

ARC Invasive Non-Native Species Factsheet

The term 'non-native species' is used to describe a plant or animal that has been introduced to an area outside of its natural range, usually by human actions. Not all non-native species are bad, it is only a minority that have serious negative impacts on our native British species, our health or our economy. These species are referred to as **invasive non-native species (INNS)**. INNS are the second biggest threat to wildlife globally after habitat loss, and in the UK it is estimated that the annual cost of their containment and control is £2 billion (NE 2011).

Many INNS are now widespread throughout the countryside, changing the landscape and causing serious problems for our wildlife by out-competing or preying on native species. For example, within the ARC catchment:

- New Zealand pygmyweed, parrots feather, water fern and floating pennywort are all seriously impacting on the health of our rivers by out-competing native plants, reducing biodiversity and increasing flood risk
- Himalayan balsam is contributing to river bank erosion and sedimentation
- Japanese knotweed is potentially causing serious damage to structures and buildings
- Giant hogweed poses a significant health risk to humans from skin blisters caused by exposure to sap
- Skunk cabbage is negatively affecting important wildlife sites by reducing biodiversity
- American mink predation has a significant negative impact on native wildlife including water voles

INNS can colonise new areas very quickly and their seeds, or tiny vegetative fragments, can be easily transported between sites. Help us limit the spread of INNS by, if possible, avoiding areas where they are present, and checking and cleaning footwear and equipment before leaving a site when you do come into contact.

Please let us know about invasive non-native species in your area. The INNS being targeted by the ARC project are detailed overleaf. Please contribute to the crucial work of identifying where in the catchment these species occur by submitting records to the online recording database **iRecord** at <http://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord>

The ARC Conservation Officer will be leading the fight against the most problematic INNS in the Arun & Rother catchment. This enormous challenge will involve working closely with landowners, farmers, anglers, and community groups and will require an army of volunteers to be successful.

If you are interested in getting involved in this important work, please contact the ARC Conservation Officer, Sarah McIntyre at sarah.mcintyre@rspb.org.uk / 01273 763623. Practical work will begin in Spring 2014.

We are looking for **community champions** to take the lead in their area on locating and organising the removal of invasive non-native species. If you are looking for a challenge and would like to help protect and conserve native species please get in touch.

ARC target invasive non-native species

Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*)



Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)



Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)



American Skunk Cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*)



New Zealand Pygmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*)



Parrots feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)



Floating Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*)



Water Fern (*Azolla filiculoides*)



American Mink (*Mustela vison*)



The photos above show the ARC project target invasive non-native species. If you see any of these please record the details at: <http://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord>

Detailed ID sheets and further information for all these species can be found on the GB non-native species secretariat (NNS) website at:

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/home/index.cfm>