

**NEW FOREST NON-NATIVE PLANTS
PROJECT**

**REPORT TO STEERING GROUP
MEETING ON
6 MAY 2014**

**Report covering the period
1 January 2014 – 30 April 2014**

**Catherine Chatters
New Forest Non-Native Plants Project Officer
1 May 2014**

Publicity

Press releases

- ‘Help needed to stop spread of toxic weed’ press release dated 18 March 2014 relating to the need to secure funding to continue the co-ordinated programme of giant hogweed control along the Avon Water during 2014;
- ‘Volunteers in battle against invaders’ press release dated 21 March 2014 relating to event on 19 March 2014 hosted by New Forest Non-Native Plants project titled ‘Encouraging community engagement, volunteering and citizen science in the control of invasive non-native species’

Publications and websites

- Article in Lymington Times dated 18 January 2014 titled ‘Town council joins hogweed fight to protect Avon Water’
- January 2014 edition of Hampshire Life magazine featured an article about ‘Slow New Forest’ (a book by local author) accompanied by a photograph of NFNNPP volunteers pulling balsam along the Avon Water
- HIWWT members’ e-newsletter 9 January 2014 – information about event on 19 March 2014 organised by the NFNNPP
- The New Forest National Park hosted a Volunteer Fair at Lyndhurst Community Centre on Saturday 15 March 2014. Their ‘Volunteer Guide 2014’, which was given to people attending the event, featured photographs of NFNNPP activities on pages 1, 4, 11 and 15
- Nature Notes in Southern Daily Echo on 5 March 2014 featured the event organised by NFNNPP on 19 March 2014
- Green Watch in Southern Daily Echo on 12 March 2014 featured an article titled ‘Invasion of the giant hogweed’
- Southern Daily Echo website on 12 March 2014 featured an article titled ‘Avon Water invasion of the giant hogweed with skin-blistering toxic sap’
- Salisbury Journal website on 24 March 2014 featured an article titled ‘Call for funds to battle giant hogweed and save the Avon’
- Article in Lymington Times dated 29 March 2014 titled ‘Battle to stop return of the giant hogweed’
- Green Watch in Southern Daily Echo on 2 April 2014 featured an article titled ‘Volunteers vital in battling invaders’
- Southern Daily Echo website on 2 April 2014 featured an article titled ‘Volunteers play vital role in eradicating invasive plants in New Forest’
- Article in Lymington Times dated 5 April 2014 titled ‘Volunteers praised for curbing invasive plants’
- Summer 2014 edition of HIWWT ‘Wildlife’ magazine included an article on the Wildlife Investors which featured Dr Jonathan Newland of Waterland Management Ltd who had undertaken the aquatic dye trials on New Zealand pygmyweed on behalf of NFNNPP

Liaison with landowners and managers

The following landowners/managers were met between 1 January – 30 April 2014:-

- Eddie Holtham (Fawley Parish Council) – 13 February 2014
- Barry Coyston (Fawley Parish Council – 13 February 2014
- Liz Rolfs – 24 February 2014
- William Peach – 24 February 2014
- Sarah Houston – 24 February 2014
- Mr D Robinson – 24 February 2014
- Deborah Robinson – 24 February 2014
- Mark Turley – 24 February 2014
- Judy Sharrock – 24 February 2014
- Peregrine Bruce – 24 February 2014
- Sara Cadbury – 5 March and 19 March 2014
- Alison Bolton – 5 March and 19 March 2014



During the evening of Monday 24 February 2014, the Project Office met landowners in Sway Village Hall to discuss proposals for continued control of giant hogweed during 2014. Photo above shows Mr and Mrs D Robinson, Mr Mark Turley and Mr Peregrine Bruce.

Steering Group meeting

The Steering Group meeting originally scheduled to occur on 14 January 2014 was postponed until 28 February 2014 (due to family bereavement).

Forum meeting

The Forum meeting, held on Wednesday 5 March 2014 at Brockenhurst Village Hall, was attended by 23 people including landowners, volunteers, a recent graduate, people hoping to volunteer during summer 2014, Natural England, Environment Agency and The New Forest National Park Authority.

