

Welcome to our Autumn 2025 newsletter and thank you to all of our contributors. If you have any comments on the newsletter, please contact nnss@apha.gov.uk.

[View an HTML version of the newsletter.](#)

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News

Update on Yellow-legged hornet (also known as Asian hornet)

384 credible yellow-legged hornet sightings have been reported in the UK in 2025, and 96 nests have been found. More information can be found on the [website of the National Bee Unit](#).

For more details on identification and reporting, including Alert posters and ID sheets to help with awareness raising, please visit the [Asian hornet alert page](#). The NNSS would like to thank everyone involved in raising awareness of this species.

Look out for yellow-seeded false pimpernel (*Lindernia dubia*)

Yellow-seeded false pimpernel (*Lindernia dubia*) is new to Great Britain (GB) and was detected in Pulborough, West Sussex, earlier this year. This species is an annual plant of wetland habitats, that spreads along waterways with contaminated equipment and could potentially be spread by waterfowl. It is already invasive in parts of Europe and poses a risk to native species and habitats.

We are keen to find out whether yellow-seeded false-pimpernel is found at any other sites in GB, and are asking for help in looking out for this species and recording sightings through [iRecord](#). Growth and flowering times are not known for certain in GB, but plants may be seen from May and flowers from June to October.

The following awareness raising materials are available to help:

- An [ID sheet](#) and [alert poster](#) to help with identification and awareness raising
- [Check, Clean, Dry materials](#) to help improve biosecurity and reduce the risk of spreading this plant on equipment.

Call to join a network of marine citizen science projects across Europe

The [CS-MACH1 project](#), funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe Programme, are building a connected network of marine citizen science projects across Europe and beyond.

By taking just 15 minutes to complete their short survey, you will help to:

- Map how citizen science projects collect, store, and share their data
- Identify challenges and your needs for support or training
- Explore how your project's data can connect to national and European platforms such as EMODnet, GBIF, SeaDataNet, and EDITO — and from there to global systems like GOOS and WMO

Your insights will directly influence how marine citizen science data can drive research, inform policy, and contribute to a healthier ocean. Plus, it's a unique opportunity to make your project part of a growing European network of innovators and data leaders.

Take the survey here: <https://forms.gle/VbDo8nUD1iayFXnK8> - please submit your responses by 22 September 2025.

Practical notes:

- If you coordinate more than one project, please complete the survey separately for each.
- If you are no longer the coordinator of a project, please forward this mail to the new person in charge.
- The survey is for projects that collect marine or combined marine–riverine data only (no projects exclusively on rivers, lakes/ponds, or other freshwater bodies).
- Your responses will be handled confidentially in accordance with GDPR, and all answers will be anonymized in the final report, which will be shared next year.

Communications

Call for feedback on the GB INNS Media and Communications Plan

The GB INNS Media and Communications Working Group is developing an updated Media and Communications Plan for 2026-2030 and is looking for views on the [current plan](#), and what should be included in the new version. **Please send any feedback or suggestions to lucy.cornwell@apha.gov.uk by 10 October.**

Comm's calendar

At the Stakeholder Forum, several people asked us to publish a calendar of key dates and priorities for awareness raising on our website, to help with comm's planning. We will publish this in October – if there are dates or initiatives you would like us to add to the calendar, please get in touch.

Be Plant Wise

Throughout autumn and winter we will be reminding gardeners to 'compost with care' to prevent garden and pond plants from becoming invasive. Please help us to promote the campaign by sharing the following resources with gardeners and horticulturalists:

- [Be Plant Wise guidance for gardeners](#)
- [Guidance for professionals](#)
- [Materials for social media](#)
- [Awareness raising materials](#) including guides to gardening without invasive plants
- New stickers for compost bins – contact us to request these or any other [Be Plant Wise materials](#).



