

# New Forest Non-Native Plants Project



Cadnam River newsletter *April 2020*

## Welcome

The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project aims to stop the spread of invasive non-native plants in the New Forest area, particularly along river banks and in wetland habitats. Catherine Chatters, the New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer, is helping landowners meet their responsibilities to stop the spread of Himalayan balsam and other invasive non-native plants along the Cadnam River. This newsletter provides an update on the progress we are making and looks ahead to the future.

## Coronavirus

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) is inevitably affecting the activities of the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project (NFNNPP). Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust is taking the situation very seriously.

The NFNNPP secured funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund through the New Forest 'Our Past, Our Future' Landscape Partnership Scheme for Catherine and her colleague Jo Gore to continue working on the Project until the end of September 2020. We had hoped to be leading volunteer work parties to pull Himalayan balsam from May 2020 but these have had to be cancelled in the light of Government advice. The situation will be reviewed by the Wildlife Trust at the end of May 2020.

As soon as we know whether we can start leading volunteer work parties, Catherine will be in touch with the relevant landowners to check that you are happy for us to come on to your land. Obviously any work that we do will be undertaken in the light of the most up-to-date Government advice. The most important thing is that everyone keeps as safe as possible in these difficult and uncertain times.



Volunteers pulling Himalayan balsam along the Cadnam River at Wigley on a sunny day in July 2019

# Himalayan balsam

Himalayan balsam was introduced to the UK as an ornamental garden plant in the early nineteenth century but has become very invasive and can out-compete native vegetation. It has colonised river banks in the New Forest area. Luckily it has short roots and is easy to pull up.



Himalayan balsam (photo: Ashley Basil)

During 2019 the New Forest Non-Native Plants Officers led groups of enthusiastic volunteers to pull up the Himalayan balsam growing along the banks of the Cadnam River. Excellent progress has been made and the balsam has almost been eradicated at some sites where we've been working for the past few years.

Thank you to all the landowners who have welcomed the volunteers on to your land and provided car parking space. Your continued co-operation is so important to the success of the Project and is very much appreciated. Depending on the Coronavirus situation, we hope to be leading more volunteer work parties to pull up Himalayan balsam along the Cadnam River during 2020.



Photo above shows a keen volunteer pulling Himalayan balsam along the Cadnam River on 24 July 2019.



Photo on the left shows volunteers at the end of a Himalayan balsam pull along the Cadnam River at Ower on 4 September 2019.

## Himalayan balsam (continued)

Here is a selection of photographs showing some more people who kindly volunteered to help with Himalayan balsam control along the Cadnam River during Summer and early Autumn 2019.

People enjoy volunteering to pull balsam with the NFNNPP as it is a great way to get some fresh air and exercise in the company of like-minded people whilst doing something useful to help the environment.



During 2019 a total of 161 people generously gave 2,322.5 hours of their time to help the NFNNPP with Himalayan balsam pulls in the New Forest area. Many of the volunteers were local residents from the New Forest and surrounding areas. Some of the other volunteers participated in corporate work parties as shown in the photos on the next page.

As well as helping to pull the Himalayan balsam along the banks of the Cadnam River, the volunteers also participated in balsam pulls along the Avon Water, the Beaulieu River, the Fleet Water, the Lymington River and two of its tributaries, the Passford Water and the Mill Lawn Brook.



## Himalayan balsam (continued)

The New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer was delighted to welcome the corporate groups who helped to pull Himalayan balsam along the Cadnam River during Summer 2019.



The photo on the left shows staff from GE Aviation who pulled balsam along the Cadnam River on 24 June 2019. The photo below shows two of the Southern Co-op Board Members who pulled balsam at Wigley on 24 July 2019.

The photo below shows staff from the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management who pulled balsam along the Cadnam River at Ower on 29 May 2019.



Photo on right shows Richard Austin of the New Forest National Park Authority who enjoyed helping with a balsam pull along the Cadnam River in September 2019.



# Monitoring the success of control work

To assess the effectiveness of work undertaken using Lottery funding, students from the University of Southampton carried out a baseline survey of Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed at sample sites along the Cadnam River during 2015 and these sites have been monitored by students each summer in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019.



The photo on the left is a reminder of how dense Himalayan balsam was at some sites prior to the start of control work.