Presentations were given by Martin Osman, Senior Landscape Manager for EM Highways Services Limited, Lee Jaycocks of Southern Water and Graham Dodsworth of Network Rail. Martin, Lee and Graham outlined their strategies for control of invasive non-native species on the land for which their organisation is responsible and gave an up-date on progress. The Project Officer gave a presentation summarising activities relating to the NFNNPP since the previous Forum meeting was held in March 2013.

The meeting was extremely useful and positive comments were received from a number of people after the event:-

“an enjoyable and information morning” – Catherine Charlton

“very good day” – Ashley Basil

“I thought it was useful to have an industry perspective - and they were not harangued by the audience, improving the prospect of cooperation” – Brian Matthews

“it was nice to see the session so well attended, it made it fun and interesting. All the best for the work you and your volunteers are doing” Lee Jaycocks, Southern Water



Graham Dodsworth (Network Rail), Lee Jaycocks (Southern Water) and Martin Osman (Senior Landscape Manager for EM Highways Services Limited) who gave presentations at the Forum meeting on 5 March 2014.

Liaison with other Projects and Organisations

During April 2014 Kate Wright, Invasive Species Project Trainee at Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, e-mailed to seek advice regarding control of American skunk cabbage. Advice was provided by the Project Officer via e-mail on 23 April 2014.

On 24 April 2014 the Project Officer gave a presentation at the Rolle Estate Office in Devon to encourage volunteers who have been pulling Himalayan balsam on the River Otter and its tributaries on the Clinton Devon Estate. Originally Dr Sam Bridgewater (Nature Conservation Manager of the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths and the Otter Estuary) had invited Trevor Renals of the Environment Agency to give the presentation but Trevor had been unable to do so and suggested the New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer. The presentation was well received and it complemented those given by the FWAG officer and the representative from the Rivers Trust.



On 24 April 2014 the Project Officer gave a presentation to encourage volunteers who have been pulling Himalayan balsam on the Clinton Devon Estate

Capital works undertaken between 1 January– 30 April 2014

No capital works were undertaken in this period.

Control work undertaken by volunteers

On 9 April 2014 volunteer Brian Matthews joined the Project Officer to facilitate access along the bank of the Avon Water at Efford for balsam pulling volunteers and the contractor who will be undertaking herbicide treatment to control the giant hogweed later in the season.

Planning work for 2014 and securing funding

The majority of the Project Officer's time between January and April 2014 has involved attempts to secure funding from private landowners and grant bodies and then issuing Purchase Orders to contractors.

The Project Officer received confirmation in January 2014 that the bid for funding in 2014/15 from the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme was successful. Funding of up to £12,240 per annum has been approved by the HLS Board for the remaining period of the HLS at end of February 2020.

The Project Officer has received assurances from Jane Smith of the Forestry Commission that £5,000 will be made available in 2014/15 for work in Inclosures etc.

The Project Officer submitted an application to the New Forest National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) for funding towards the control of giant hogweed along the Avon Water in 2014 (to supplement the money pledged by landowners). The Project Officer attended the SDF Panel on 25 March 2014 and was successful in securing a grant of £7,982.88.

The Project Officer requested grant aid from Sway Parish Council towards the control of giant hogweed along the Avon Water in 2014 but this application was rejected.

Approaches were made to two County Councillors for funding towards the control of giant hogweed along the Avon Water in 2014 but the deadline for applications had expired.

Following the meeting at Sway Village Hall on 24 February 2014 and as a result of numerous e-mails, letters and telephone conversations, the Project Officer has secured pledges of contributions from landowners along the Avon Water towards the cost of giant hogweed control in 2014. To date £8,166 has been received.

