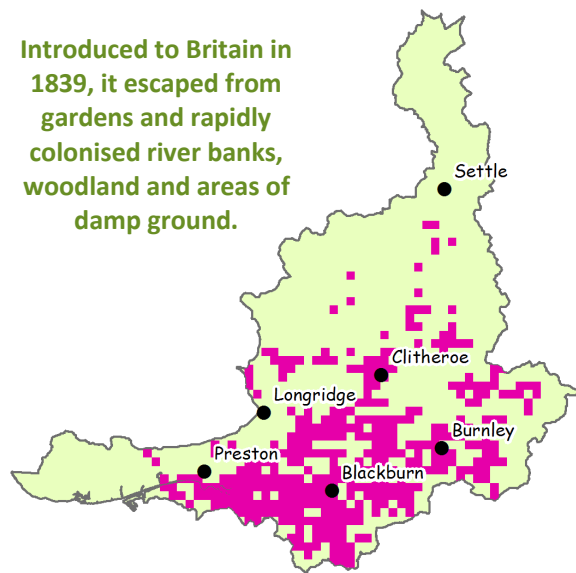


Introduced to Britain in 1839, it escaped from gardens and rapidly colonised river banks, woodland and areas of damp ground.



Distribution of Himalayan balsam in the Ribble catchment
Source: Ribble Rivers Trust (2012)

Advice on identification and control of Himalayan balsam and other invasive plants is available from the Ribble Rivers Trust and the sources below

Lancashire Invasive Species Project:
www.lancashireinvasives.org

Environment Agency - Tel: 08708 506 506
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Non-Native Species Secretariat:
www.nonnativespecies.org

The Lancashire Invasive Species Project is tackling Himalayan balsam and other invasive species, like Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed.

We are asking local landowners and other interested parties to help us in this task.

Please get in touch, using the contact details below, for further information.

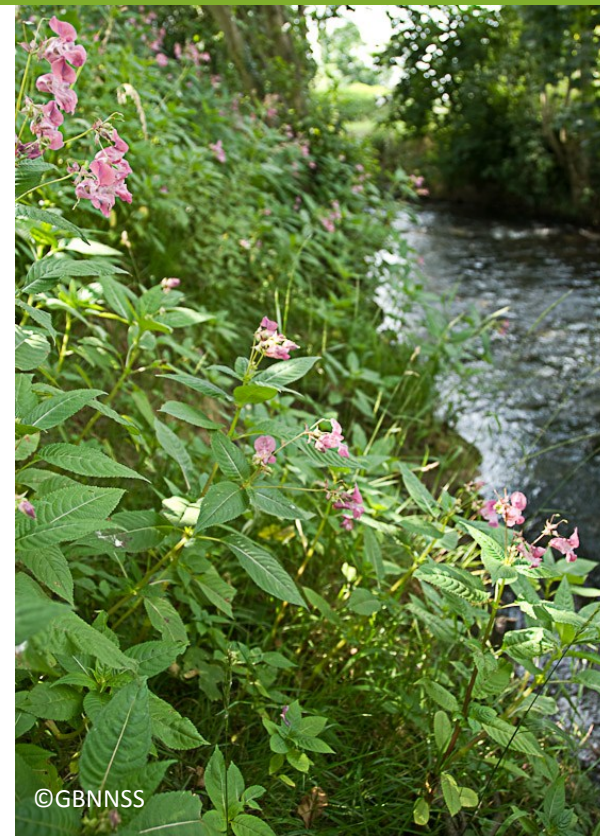
Ribble Rivers Trust

Ribble Rivers Trust
c/o Hanson Cement
Ribblesdale Works
Clitheroe
BB7 4QF

Phone: 01200 444452
E-mail: admin@ribbletrust.com



Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*



Himalayan balsam is an invasive non-native species which spreads rapidly if not controlled.

This leaflet gives information on identification, impacts and control of Himalayan balsam for landowners.



Control methods for Himalayan Balsam



Control

Control measures should aim to prevent flowering, and must be carried out before the seedpods explode in order to be effective. Himalayan balsam is an annual plant and needs to produce seeds to perpetuate.

Cutting the plant stems at ground level, below the first node prevents any re-growth. This can be done with a scythe, shears, strimmer or mower. Cutting should be repeated annually until no more growth occurs.

Individual plants can be easily pulled up by hand, ensuring that the roots are taken out.

In early spring when the plants are still small they can be sprayed with the selective herbicide 2,4-D amine, available from specialist suppliers. Larger plants can be sprayed with a glyphosate based herbicide, however this will also kill non-target vegetation including grasses.

After Himalayan balsam has been removed, consider habitat restoration such as sowing wildflower seeds or planting trees.

Responsibility for invasive weed control

Responsibility for dealing with invasive weeds rests with individual landowners.

Control efforts by individuals can help reduce the spread of invasive non-native species and are most successful if carried out as part of a locally co-ordinated strategy with collaboration of all relevant parties.

Control generally needs to be repeated for at least two years until all plants have gone.



Using a strimmer or brushcutter can be an effective way of managing large or dense patches of Himalayan balsam.



The characteristic pink slipper-shaped flowers appear in July. When the seed pods mature, they explode when touched, scattering the seed up to 7m away. Seeds are also spread by water and they remain viable for up to two years.

Impacts

Himalayan balsam grows in dense stands that suppress the growth of native grasses and other flora. In autumn the balsam dies back, leaving the soil bare of vegetation, and therefore liable to erosion. On riverbanks, this increased erosion may increase flooding risk.

Himalayan balsam rapidly spreads along physical corridors such as fences, hedges and streams and invades sensitive habitats like native woodland.

Because Himalayan balsam spreads so quickly, the cost of control escalates year on year. Dense stands of Himalayan balsam can be found in parks, rivers and other public areas reducing their recreational value. Seeds can also spread across boundaries, causing colonisation of neighbours' land.