Invasive Species Week 2026

Following another successful Invasive Species Week this May (thank you to everyone involved!) we are looking at dates and plans for 2026. If there are dates we should avoid in May / June 2026,

or you have any views on what the next Invasive Species Week should involve, please get in touch.

Update on materials sent out

With your help the NNSS has sent out nearly 55,000 awareness raising materials this year, including over:

- 20,000 [Check, Clean, Dry](#) materials, including 150 signs
- 7,500 [Be Plant Wise](#) materials, including 3,400 guides to gardening without invasive plants
- 21,000 yellow-legged hornet materials.

[View all awareness raising materials available from the NNSS](#), including our latest [posters for veterinary surgeries and rescue centres](#).

Please send any feedback or other comm's queries to lucy.cornwell@apha.gov.uk.

Update from Non-native Species Inspectorate

Rob Wakefield, Non-native Species Inspectorate

Purple pitcher plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*) is a fascinating carnivorous plant, but like many plant species known to be invasive in Great Britain, it is currently legal to trade. It can wreak havoc in some of the rarest and most sensitive habitats – bogs and mires.

There are currently around 20 sites where the species is thought to have been introduced into the wild. These are mostly in southern England, but a handful of populations exist in Cumbria and Scotland.

Because the plant is largely confined to bog habitat, there is a real opportunity to eradicate the plant from the wild. This is the intention of the Non-native Species Secretariat, working alongside Non-native Species Inspectorate (NNSI) colleagues, Natural England, NatureScot, and other organisations and landowners.

Achieving eradication is not a simple matter of removing or spraying the plants. Seeds are thought to survive for at least 5 years in the soil. Each site is therefore checked annually until 5 years have passed without any plants remaining or setting seed. In the first few years, most of the hard work is done – removing or spraying the plants. In the following years site visits mostly involve checking for seedlings and ensuring plants have not colonised new areas.

Occasionally, plants can be particularly persistent, and this was found to be the case where the NNSI were working in summer 2025, in Scotland. A colony of pitcher plants thought to have been killed off, were checked and found still thriving. After a thorough search of suitable habitat in challenging conditions (not least having been cut off from the nearest facilities by a road collision which had closed the highway!) a total of 14 plants were found and removed by a team of 6 inspectors.



Images above: NNSI team working in Scotland in summer 2025 (top). Biting insects and hot weather added to difficult conditions underfoot didn't prevent the team from finding 14 live Sarracenia plants. 3 large Sarracenia plants removed during the visit (bottom). NNSI.

For more information on Purple pitcher plant, [visit the alert page](#). Sightings should be reported to iRecord: <https://irecord.org.uk/enter-non-native-records>.

Contact the NNSI: NNSI@apha.gov.uk.

Update from APHA Local Action Group Coordinator

Ben Francis, Animal and Plant Health Agency

Since the last update, I have been working on the following:

LAG Toolkit

I have been working with [WaREN](#), Nature Scot and the National Biodiversity Data Centre in Ireland to produce an updated LAG toolkit that can be used in each administration. I will be in touch for some feedback on this draft soon. You can also use the NNSI website LAG toolkit [here](#).

LAG map

I am producing an interactive online map showing all LAGs in Great Britain. This will be available on the NNSI website soon.

Facilitating regional meetings

I am organising a Midlands Regional INNS meeting in October with Severn Trent Water. If you are a LAG in the East or West Midlands and would like to attend, please let me know. If you are working in another region of England would like to join a regional meeting in this area, please be in touch with me.

Promoting the work of LAGs

I am meeting again with Network Rail to connect their staff with LAGs in areas of work. I have also attended CABA meetings to promote INNS work and collaboration with LAGs. I am eager to hear

about any issues you are having with significant landowners or organisations in your area. Please be in touch with me.