The following Purchase Orders were issued to contractors during the period January – April 2014:-

Giant hogweed (two treatments in 2014)

- Banks of the Avon Water. POs issued on 10 April 2014

American skunk cabbage

- HIWWT nature reserve in Lymington River Reedbeds SSSI. PO issued on 4 April 2014
- Crown Land along Mill Lawn Brook (with Montbretia). PO issued on 10 April 2014

Buddleia

- Crown Land at Wittensford. PO issued on 4 April 2014

Bog arum

- Crown Land at Ipley. PO issued on 4 April 2014

Japanese knotweed

- Crown Land – ditch at Bartley. PO issued on 4 April 2014
- Crown Land - New Park. PO issued on 25 April 2014
- Crown Land- Pondhead Inclosure. PO issued on 25 April 2014
- Crown Land – Hawkhill Inclosure. PO issued on 25 April 2014
- Crown Land – Meerut Road, Brockenhurst. PO issued on 4 April
- Crown Land – near The Pig Hotel. PO issued on 25 April
- Crown Land – Chinham Road, Bartley. PO issued on 4 April 2014

Parrot's feather (two treatments in 2014)

- Four sites on Crown Land. POs issued on 1 April 2014

Himalayan honeysuckle

- Crown Land at Nomansland. PO issued on 4 April 2014
- Crown Land at Emery Down (with Japanese knotweed). PO issued on 4 April 2014

Himalayan balsam

- POs issued to Ashley Basil Horticultural Services on 7 April for pulling, patrolling and leading volunteer work parties in summer 2014.

Japanese knotweed, Himalayan knotweed & bamboo on Pennington Common

- PO issued on 23 April 2014. The cost will be re-imbursed by Town Council using their HLS funds.

On 4 April 2014 the Project Officer met Matthew Cheetham (Southern Counties Forestry) to discuss the control of American skunk cabbage and Montbretia along the Mill Lawn Brook. The Montbretia had been discovered by the Project Officer on 23 March 2014 at two locations along the bank of the stream.



Montbretia growing under gorse on bank of the Mill Lawn Brook, downstream of Burley. It was discovered by the Project Officer at two locations here on 23 March 2014 and will be controlled using herbicide in summer 2014.

The Project Officer wrote to all relevant landowners along the Cadnam River on 25 April 2014 to inform them that NFNNPP is unable to commission control of Japanese knotweed on their river banks in 2014, due to lack of funding.

The Project Officer compiled a programme of volunteer work parties to control Himalayan balsam during summer 2014 and this has been distributed to people who have volunteered in recent years. The programme is also available via the Project webpage on the HIWWT web site.

Promotional Events

New Forest Wildlife Forum on Saturday 8 February 2014

The Project Officer manned a display at the New Forest Wildlife Forum held at Lyndhurst Community Centre on Saturday 8 February 2014. The event had been organised by the New Forest National Park Authority.



Ian Barker and Sarah Kelly looking at the NFNNPP display during the New Forest Wildlife Forum at Lyndhurst Community Centre on Saturday 8 February 2014

Promotional Talks

The Project Officer gave a presentation at the Annual General Meeting of the New Forest HLS scheme on the evening of 27 March 2014. This focussed on the control work undertaken during 2013 using HLS funding.

The Project Officer was due to give a talk to the Havant Area Group of HIWWT on the evening of 22 January 2014 but was unable to do so due to attendance at the GBNNSS workshop in Shropshire. In the circumstances Bob Chapman very kindly agreed to stand in and give a talk to the local group that evening. The Project Officer's talk on the NFNNPP to the Havant Area Group has been re-scheduled for 26 November 2014.

The Project Officer was due to give a talk to The Royal Southampton Horticultural Society on the evening of 31 January 2014 but, due to family bereavement, a replacement speaker kindly stood in and gave a talk on a different topic. It is hoped that the Project Officer's talk on NFNNPP can be re-scheduled for a future date.

Promotion of the 'Be Plant Wise' campaign and 'Check, Clean, Dry' campaigns



The 'Be Plant Wise' and 'Check, Clean, Dry' messages were promoted to Forestry Commission staff during the training session on 11 February 2014. Photo above shows Dan Charlesworth, Recreation Ranger



The 'Be Plant Wise' and 'Check, Clean, Dry' messages were promoted to Forestry Commission staff during the training session on 11 February 2014.
Photo above shows Marianne Bergin, Senior Ecologist

Training provided by the Project Officer

At the request of Marianne Bergin of the Forestry Commission, the Project Officer organised a half-day training session for FC staff on Tuesday 11 February 2014 in a hotel in Lyndhurst. Dr Ben Rushbrook of HIWWT gave a presentation on biosecurity. The event was attended by 16 FC staff including works supervisors, recreation rangers, a beat forester and ecologists.



