

Invasive Non-native Species: Help Stop the Invasion!



American mink (Credit: Paul Gambling)



Japanese knotweed (Credit: Mike Sutton-Croft)



Floating pennywort (Credit: Broads Authority)



Signal crayfish (Credit: Scott Perkin)

What are invasive non-native species?

Humans are increasingly moving species outside their natural range, sometimes deliberately and sometimes accidentally. In the absence of their natural enemies, some species can spread rapidly and cause problems. These species are termed 'invasive'.

Why do invasive non-native species matter?

- Invasive non-native species pose one of the most serious threats to biodiversity worldwide, second only to habitat loss.
- Invasive non-native species have large economic impacts. In Britain alone, these species cost our economy several billion pounds a year.
- Invasive non-native species can be damaging to our health and well-being. For example, invasive aquatic weeds can clog waterways and ponds, restricting their use for fishing and boating. Other invasive species, such as giant hogweed, pose a direct threat to our health (see below for details).

Not all non-native species are invasive! Many have benefits. For example, the majority of our crop plants have been introduced from other countries (wheat originally came from the Middle East).



Wheat

Giant hogweed is one of the most problematic invasive non-native species in Britain today. It can grow up to 5 metres in height, with each plant producing many thousands of seeds a year. Giant hogweed contains a poisonous sap that causes painful blistering and severe skin irritation.



Giant hogweed (Credit: Olaf Booy)

The Norfolk Non-Native Species Initiative

To address the threat of invasive alien species, the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership has taken the lead by launching the Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative. This is one of very few projects in Britain designed to promote the active management of invasive alien species at a county level. The Initiative is currently supported by the Broads Authority, Environment Agency, Natural England, Norfolk County Council and the Water Management Alliance.

The Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative is:

- 1) Collating and monitoring data on the distribution and spread of invasive non-native species in the county;
- 2) Developing action plans to address the species of most urgent concern;
- 3) Facilitating control and eradication projects at high priority sites; and
- 4) Promoting awareness of the risks and impacts associated with non-native species.

Help stop the invasion!

By taking some straightforward steps, you can make an important contribution to safeguarding the future of Norfolk's native wildlife from the impacts of invasive non-native species. Here are some ways in which YOU can help:

- Dispose of your garden and pond waste in a responsible manner (do not fly tip your garden waste). 60% of invasive plants in the UK are garden escapees!
- Ensure that you don't buy problem plants for your pond and garden in the first place. Visit the Initiative's webpage for advice on which plants are 'safe'.
- Don't release your pond fish or other animals into the wild.
- If you see an invasive non-native species, report the sighting to the Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative. Identification aids can be found on the Initiative's webpage (see below).
- Spread the word! Many people are unaware of these species and the impacts that they can have. Effective management of these species can only be achieved when everyone is working together, so tell your family and friends!

There are many other ways that you can help stop the invasion. Please visit our webpage to find out more!

Please visit: www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/nonnativespecies

Contact the Initiative at:

Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative
C/o Environment, Transport and Development
Norfolk County Council
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich
Norfolk NR1 2SG

Tel: **01603 228977**

E-mail: **michael.sutton-croft@norfolk.gov.uk**

Web: **www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/nonnativespecies**

Twitter: **www.twitter.com/norfolknsi**

Other useful websites:

GB Non-native Species Secretariat - **www.nonnativespecies.org**

Global Invasive Species Programme - **www.gisp.org**

IUCN Invasive Species Specialist Group - **www.issg.org**



Australian swamp stonecrop (Credit: Keith Luxford)



Himalayan balsam (Credit: Mike Sutton-Croft)

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