Improving biosecurity

Since 2023, I have been helping to deliver an action from the Boating and Angling Pathway Actions Plans, by working with landowners to install [Check Clean Dry](#) signs and implement other biosecurity recommendations at sites where priority species have been found. Recently I have been installing Check Clean Dry signs with the Environment Agency and local authorities in London and the South East. If there are any areas where recreation (e.g. [angling](#), [canoe](#), [kayak](#), [rowing](#), [paddle board](#), [sailing](#)) takes place which you think would benefit from Check Clean Dry signage, free awareness raising materials can be requested from the NNSS: nss@apha.gov.uk.

Contact details: ben.francis@apha.gov.uk.

Updates from non-native species projects

Coordinated INNS control in the Upper Wye

Daisy Winston-Scott, Natural Resources Wales (NRW)

The Upper Wye Catchment Restoration Project, funded through the Welsh Government's Nature and Climate Emergency Fund, is NRW's landscape-scale initiative to restore the special habitats of the upper Wye and its tributaries, most of which are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Area of Conservation. A key part of this work involves identifying and tackling invasive non-native species (INNS) across the catchment, with our target species including American Skunk Cabbage (ASC), Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. In our first year, 2.6 km of riverbank has been improved through targeted control and removal efforts – and we're just getting started.

Our main focus is the control of an extensive, previously unrecorded infestation of American Skunk Cabbage on one of the Wye's tributaries, as well as several smaller infestations of ASC across the catchment. It's vital we contain these and prevent ASC spreading to the main river.

Images right: American skunk cabbage along the Marteg (left) and NRW visiting the Marteg (right). Natural Resources Wales.



Elsewhere, project staff are developing a tributary-scale approach to tackling

Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed. Surveys this summer are mapping the most

upstream balsam on key watercourses. This intelligence will help shape a phased control strategy working methodically from source to confluence – a long-term, collaborative effort to be developed over the coming years.

Our INNS work complements a broader suite of river restoration interventions – from woodland creation and floodplain reconnection to ‘slow the flow’ schemes and supporting sustainable land management on farms. We’re also encouraging the public to report INNS sightings and are working closely with local communities, volunteers, and partners.

For more information:

- Email: adfergwyuchaf@cyfoethnaturiol.cymru
- Visit the project Instagram: [@AdferGwyUchaf](https://www.instagram.com/AdferGwyUchaf)
- Visit the project website: <https://ymgynghori.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/projects-delivery-cyflawni-prosiectau/upper-wye-catchment-restoration-project/>

Tweed ghillie receives Scotland’s first AQUA biosecurity award

Emily Iles, Tweed Forum

Congratulations to Craig Burmann-Duke, ghillie at Mertoun Estate near St Boswells, who has been awarded Scotland’s first [AQUA \(Aquatic Quality\) biosecurity award](#) for his work protecting the River Tweed from invasive species.

Tweed Forum nominated Craig for the award following his many years of volunteer work removing giant hogweed as part of our [Invasive Non-Native Species \(INNS\) programme](#). Craig encourages anglers on his beat to make use of a special wash station and drying racks to clean their fishing equipment before entering the water to ensure the removal of fragments of invasive plants and help prevent the spread of fish disease. He uses a special disinfectant supplied to ghillies along the river by the [Tweed Foundation](#) and also shares information and literature on the [Check, Clean, Dry](#) protocol to encourage good practice.

As well as being the first AQUA accreditation in Scotland, this is the first time that the award has been presented to a wild salmon fishery. We’re delighted that Craig has received this award and hope that other ghillies and water asset managers across the Tweed catchment will also consider taking part in the AQUA scheme and champion biosecurity in their own areas.

Image above right: Craig Burmann-Duke, ghillie at Mertoun Estate near St Boswells, has been awarded Scotland’s first AQUA (Aquatic Quality) biosecurity award. Tweed Forum.



Severn Estuary Biosecurity Plan: Safeguarding the Estuary's Future

Alys Morris, Severn Estuary Partnership Manager

We are excited to announce the recent launch of the Severn Estuary Biosecurity Plan — a collaborative and proactive strategy designed to address the growing threat of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) across the Severn Estuary.

