delay development and impede property sale
- Costs of control can increase rapidly as plants become more established

RPS aims to protect clients from prosecution, enforcement actions and liability claims and to minimise related impacts on the environment and on property.

Our services

- Survey and assessment
- Biosecurity plans
- Customised management plans
- Competitive tender acquisition
- Control supervision
- Monitoring
- Report productions

For more information contact:



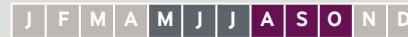
Peter Watson
Associate – Ecology
T: +44(0)1480 302790
E: peter.watson1@rps.tetrattech.com

Five of the most problematic are:



Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)

Japanese Knotweed is a tall, vigorous, hardy perennial plant, with heart shaped leaves, attractive purple stems and small, creamy white flowers. The woody underground shoots of this species grow rapidly through soil, colonise large areas quickly, and can cause damage to buildings, underground structures and hard surfaces. This species costs the UK construction sector approximately £150 million per year, excluding costs associated with delays to development, which can be substantial.



Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)

Giant Hogweed is the largest herbaceous plant in Britain and can grow up to 5m tall with leaves 3m long. The colour of its wide, bristly stems ranges from green to purplish green with purple blotches. Large flower heads can produce up to 80,000 seeds per year. The sap of this highly noxious species can cause severe blistering of human skin, making it a particular problem on amenity land. This species can outcompete native plants and contribute to riverbank erosion.



Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*)

Himalayan Balsam is a stout succulent annual with reddish translucent hollow stems. This plant can grow up to 3m tall and possesses finely serrated slender to elliptical leaves (up to 15cm long) and attractive pink trumpet shaped flowers. This extremely invasive species spreads rapidly on the soft banks of water bodies, out-competing native plants, blocking access and contributing to riverbank erosion, consequently increasing flood risks.



Certain Cotoneaster species

The Cotoneasters are a large group of prostrate shrubs and small trees. These densely growing plants possess alternate leaves (generally small) and red berries, which can be toxic to mammals if eaten in sufficient quantity. Now widespread, due to prolific planting and seed dispersal by birds, these plants, once well established, can be extremely difficult to control and can have serious impacts on high conservation value native vegetation, e.g. dry limestone grasslands.



New Zealand Pigmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*)

New Zealand Pigmyweed is a small, frost tolerant, plant with narrow fleshy bright green leaves, which grows in and by water. Tiny white flowers are present from July to September. Once established, this species forms dense mats that can impede drainage (causing flooding) and reduce amenity use of waterbodies. This plant outcompetes most native aquatic plants and can reduce light and oxygen availability in waterbodies, affecting fish and invertebrates.



■ Survey not possible

Key: ■ Optimal survey period ■ Sub-optimal survey period