



Invasive Species Action Group



Environment
Agency

Non-Native Species Newsletter: Summer Edition 2013

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Working in partnership to remove non-native fish in Essex

Part of the remit of the Anglian Fisheries Enforcement team is to enforce The Import of Live Fish Act 1980 (Species Amended 2003). This is an act to restrict in England and Wales the import, keeping or release of live fish or shellfish or the live eggs or milt of fish or shellfish of certain species to protect the environment.

Through intelligence gathered a visit was made on the 24th August 2012 to one such fishery in Essex suspected of keeping non native species Sturgeon and Wels Catfish. Nick Beardmore Fisheries Enforcement Officer from the Eastern Area met with the current Lease holder of Oakwood Lakes (Formerly Church View lakes) Mr Andy Williamson.

After discussion with Nick, Mr Williamson accepted that both Wels Catfish and Sturgeon had to be removed from the lakes before July 31st 2013 to comply with the

conditions of his temporary ILFA licence and to protect the environment or face possible enforcement action.

An action plan and agreement was drawn together to remove the species "As Caught" by anglers, this was because of the nature of the fisheries being deep and having prolific weed therefore making them difficult to net or electro fish with precision.



Signs were put around the fishery informing anglers of the need to eradicate both Sturgeon and Wels Catfish from the lakes asking them not to return the species and informing them of what action to take.

By working together Mr Williamson has adopted a very supportive role in the process working very closely with the Environment Agency. We are now very close to the total eradication of ILFA non native species from Oakwood Lakes (Formerly Church View lakes).

Contact: [Nick Beardmore](mailto:Nick.Beardmore@ea.gov.uk) 07901 516586

New look newsletter



As part of our invasive species communications programme we have adopted a brand for the information we provide to staff.

Details of the campaign are at O:\Invasive Species National Resources\INNS Campaign. Please look out for our new branded material, adopt our email signature and promote the new easinet pages <http://intranet.ea.gov/policies/environmentalwork/6459.aspx>

Contact: [Jo Heisse](mailto:Jo.Heisse@ea.gov.uk) 7-23-3179/[Jen Woodward](mailto:Jen.Woodward@ea.gov.uk) 7-50-3015



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ISAG has new leadership

The Invasive Species Action Group is delighted to welcome its new chairperson, John Russon, Regional Flood Executive Manager SW Region.



John succeeds from Geoff Boyd, both as Regional Flood Exec. Manager and as chair of the group, who retired on 28 June.

John joined the NRA in 1991 and has

worked in a wide range of operational roles in the South West including Environment Officer, Water Quality Monitoring Team Leader and Environment Management Team Leader. In 2003 John moved into Head Office Operations working for the Director of Operations on the Operations Gateway, Business Planning & Performance Management, OMT, business support to National Operations, River Basin Management and Workforce Planning. John spent a year on assignment to Anglian Region as the Environment & Performance Manager before taking up his current role as Regional FCRM Executive Manager in April 2013.

ISAG welcomes the operational focus John's leadership will provide. We hope that the strong links with FCRM will help us to embed our biosecurity messages and the value of invasive species management.

ISAG is also delighted to welcome **Peter Carty**, Principle Solicitor, National Legal Services as our legal advisor and **Dave Smith**, Evidence Support Officer, as our research advisor. Sadly, **Richard John** has recently left the organisation and is no longer able to represent FCRM.

POSTnote on invasive species now available

The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology provide guidance to members of parliament on technical issues.

With advice from us and a range of other stakeholders, POST has recently issued guidance on invasive non-native species. It is available at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/briefing-papers/POST-PN-439>. The POSTnote summarises debate over the risks posed by some invasive non-native plants and the policy frameworks and measures for addressing these risks. Invasive species issues are regularly discussed in both Houses, and we welcome guidance that will inform this debate.

Invasive species data now on the easimap

Staff can now access invasive species records from the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) on easimap

The data includes most of our BIOSYS records, but NFPD data have yet to be included. To view the records the link below will connect to Easimap for National Permitting, then follow the steps given below the link.