This plan represents a united effort to safeguard one of the UK's most dynamic and ecologically significant estuarine environments, recognised for its nationally and internationally important habitats and wildlife.



Led by the Severn Estuary Partnership, and funded by Natural England and Natural Resources Wales, the Biosecurity Plan has been co-developed with a wide network of stakeholders, including local authorities, marine industries, environmental NGOs, and recreational user groups.

The plan takes a pathway-based approach, targeting the main routes by which INNS are introduced and spread. It focuses on six priority sectors: recreation, angling, commercial operations, marinas, habitat and species restoration and field research and monitoring.

To support implementation, this dedicated online resource is hosted on the Severn Estuary Partnership website. It includes sector-specific guidance, practical tools, and actions to help make biosecurity more accessible, effective, and embedded in day-to-day activities.

Looking ahead, the next phase will include targeted outreach and training sessions, monitoring and evaluation of uptake and effectiveness and continued support for local users and stakeholders to adopt and champion biosecurity best practice.

To explore the full plan, access resources, or get involved, visit:

www.severnpartnership/biosecurity or email us at severn@cardiff.ac.uk

Scottish Invasive Species Initiative – new approach to pesticide application in large infestation sites proving successful

Karen Muller and Elise Cox, Scottish Invasive Species Initiative

Since 2018, the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative has been tackling invasive species in river catchments across the north of Scotland. Invasive plants are tackled from the upstream source, working steadily downstream in order to prevent reinfestation and move towards eradication.

In lower catchments, large infestations of Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed can present significant control challenges. Traditional control methods (using knapsack sprayers or stem injectors) require extensive time and resources and limit treatment to the outer edges of stands.

In 2023, a motorised power sprayer was trialled in the Spey, Findhorn, and Lossie catchments. This 400-litre pressurised sprayer (using RoundUp ProVantage at the standard 2% concentration) has a 50-metre hose and a lance that can spray up to 10 metres. A three-person team managed

the equipment safely while ensuring precise application. In some areas a tractor-mounted cage was used to lift the operator for better reach. This method allowed operators to cover an estimated 10–15 times more ground than could be covered with a backpack sprayer in the same amount of time - greatly increasing efficiency compared to standard control methods.

When we returned to the sites in 2024, this control approach had proven to be highly effective in breaking into the vast and inaccessible infestations in these lower catchment infestations. The largest stands were significantly reduced, giving us opportunity to rapidly push further towards the centre. Knotweed regrowth in treated areas was minimal and easily handled with knapsack sprayers. The success of this method led to its redeployment in 2024 in suitable locations, where knotweed stands were still extensive and hard to reach. In other areas, reduced infestations allowed for a return to traditional knapsack spraying to cover the remaining smaller stands.



Image above left, Top image taken in 2023 before treatment, bottom image taken in 2024 before treatment at Middle Brae on the River Spey. Image above right: Before and after - Top image taken in 2023 before treatment, bottom image taken in 2024 before treatment at Palmerscross on the River Lossie. SISI.

The efficacy of the spray tank has significantly accelerated the timeline towards eradication, clearing large areas once dominated by Japanese knotweed. In many cases we're already seeing promising signs of native species beginning to revegetate. This year the sites will be reassessed to determine where the spray tank would be appropriate to use again and where we can transition to knapsacks and stem injectors.

[Visit the SISI project website for further information.](#)

Bollin Native Rivers Project Completed!

Amara Coombes, Mersey Rivers Trust

The Bollin Native Rivers Project is a DEFRA-funded initiative focused on invasive species control in the River Bollin catchment, Cheshire. With £30,000 of funding over two years, the project built on long-term management efforts established through BEACON, a Local Action Group hosted by Mersey Rivers Trust, which began tackling INNS in the catchment in 2011. BEACON's focus has been on controlling Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed, and Himalayan Balsam, which are widespread across the catchment.