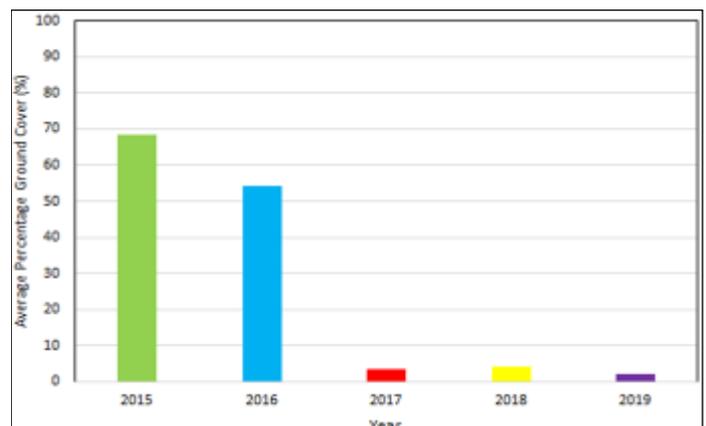
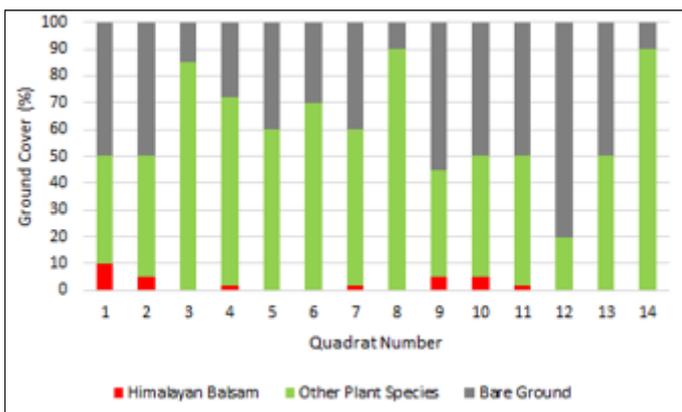


The photo on the right shows Dominika and Rebecca who undertook the baseline survey during 2015; the photo below shows Sophie and Rachael who did the monitoring in 2019.



The monitoring has revealed substantial decreases of the invasive non-native species at all the sample sites.

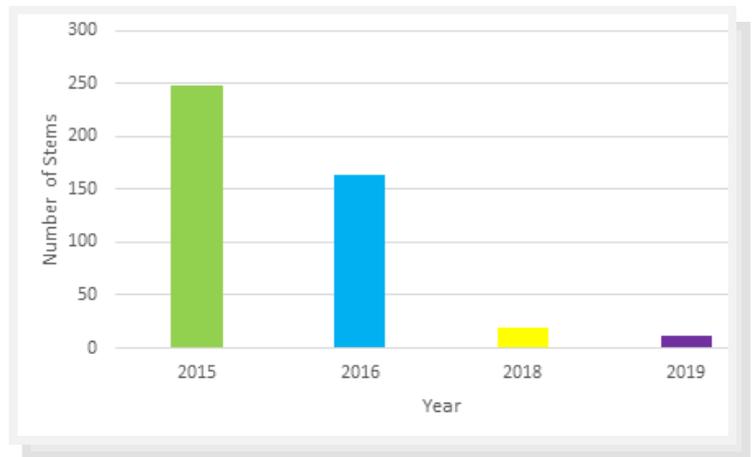
The graph below (right) reveals the decrease in percentage cover of Himalayan balsam at the sample site at Wigley along the Cadnam River. The graph below (left) shows the amount of Himalayan balsam compared to bare ground and native species in 14 quadrats at this sample site in 2019.