Forestry Commission staff during the training session on 11 February 2014

Training attended by the Project Officer

Great Britain Non-Native Species Secretariat workshop on 21 and 22 January 2014

The Project Officer attended the two day workshop at Preston Montford organised by the GBNNSS. This, again, was an excellent event and an extremely useful opportunity to meet other project officers from around the country. The Project Officer gave a presentation on training and awareness-raising events organised by the NFNNPP.

Robson Meeting on 8 April 2014

The Project Officer attended the first day of the 46th Robson Meeting at Reading Town Hall on 8 April 2014. This was a useful opportunity to hear from Nicole Tilche of the Law Commission regarding the Law Commission's review of wildlife law, plus presentations on control of floating pennywort and research into biological control for Himalayan balsam and a demonstration by the EA's consultants of the new guidelines for management of aquatic vegetation.

Volunteer survey, research and other activity



On Wednesday 12 February 2014, the Project Officer attended the meeting at Southampton University to hear the presentation given by recent graduate Louise Cooke who (with Marija Nilova) had undertaken a survey of giant hogweed on behalf of NFNNPP in 2013.



On 1 April 2014 the Project Officer had a meeting with Joshua O'Shaughnessy, a geography student at Keble College, Oxford University. Joshua is keen to base his dissertation on invasive non-native plants in the New Forest, possibly repeating the survey undertaken by Southampton University graduates in summer 2009.

Trials relating to control of New Zealand pygmyweed *Crassula helmsii*



New Zealand pygmyweed (Photo: Ashley Basil)

The practical work relating to herbicide, hot foam and aquatic dye have now all been completed.

On 3 April 2014 the Project Officer hosted a meeting for Dr Naomi Ewald of Freshwater Habitats Trust to up-date relevant organisations on the results of her latest monitoring (undertaken in February 2014) of the effects of the treatments. The meeting was attended by Forestry Commission, Natural England and Hampshire County Council.

Naomi has completed her interim report based on the results of the monitoring undertaken in February 2014. Further research will be undertaken in summer 2014 and the final report is scheduled to be submitted in autumn 2014.

Reducing the Impact of Non-native Species in Europe (RINSE)



WP 2 – training and awareness-raising

On 19 March 2014 the Project Officer hosted an event at Brockenhurst Village Hall focussing on the role of volunteers in the control of invasive non-native plants. The event was titled 'Encouraging community engagement, volunteering and citizen science in the control of invasive non-native species' and was attended by 56 delegates.

Speakers included:-

- Catherine Chatters on the role of volunteers in the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project
- Dr Steve Jackson of Southampton Solent University on the results of the volunteer motivation survey
- Derek Tippetts (Voluntary Ranger with the Forestry Commission) giving a volunteer's perspective
- Representative of OPAL (Open Air Laboratories) from Imperial College, London (speaker's name to be confirmed following appointment of successor to Dr Linda Davies)
- Mike Sutton-Croft, Norfolk Invasive Species Initiative on the role of volunteers in Norfolk and the RINSE mobile 'phone 'app' for species identification
- Martin Rand of Botanical Society of the British Isles on the role of volunteers in recording invasive non-native plants
- Sam Stork, 'Source to Sea' Project Manager on Living Records
- Dr Helen Roy of Centre for Ecology and Hydrology on citizen science surveys



Representatives of RINSE partner organisations at the event on 19 March 2014



Glen Skelton of Surrey Wildlife Trust looking at the display on 19 March 2014



Volunteers Maggie Adams and Bob Annell who attended the event on 19 March 2014



Mike Sutton-Croft of Norfolk County Council giving his presentation at the RINSE event on 19 March 2014

The event was well-received and 39 feed-back forms were completed after the event.

