

Non-Native Species Secretariat Newsletter Issue 2 - Dec 2011

Welcome

Merry Christmas and a happy new year! The launch of the 1st edition of the Non-native Species Secretariat Newsletter in August 2011 was greeted with some very positive feedback from stakeholders. We hope you find the 2nd edition just as informative. Topics covered in this issue include:

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We are looking for contributions for the next newsletter. If you have any ideas please email: nnss@fera.gsi.gov.uk.

Species Alerts!

Asian Hornet - *Vespa velutina*

The 'Asian hornet' is an invasive non-native species of wasp from Asia. It has spread rapidly across France following its accidental introduction in 2004 and was confirmed in Spain and Belgium in 2011. Not yet present in

GB, the Asian hornet is considered likely to arrive soon.

As a highly effective predator of insects, including honey bees and other beneficial native species, the Asian hornet can cause significant losses to bee colonies (including wiping out individual bee hives). Click here for more information:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/alerts/index.cfm>

Government is considering a response plan including awareness raising amongst bee keepers, pest controllers, other stakeholders and the public, and developing information and advice.



Courtesy The Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera), Crown Copyright

Suspected sightings should be reported, as soon as possible, along with a photograph and details of where you saw it, to:

alert_nonnative@ceh.ac.uk

Other Alerts!

We remain on the alert for sightings of the killer shrimp *Dikerogammarus villosus*, water primrose *Ludwigia grandiflora*, and carpet sea-squirt *Didemnum vexillum*. See <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/alerts/index.cfm>

EU Developments

EU Invasive Alien Species Strategy

UK experts played a very strong role in the Commission's working groups during 2011 and we hope that input will help the Commission to develop cost-effective ideas. Defra's Protected and Non-native Species team is now in discussion with the Devolved Administrations to develop plans for briefing sessions with stakeholders in the new year. We are keen to engage with stakeholders to help assess the potential implications of a new EU IAS Strategy, now expected to be a proposal for a new EU Directive, and to identify key concerns and ideas. It is understood that the Commission is planning an online public consultation in the first quarter of 2012 and we will inform you of that in due course.

Convention on Biological Diversity supports struggle against invasive species

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has supported a recent call from conservation organizations for continued action against invasive species.

On 22nd July this year, the magazine *Science* published a letter from senior leaders of the worlds' most authoritative conservation organizations (including IUCN and Wildlife Conservation Society) entitled "*Invasives: A Major Conservation Threat*". The purpose of the letter was to respond to recent arguments against the struggle to tackle invasive species. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity said:

"Invasive species are a subtle threat to the natural balance of species and ecosystems, but can suddenly occur in explosive outbreaks. For this reason, the global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 includes a specific target on this issue". "We warmly welcome the letter published in Science – signed by an impressive list of leaders of conservation organizations – because it

confirms the commitment of the conservation community to address this threat. Preventing and mitigating the negative effects of invasions is indeed a huge challenge, and the cooperation of the NGOs is of crucial importance."

See: <http://www.cbd.int/> for further information.

INNS Species Focus

Killer Shrimp Update

The invasive non native shrimp, *Dikerogammarus villosus*, was first reported in the UK on 3rd September 2010 in Grafham Water SSSI in Cambridgeshire, and was subsequently detected on 25th November in Cardiff Bay, and on 26th November in Eglwys Nunydd reservoir (Port Talbot), in Wales.

Now with more than a whole year having gone by, there are still only the three known populations of the killer shrimp. This is very encouraging and suggests that actions taken by everyone at current invaded sites combined with everyone else's efforts to implement biosecurity practices around our waterways are paying dividends. This has been a superb joint effort but there is still no room for complacency as preventing its spread remains a serious challenge. Raising awareness, promoting biosecurity and keeping vigilant remain crucially important in protecting our waterways from significant harm.

Our unique success in Europe in containing the killer shrimp to date is down to an impressive combined effort. Site owners, operators and user groups at the affected sites have developed risk assessments for their activities and are implementing bio-security measures (e.g. jet washing equipment and erecting signs) as well as other appropriate containment actions. These groups continue to work very closely together on their bio-security measures and are being supported by advice from STAG & local Environment Agency, Natural England and Countryside Council for Wales's officers as appropriate.

Find out more about Bio-security guidance at:
www.nonnativespecies.org/alerts/killershrimp

The Environment Agency has developed a monitoring programme which includes over 4,300 sites across England and Wales to provide extensive coverage of English and Welsh water bodies. A map showing these monitoring sites can be found at:

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Leisure/killershrimpmonitoring.pdf>

Legislation & Guidance

Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011

Scottish Government will commence the non-native species parts of the 2011 WANE Act, in spring 2012.

The Code of Practice on Non-native and INNS will be laid before the Scottish Parliament over the course of the winter, so that it can come into effect at the same time as the new provisions.