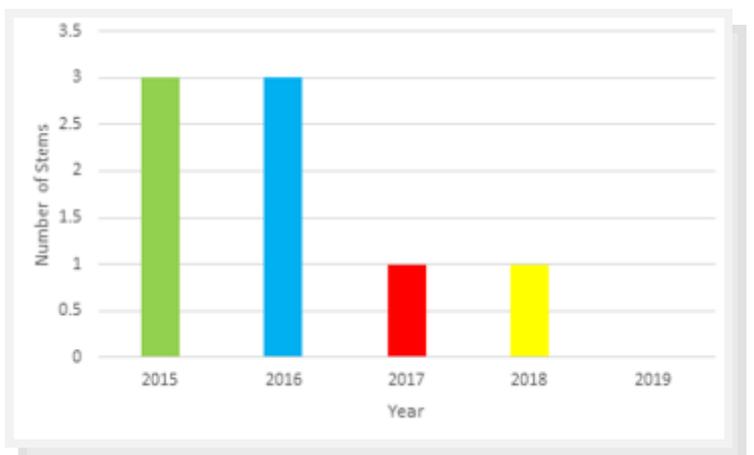
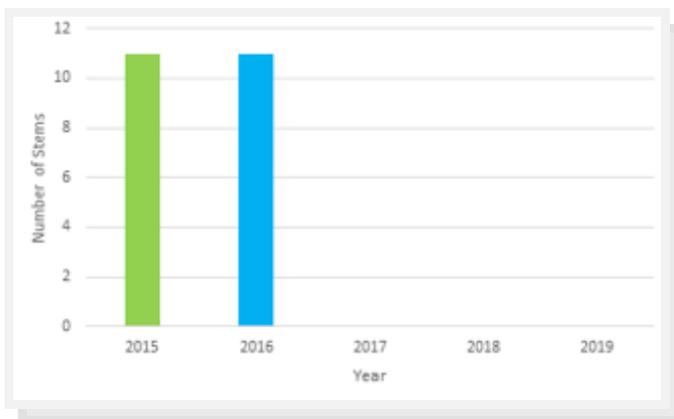
# Monitoring the success of control work (cont.)



The graphs on this page show the reduction in Japanese knotweed stems at the three sample sites along the Cadnam River. (One site could not be monitored in 2017 due to a fallen tree).



Ben and Sophie (above) undertook the monitoring of the Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed during 2016. Isobel and Jacob (below right) did the monitoring in 2017. During 2018 the monitoring was undertaken by Ben and Flora who are shown in the photo below (left).



Thank you to the landowners who have welcomed the students on to their land. The monitoring has been of great benefit to the Project as well as giving the students valuable work experience.



## Awareness-raising events

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, which hosts the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project (NFNPP), is one of the partners in the New Forest 'Our Past, Our Future' Landscape Partnership Scheme. This is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and aims to conserve and restore landscapes and habitats and inspire a new generation to champion the area. In addition to providing resources for practical work, the NLHF provides funding which enables the NFNPP to raise awareness about invasive non-native plants.

Last year the NFNPP hosted awareness-raising sessions for Network Rail staff and contractors, Young Commoners and volunteers to help people recognise invasive non-native plants, understand the problems they can cause and find out how to control them.



The photograph above shows New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer Jo Gore with some of the participants identifying pictures of invasive non-native plants during the training session for Network Rail staff and contractors in March 2019.



Photo above: volunteers during the awareness-raising session on 6 November 2019. Many of these people helped with the control of Himalayan balsam along the banks of the Cadnam River during Summer and early Autumn 2019.

Photo on right: three of the Young Commoners at the awareness-raising session held in Lyndhurst on 10 May 2019.



## Awareness –raising events (continued)

The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project attended the Wood Fair at Roydon Woods in June last year and had a display at a nature reserve open day at Lymington in September.



Photos show visitors to the NFNNPP displays at the Wood Fair (left) and nature reserve open day at Lymington (below).



## Project shortlisted for CPRE Award

The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project was selected as a finalist in the Community and Voluntary category of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England's Hampshire Countryside Awards 2019.

Photograph shows Nigel Atkinson, Lord Lieutenant for Hampshire, presenting a certificate to the Project Officers and volunteers Patsy Baverstock and Brian Matthews at the CPRE Hampshire Countryside Awards ceremony on 17 September 2019.



Photo credit: Jason Allen Photography

# New Forest Non-Native Plants Project Forum

The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project annual Forum meeting, held on Wednesday 4 March 2020, was attended by over 50 people. Patrick Heneghan introduced the event on behalf of the New Forest National Park Authority. Trevor Renals, the Environment Agency's national specialist on invasive non-native species, gave a fascinating presentation on the control of Creeping Water Primrose, putting the work of the Project into a national and international context. Catherine and her colleague then summarised the activities of the Project since its launch over a decade ago in May 2009. Thanks were expressed to everyone who has supported the Project.

## Contact details

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Catherine Chatters, New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer, pulling Himalayan balsam, photographed by Ashley Basil.



**Hampshire &  
Isle of Wight**  
Wildlife Trust

The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project is a partnership project hosted by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and supported by a number of organisations



**Our Past, Our Future**  
*Working together for the New Forest*



All advice given by HIWWT is done so in good faith and every effort is made to ensure that it is accurate and appropriate however it is the sole responsibility of the landowner to ensure that any actions they take are both legally and contractually compliant. Therefore, HIWWT does not accept responsibility or liability for any losses incurred or arising from the advice we give.

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