During the project, 1,994.75 hours of INNS control were completed, covering 25 km of riverbank. Twenty-one new volunteers were recruited, and six individuals were trained in herbicide application to support the work. *Images, right: before and after management. Mersey Rivers Trust.*

The funding also supported:

- Surveys of new areas in the catchment
- Digitisation of INNS maps and management history
- Support for community groups taking local action

Public awareness was raised through educational signage, posters, and engagement events with landowners and local residents.

Project manager Abigail Culter highlighted the key successes of the project: "Being able to engage with the local community was a real highlight. Through volunteer training, educational workshops for children, landowner engagement, and the creation of signage, we were able to spread the word about the valuable work we've been doing for many years across the catchment."

"It was also incredibly valuable for us to commission surveys along parts of the Bollin that we don't currently cover, as this helps us target specific areas and reduce recolonisation and further spread along the riparian corridor."

The next steps for INNS control on the River Bollin are to expand INNS control coverage within the catchment, working with landowners such as the National Trust and United Utilities to access new areas of land not previously managed.

Find out more about our INNS work by visiting our website:

<https://www.merseyriverstrust.org/projects/projects-folder/invasive-non-native-species>

For more information contact us on info@merseyrivers.org

OATA relaunches its Biosecurity Assessment Tool

Pauline Davey, Ornamental Aquatic Trade Association

The trade body for the ornamental aquatics industry has revamped its Business Biosecurity Self-Assessment Tool, redesigning it as a streamlined, easy-to-use online survey to help businesses quickly assess their biosecurity practices.

The tool guides users through a structured online survey, where businesses are invited to review and select statements relevant to their operations across a range of key topics. These include supply chain management, quarantine procedures, hygiene practices, wastewater handling, and



livestock health checks, among others. The assessment is intended to encourage critical reflection on current practices and to identify potential areas for improvement.

The survey requires only a few minutes to complete. Upon submission, participants receive an immediate summary of their biosecurity status, followed by a more detailed report sent directly via email. This comprehensive report is designed to be used in conjunction with OATA's *Biosecurity and the ornamental aquatics industry* guide, which offers further recommendations and best practice guidance to enhance biosecurity measures within businesses.

Deputy Chief Executive Dr Matthew Bond said: "Invasive Species Week, which raises awareness about non-native flora and fauna, was the perfect time to relaunch our Business Biosecurity Self-Assessment Tool. It's really easy for businesses to work through and, used alongside our *Biosecurity and the ornamental aquatics industry* document will really help businesses make improvements to what they do."

The Business Biosecurity Self-Assessment Tool is freely available and accessible now on the OATA website. <https://ornamentalfish.org/what-we-do/set-standards/biosecurity/>

River Lea Diversion Floating Pennywort Biocontrol Project

Frances Dismore, Stonebridge Lock Coalition

The project aims to control INNS Floating pennywort in the River Lea Diversion using the specialist biocontrol weevil *Listronotus elongatus*. The plant chokes approximately 70% of the 2.1km waterway (see image, right). The project is funded by the Thames21 and Lund Trust EMPOWER Rivers Community Fund.



After assessing the site for suitability, the weevils have been released and will be monitored by CABI. This project, together with releases at over 20 sites in England, is part of a coordinated national Floating pennywort management strategy. The aim is for the weevil to become established and self-sustaining. Under targeted herbivory pressure, the plant will no longer outcompete native riparian vegetation. The project complements manual removal work by London Lea CAG and volunteers and as a trial, will help determine whether biocontrol can reduce long-term time, effort and cost burden of managing the plant in the catchment.