<http://gis-easimap.ea.gov/imf/imf.jsp?site=enp>

- Click on folder for 'Priority Species & Habitats'
- Click the tick box for the layer 'Invasive Non Native Species'

To view you need to zoom in to a scale of at least 1:139,000 (or just click on the + sign next to the folder name). There's also an additional function to view the records by species group e.g. mammals, fish, higher plants. To activate this view option just click on the colour ramp  next to the layer name, and the colour of symbols displayed will represent the species group (the 'Legend' tab will give the colour/species group).

Contact: [Dave Clark](mailto:dave.clark@ea.gov), 07917 557915



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Non-native invaders of the microscopic kind

The high profile work of the Non-native 'virtual' team, on the eradication, control and management of invasive non-native fish populations is well known throughout the Environment Agency. What is less well known is the critical part the Fish Health team in Brampton play in protecting our fisheries from non-native threats.



Along with non-native fish species, come non-native parasites and diseases. At the Brampton lab, we carry out in depth post-mortem and microscopic examinations alongside

microbiological, viral and histopathological techniques to find and identify the parasites and diseases of non-native fish species. We risk assess the impact these invaders might have, not only on their natural host but how they may threaten our native fish stocks if they transferred hosts and established here.

So far, we have found three new parasites on non-native fish - all new finds for the UK. We identified these parasites on pumpkinseed, black bullhead and Wels catfish, all from still water fisheries here in England. They are all exotic parasites that have been introduced and then established along with their non-native fish hosts. All three parasites, invisible to the naked eye, are members of the monogenea – a group of flatworms that include high risk pathogens like *Gyrodactylus salaris*.

Thankfully, our monitoring work combined with our established risk assessment frameworks, have shown these parasites to be benign invaders. However,

experience from Norway shows, it only takes one such introduction to cause serious disease problems to wild fish populations.

We work with universities and specialists throughout the UK and Europe, to understand the threats of non-native parasites and emerging disease and how we might manage them. One such study involves the parasite known as the Rosette Agent, which hit the headlines as a new invader to our waters. This parasite primarily infects topmouth gudgeon, but can potentially jump to our native fish species, including Atlantic salmon. We are leading a study, in collaboration with Bournemouth University and Cefas, using samples gained from our eradication work to monitor the distribution and impact of this novel parasite. Using histopathology and molecular screening, we can assess the risk this parasite poses to our native species.



The work we do provides vital watch on non-native parasites and novel diseases in both native and non-native fish. Our investigations and risk assessments ensure we can respond to new finds swiftly and place controls, helping to prevent the devastation that disease and parasites can cause to fish populations, thus safeguarding the fisheries they support.

National Fisheries Services are a part of National Operations. Find out more about us [here](#). If you want to know more about our work contact us:

Tel: 01480 483802

Email: fish.health@environment-agency.gov.uk



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Coming soon – Aqualnvader – to smart and I ‘phones

Following the success of Plant Tracker, we are pleased to announce that Aqualnvader - a tracker app for invasive fish and aquatic animals – is on the horizon. It is planned for launch on i-phones and smart phones very soon. There is a test version currently on trail.

As we've seen with [Plant Tracker](#), key groups within the public are very keen to engage with us and use apps to provide us with real and to date data on invasive species in the wild. With a million plus anglers interacting with the aquatic environment and other interested community groups, we have an amazing resource we can use the app to tap in to. The new app is being promoted by The Angling Trust.

The development of the app by the University of Bristol will let people send us images and locations of suspected invasive fish and crayfish. We will validate the records and, where new finds occur, focus our own reactive monitoring. When the app is completed, it will be available from <http://naturelocator.org/>

Where non-native species are confirmed we can take rapid action to prevent spread and, if appropriate, eradicate populations using the National Fisheries Services non-native eradication team. Early discovery of populations of species such as topmouth gudgeon, fathead minnow or black bullheads and rapid action to control or remove them could save £100,000s in future action after they had spread. This rapid action will make a real contribution to protecting the environment, WFD status and the social and economic value of fisheries. All from the click of a button on the app.