WP 3 – trials and demonstrations

The 'Partner Annexes' relating to the WP3 demonstrations (creeping water primrose, giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam) were submitted by the Project Officer to Norfolk County Council (lead partner) on 26 March 2014. The 'Partner Annexe' relating to the New Zealand pygmyweed trial is being prepared by Dr Naomi Ewald of Freshwater Habitats Trust.

The information for the 'Partner Report' relating to the New Zealand pygmyweed trial was prepared by Dr Naomi Ewald and submitted by the Project Officer to Bournemouth University on 4 April 2014. The Project Officer is preparing the information for the 'Partner Reports' relating to the WP3 demonstrations (creeping water primrose, giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam) and these will be submitted to Bournemouth University in due course.

Joint WP2 and WP3 workshop in Arras, France on 24 April 2014

Bob Chapman represented HIWWT at this workshop and reported on progress by HIWWT in relation to WP2 and WP3, using a powerpoint presentation prepared on his behalf by the Project Officer.

Submission of RINSE financial claim

The financial claim to the end of November 2013 was audited by the First Level Controller (Paul Wright of Sheen Stickland) on 24 January 2014 and then submitted to Norfolk County Council by their deadline of the end of January.

RINSE cross-border Steering Group meeting on 13 February 2014

John Durnell intended to represent HIWWT at this meeting in Norwich (and had booked train and accommodation) but had to cancel his journey due to severe weather warnings and possible disruption to travel.

Other work

Floating pennywort at Holbury

During the 'New Forest Wildlife Forum' held at Lyndhurst on Saturday 8 February 2014, the Project Officer was introduced to Mr Eddie Holtham of Fawley Parish Council.

Martin Rand (BSBI Vice County Recorder) confirmed identification of the floating pennywort *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides* which Mr Holtham had collected from a pond owned by Fawley Parish Council at Holbury.

The Project Officer arranged a site meeting on 13 February, gave advice on control of this extremely invasive non-native plant and discovered it growing in a second pond at this location. This is the first instance of *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides* being brought to the Project Officer's attention in the New Forest area.



Eddie Holtham and Barry Coyston of Fawley Parish Council pointing out a patch of floating pennywort *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides* on 13 February 2014



Hydrocotyle ranunculoides in pond at Holbury



Hydrocotyle ranunculoides removed from pond at Holbury on 13 February 2014

Land Advisers' Meeting

The Project Officer attended the HIWWT Land Advisers' meeting on 20 March 2014.

The Environment Audit Committee inquiry on invasive non-native species

Just before the Christmas holidays, the Project Officer had discovered that the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee had established an inquiry on invasive non-native species and were inviting comments with a very short deadline early in the New Year.

The Inquiry has been set up to examine:-

- The principal drivers of the rising number of invasive species
- The adequacy of understanding and data on invasive species and the extent of the harm they cause to be able to devise strategies to address them
- The adequacy of the draft EU Regulation and its relevance to the situation in the UK.

The Project Officer submitted a response on behalf of the NFNNPP on 7 January 2014. Below is an extract from her response:-

Summary

- *We note that the Inquiry will examine 'the case for any change in the law regarding invasive species' and 'any lessons for England and Wales from the experience of Scotland's invasive species legislation and controls'.*
- *We ask the Environmental Audit Committee to consider the Law Commission's review of Wildlife Law, in particular the Law Commission's Provisional Proposal 8-7 'that the power to make species control orders on the same model as under the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 should be adopted by our new legal regime'.*
- *We ask the Environmental Audit Committee to consider the introduction of species control orders 'made by statutory notice if the relevant body is unable to ascertain the name and address of any owner of occupier', referred to in paragraph 8.76 of the Law Commission's consultation paper on the reform of Wildlife Law.*
- *We consider that the introduction of species control orders, in particular in situations where the name and address of the owners can not be ascertained, would be of significant benefit to the control and eradication of invasive non-native species.*

Press releases – see attached sheets

Media coverage – see attached sheets

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The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project is hosted by
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RINSE
Reducing the impact of non-native species in Europe