The river is a boundary between Haringey and Waltham Forest. It's designated non-navigable therefore, is subject to minimal direct disturbance. It's an important area for birds. London Priority Species such as European eel, Kingfisher, Otter and Water vole are present. Cuckoo, Gadwall, Sand martin and Teal visit seasonally. It's a key corridor of the Lee Valley priority riparian habitat mosaic. It has excellent connectivity with William Girling and King George V Reservoir SSSIs, Edmonton Marsh and the Lee Navigation. It transects Tottenham Marshes SINC acting as a contiguous buffer zone to Lockwood Reservoir SSSI, Walthamstow Wetlands Ramsar.



Stonebridge Lock Coalition are a community river action group. We work with Thames21 and landowners to enrich our local waterways and improve water quality. Biocontrol offers a solution requiring minimal direct disturbance. We're excited by the prospect of Nature Recovery facilitated by the project; we look forward to seeing more diverse aquatic flora. We hope for possible increase in recruitment of wildlife facilitated by diverse habitat and forage including more larval food plants.

Image above left: Floating pennywort piñata. "Be Plant Wise" outreach conversations with community. Stonebridge Lock Coalition.

Volunteers and land needed to expand grey squirrel management in Yorkshire, Lancashire & County Durham

Kay Haw, UK Squirrel Accord

Thanks to Forestry Commission funding, UK Squirrel Accord has a project ongoing to expand grey squirrel management in Yorkshire, Lancashire and County Durham. The aim is to reduce the negative impacts of invasive grey squirrels to increase the protection of red squirrels and young trees.

Two Squirrel Officers are recruiting and training new volunteers and establishing new volunteering groups. As well as identifying land on which the volunteers and groups can carry out grey squirrel management. So far five new landscape-scale groups and partnerships have been created, and they are open to new volunteers:

- Bowland Red Squirrel Alliance
- River Allen Red Squirrel Group
- Weardale Red Squirrel Group
- West Yorkshire Red Squirrel Alliance
- Yorkshire Dales Red Squirrel Alliance



Image, above: BASC and UK Squirrel Accord grey squirrel management competency training course providing local volunteers with technical skills and equipment. UK Squirrel Accord.

UK Squirrel Accord is seeking volunteers to get involved and locate land that would benefit from grey squirrel management activities. Free training is available in grey squirrel management and first aid, and subsequent mentoring is provided. In England, Forestry Commission offers a grant to encourage and financially support grey squirrel management. If you are keen to volunteer or offer land, please email the UK Squirrel Accord via SquirrelOfficers@squirrelaccord.uk

Volunteer Coordinator

Kennedy Page, Tees Rivers Trust

We are currently in the development phase of a new, National Lottery Heritage Funded project, TISP (Tees Invasive Species Project). With a focus on biosecurity, community engagement, education and innovative techniques, a key part of this project is to grow, empower and upskill our dedicated team of volunteers who play a vital role in the work we do.

We have recently recruited a volunteer coordinator, Kennedy, to lead engagement and practical volunteer tasks. With a background in education, Kennedy is passionate about bringing together people of all ages to share knowledge, skills and experiences and to support those looking to develop careers within the environmental sector.

Our volunteers have spent most of this year managing giant hogweed and have covered roughly 65 kilometers (40 miles) already this season. Many of our volunteers are now managing individual stretches of the river independently as 'River Restorers', taking pride and responsibility over areas they have improved.

Next year we will be recruiting an Education Officer along with two more Project Officers as well as contracting out some of the giant hogweed management work. We are continuing to monitor our biocontrol sites, where we are exploring using a rust fungus to manage Himalayan balsam and psyllids for Japanese knotweed. We hope to increase the number of trial sites over the new couple of years.

The before and after images titled "From Hogweed Hell to Habitat Heaven" show the immense transformation achieved by 3 years of management.

Images, right: Ingleby Barwick in May 2022 (top) and July 2025 (bottom). Tees Rivers Trust.



After frequent visits as a volunteer group, one of our dedicated volunteers, Ian Towers, now manages this area independently to ensure giant hogweed does not dominate once again. The site now has improved accessibility for its users and hosts a diverse range of native flora.