For updates on progress see:
www.scotland.gov.uk

Law Commission Announcement

The Law Commission announced its 11th Programme of Law Reform in July 2011. This included proposals to reform legislation associated with wildlife management. The legislation around Invasive Non-native Species will fall within its scope. The Law Commission aims to publish provisional proposals for reform in June 2012 followed by a 3 month public consultation. They plan to publish a final report with recommendations in 2014. For further information see:
<http://www.justice.gov.uk/lawcommission/>

INNS Projects

Welsh Government's ecosystem resilience, diversity and compliance fund

Over 25% of the Welsh Government's ecosystem resilience, diversity and compliance fund has been allocated to invasive species control. On 4 November 2011, John Griffiths AM, Welsh Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development, announced details of the 17 projects funded by the £1million Ecosystem Resilience, Diversity and Compliance Fund. The fund was developed to support the adoption of the sustainable ecosystems services approach promoted by Natural Environment Framework for Wales.

Two projects aimed at controlling the spread and impact of invasive alien species received funding. At £250,000 the eradication of Carpet Sea Squirt (*Didemnum vexillum*) in Holyhead Marina was the largest project supported by the fund.



This project is designed to conserve native biodiversity, protect local fisheries and preserve the amenity value of the marina, all of which are important ecosystem services.

A second project aimed at controlling *Rhododendron ponticum* in Cwm Dulais, near Swansea received £31,500 to increase grazing land and improve ecosystem resilience.

Both projects will be evaluated in May 2012 and will help inform the future development and direction of the Natural Environment Framework in Wales.

Water Framework Directive funding for INNS projects

In late spring 2011 the Secretary of State announced a £92 million fund to deliver against Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives in England. Of this Defra has allocated £5 million for projects concerning non-native species. This fund will support research into understanding and managing aquatic invasive non-native species. These projects include, research into the management of non-native crayfish and the development of bio-control agents for some of the most invasive aquatic weeds.

A significant proportion of the fund will also be allocated to community groups known as Local Action Groups or LAGs who coordinate and take action on invasive non-native species locally. In the 2011/12 financial year over £250,000 has been allocated to projects across England. Finally, some of the fund will be used to promote good practice and encourage responsible behaviours in the aquatic environment.

Local Action Groups

Government Funding for Local Action Group Projects

16 Local Action Groups have received funding for this financial year from Water Framework Directive budget.

The funding will be used in a variety of ways, examples include: purchasing equipment such as bush cutters and knapsack sprayers; promotion of 'Be Plant Wise' and 'Check, Clean, Dry'; arranging workshops to engage stakeholders; and training of volunteers.

Defra will be inviting bids for 2012/13 in January 2012. The call for bids will be published on the Non-native Species Secretariat website.

Focus on the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project

Established in May 2009, the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project aims to stop the spread of invasive non-native plants in the New Forest area, particularly in wetland habitats and along streams and rivers.



Project Officers Catherine Chatters and Jo Gore have had a busy summer tackling the spread of Himalayan balsam along the Lymington River, helped by plenty of enthusiastic volunteers. Where balsam-pulling was undertaken in 2010 the Project is already seeing a big difference and volunteers have been really encouraged by this evidence of progress.

Work by contractors to control parrot's feather, giant hogweed, Japanese knotweed, American skunk cabbage and creeping water primrose has continued and this year the Project have added the invasive non-native bog arum to their 'hit list'.

During 2011 the Project commissioned trials to assess the effectiveness of organic hot foam and aquatic dye to control New Zealand pygmyweed, without having a long-term detrimental effect on native plants and invertebrates. The trials will continue in 2012 and the results of this research will be available in Autumn 2012.



The Project has continued to spread the 'Be Plant Wise' message with displays at training events, local garden centres and the New Forest and Hampshire County Show.

A very successful event attended by over 70 people was hosted by the Project in early November 2011 to provide advice on the practicalities of controlling invasive non-native plants. View the project page at:

<http://www.hwt.org.uk/pages/new-forest-non-native-plants-project.html>

Events

Future Events

NNS Annual Stakeholder Forum – Birmingham
- May 2012

Invertebrates associated with invasive alien organisms Conference - Riga, Latvia – 16th – 18th Aug 2012 - More info. at: [Invertebrates associated with invasive alien organisms](#)

Invasive organisms and globalisation Conference – Riga, Latvia 20th – 23rd Aug 2012. More info. at: [Invasive organisms and globalisation](#)

Invitation for bids for funding from local action groups – Mid Jan 2012

Contacts us:

Email: nnss@fera.gsi.gov.uk

Post: Non-native Species Secretariat,
Food and Environment Research Agency,
Sand Hutton,
York,
YO41 1LZ.

**The next issue will be published in
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