Contact: [Nigel Hewlett](#), 7-50-3969

Biosecurity e-learning now available

The e-learning package, 'better biosecurity', is now available from the e-learning catalogue.



The training can be accessed on the e-learning facilities on the easinet. Once into the catalogue, select 'Operational and Technical Specialist' and load the 'Better Biosecurity' training onto your training area. The training will encourage staff to adopt the ['check-clean-dry'](#) campaign launched by Defra in 2011. Further e-learning relating to invasive species recognition will soon be available.

Contact: [Alice Hiley](#), 7-28-4234

Network of Operational Technical Leads needs YOU!

Would you like to represent your Area? We want a network for 'invasive species and biosecurity' that represents the diversity of the Agency; both its people and its functions

The call for volunteers to form a network of Operational Technical Leads (OTL) for Invasive Species and Biosecurity has so far met with a poor response, but a big thanks to those who have already volunteered.

If you wish to be considered for the INNS/Biosecurity OTL, please discuss with your line manager first. The annual time commitment will be approximately a minimum of 10 days, but the role can be as big or small as you want to make it

Contact: [Trevor Renals](#) 7-24-5033

ISAG visits the London Wetlands Centre

The Invasive Species Action Group was treated to a guided tour of the London Wetlands Centre by Hannah Freeman and Adam Salmon of the Wildfowl & Wetland Trust.



Hannah explained the excellent contribution [WWT](#) were making to invasive species management. A number of pernicious invasive species have been successfully eradicated from the London Wetlands Centre, including water primrose, floating pennywort and Azolla. Crassula continues to be a problem, and is a particular issue at the WWT reserve at Llanelli.

Using funds we secured on behalf of WFD within Defra, WWT has created a display informing visitors of the problems created by invasive non-native plants and encouraging the public to adopt good biosecurity. The display was recently opened by the Environment Minister, Richard Benyon, and featured models of some of our most damaging invasive aquatic plants safely locked in cages, with information on the need to avoid these plants from escaping our gardens. Our thanks to SE Region for arranging the visit.



Invasive Species Action Group update

The Invasive Species Action Group is a strategic group, providing governance for invasive species issues within the Agency.

The current composition of ISAG is as follows:

Regional representatives:

NW: vacant

NE: **Andrew Virtue**, F&B officer

Mid: **Phil Harding**, A&R Team Leader

Ang: **Helen Smith**, Environment Manager

SW: **Anna Bright**, Biodiversity Tech. Spec.

SE: **Chris Catling**, Principle officer (Biodiv.)

Chairperson: **John Russon**, SW Regional Flood Exec. Manager

Business lead for invasive species:

Mark Diamond, Ecosystems Manager, E&B

Operational lead for invasive species:

Trevor Renals, Technical Advisor 1, CETS

Environment & Business: **Alice Hiley**, Advisor

Fisheries: **Nigel Hewlett**, Technical Manager, National Fisheries Services

Marine: **Nina Godsell**, Marine Mon. Officer 1

Communications: **Joanna Heisse**, Biodiversity Tech. Spec., KSL Area, SE

FCRM: **vacant**

Field Services: **David Baillie**, Business Change Manager

Legal: **Peter Carty**, Principle Solicitor

Evidence: **Dave Smith**, Support Officer

Secretariat: **vacant**

Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru - **Nick Birula**, Senior Advisor

The next ISAG meeting will be held in November (to be arranged). Minutes of previous ISAG meetings are available at [O:\Invasive Species National Resources\ISAG - Invasive Species Action Group](#). If you wish to propose agenda items for ISAG, please contact [Trevor Renals](#), 7-24-5033

**Help stop the spread of invasive non-native species:
Check-Clean-Dry and Be Plant Wise**