If you are interested in joining us on any volunteer activities, please get in touch by emailing Kennedy at: kennedy@teesriverstrust.org and for more information about the project, you can email our project manager, Chloe at: chloe@teesriverstrust.org

For more information about what we do as a Trust, visit <https://www.teesriverstrust.org/>

Don't Pack a Pest: New campaign launched to protect the Lake District's iconic waters

Ali Penny, Eden Rivers Trust

Cumbria's three rivers trusts have joined forces to combat the growing threat of invasive species in Cumbria's waterways. Invasive weeds have already rendered some lakes in Ireland unusable for recreation - this campaign aims to ensure that such ecological damage never reaches the Lake District's iconic and internationally-important waters.

Why now?

Prevention is our best and only real line of defence. If we act now, we can protect these globally important waters for future generations.

'Don't Pack a Pest – Protect our Lakes' urges anyone enjoying the outdoors to adopt a simple but powerful habit: Check, Clean, Dry. By cleaning their boots, boats and kit between visits, people can help stop the silent spread of invasive non-native species (INNS).

The campaign is being rolled out through signage, events, and social media to raise awareness and inspire action. It also includes trials of new tools and tactics aimed at reducing the spread of INNS and shaping Cumbria's long-term biosecurity response.

A long-term approach

Don't Pack a Pest is part of a one-year initiative funded by the UK Government, designed to lay the foundation for long-term protection of the Lake District's lakes. Under the umbrella of the **Lakes Biosecurity Priority Area (LBPA)**, **West Cumbria Rivers Trust, Eden Rivers Trust, and South Cumbria Rivers Trust** are working together to develop a strategic response to the threat of invasive non-native species (INNS).



They will develop a five-year strategy and action plan to prevent new INNS introductions, increase public awareness, and improve access to lakes through targeted infrastructure upgrades that will allow the natural recovery of affected waterbodies and ensure the long-term health of these iconic landscapes.

Find out more about the campaign: [Don't Pack a Pest — West Cumbria Rivers Trust](#)

White-Clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) Conservation

Marcus Brown, South West Water

South West Water are doing a lot of work on our sites that are affected by the presence of invasive non-native species (INNS) including the American signal crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus*) (ASC) as they have many negative effects to the environment, but are also problematic to the water industry. Our work includes conducting surveys, carrying out monitoring of pathways, control/management and stakeholder engagement on awareness and biosecurity.

One of the key environmental issues that ASC can cause is to the only native crayfish in the UK, the white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) (WCC). It is currently only found in 2 rivers in Devon that we know of, in very small numbers due to environmental pressures, including the presence of the invasive crayfish.

South West Water are working with Wildwood Devon and the South West Crayfish Partnership (SWCP) to try and safeguard the future of the WCC. Marcus recently volunteered to help check artificial refuge traps (ARTs) on the rivers Creedy and Culm to remove healthy WCC from the sites for rehoming at Wildwood's crayfish hatchery.

Phase two of the Saving Devon's Native Crayfish Project is led by Wildwood Devon, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and South West Water and partnered with the South West Crayfish Partnership and Bristol Zoological Society. This project aims to breed WCC that have been collected from Devon rivers where the Endangered native crayfish are under pressure from the invasive ASC, river quality issues etc, to hopefully one day release them back into new sites free from ASC and other pressures.



We found lots of healthy WCC that were taken back to the hatchery, which is fantastic, though we did find an ASC in one of the traps, showing that the two species are cohabiting the same areas putting real pressure on the natives.

Image left: checking for healthy white-clawed crayfish. Marcus Brown.

The project will engage with the local communities to raise awareness about reporting both ASC and WCC sightings and good biosecurity measures.

If you would like to find out more, head over to Wildwood Devon's website - [Crayfish hatchery and nursery](#).

Contact the NNSS

You can contact us at: nnss@apha.gov.uk, or visit www.nonnativespecies.org.