



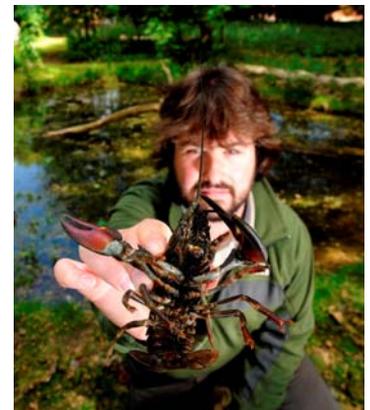
Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative Newsletter



Once again, we are running a little bit behind with our Newsletters... I really shouldn't make excuses *but* it really is because we have been incredibly busy again... The NNNSI headquarters (two desks pushed together at County Hall...) have been a hive of activity, with staff also getting out and about across Norfolk to spread the word and facilitate action. We have even had to recruit a Project Assistant to help with the workload! Emily Nobbs has been helping the Co-ordinator with a range of 'on the ground' eradication projects and awareness raising initiatives. Emily will continue to help with elements of the project during 2013. Read on to hear about some of the project's she has been involved with in 2012!

UPDATE FROM THE CO-ORDINATOR

On the 22nd September 2012 the NNNSI was 4 years old... Quite a landmark for the project! We have achieved a lot, thanks in no small part to the support of our partner organisations. Nonetheless, we have an eye on the future, and are starting to set the 'wheels in motion' to write a new Strategic Plan for the NNNSI that will replace the current 'Status Report and Action Plan' when that runs out in 2013.



Since my last update, we have:

- Had a presence at 15 environmental events across Norfolk, to highlight the impacts of INS and the steps people can take to reduce their spread;
- Continued to promote the 'Be Plant Wise' campaign, with 15 garden centres in Norfolk now displaying the campaign materials;
- Launched the 'Pond Invaders' citizen science survey, which is being distributed through our network of partner garden centres;
- Begun intensive control of Himalayan balsam on the River Wensum, with a view to eventual eradication;
- Continued to make progress towards a Garden Centre Accreditation Scheme - 'Go Native for Norfolk' – with 5 garden centres now signed up;
- Overseen the successful floating pennywort eradication project on the River Waveney, we are still on track to achieve eradication by 2014;
- Organised the Norfolk Non-native Species Stakeholders' Forum, which was held in May 2012;
- Commissioned the development of a new Mink Control Strategy for Norfolk;
- Organised a training and awareness raising Workshop on Killer Shrimp, which was attended by more than 200 people! Details here: <http://bit.ly/RfzygL>

Mike Sutton-Croft

Co-ordinator, Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative

NEWS FROM NORFOLK

Update on RINSE

In the last NNNSI Newsletter we broke the exciting news that our European funding bid had been successful, and the RINSE (Reducing the Impact of Non-native Species in Europe) project was going to become a reality! The project launched in March 2012 and is now starting to deliver some excellent outputs.

The project is divided into three primary 'Work Packages'. These are 'Prioritisation and Horizon Scanning', 'Training and Awareness Raising' and 'Field Trials and Demonstration Projects'.

The majority of the work under the first Work Package is being delivered by the University of Cambridge, who won a contract to carry out this work from the RINSE partnership.

One key output from the contract, which should be completed in March 2013, comprises of a prioritised 'horizon scanning' list of species that are soon to move in to our area of Europe, with associated mapping that will indicate the likely distribution of these species, predicted using sophisticated models that take in to account both bioclimatic and socio-economic factors.

One of the first major outputs of Work Package 2 will be a new smartphone App that will enable users to report a sighting of an invasive non-native species in a matter of seconds! It is being developed by the NatureLocator team at the University of Bristol, who have already released several successful Apps to record wildlife sightings, including PlantTracker and Leaf Watch. The App is scheduled to launch in April 2013 and will be available for iPhone and Android based devices.

Work Package 3 involves 'hands on' work in the field, and several of the NNNSI's high-profile eradication projects will now be delivered under the umbrella of the RINSE project as a part of this Work Package. These include the floating pennywort eradication on the River Waveney and parts of the mink control project, which is being expanded to cover North Norfolk thanks to funding from RINSE. Our experiences in delivering these projects will be written up as Case Studies, so that other projects in the UK and further afield can learn from our successes/mistakes...

There will be much more to report in the next NNNSI Newsletter, with 2013 being the busiest year for the RINSE project, which is designed to 'wrap up' at the end of 2014.

More information about the RINSE project can be found here: www.rinse-europe.eu



2012 NNNSI Stakeholders' Forum a success!

A major event in the NNNSI's calendar every year is the annual Stakeholders' Forum. The 2012 event was the 6th Forum, the 4th in its current format, and was once again very well attended, with over 70 individuals gathering at the Abbey Conference Centre in Norwich. The NNNSI broadened the spectrum of invitees this year, including new audiences such as local angling and boating clubs.

The day started with Dr Rob Tanner from CABI presenting their research to identify a biological control agent for Himalayan balsam. Currently the best agent seems to be a type of rust fungi. This highly damaging disease attacks the stem and leaves of the plant, often killing young seedlings and reducing the photosynthetic rate of older plants during the dispersal phase of the pathogen (CABI 2012). Host specificity testing is ongoing, and should this be completed successfully, the rust fungus will be tested in the field in the near future.

Rob was followed by Catherine Chatters of the New Forest Non-native Plants Project. Problem species in the New Forest include Himalayan balsam, parrot's feather, giant hogweed, New Zealand pygmyweed, American skunk cabbage, Japanese knotweed and creeping water primrose. Catherine gave a summary of the various awareness raising and eradication initiatives being delivered by the New Forest Non-native Plants Project. Catherine also summarised the important research being undertaken by the project in to the most effective methods of control for *Crassula helmsii*. This is a weed that is notoriously difficult to manage, and I think we all look forward to hearing the outcome of the New Forest's research in 2013.

We then heard from Prof. Gordon Copp (CEFAS) about the work he has carried out on a less well studied group of species, non-native fish; particularly those from the Ponto Caspian region. These species are of particular concern, and the problem is likely to get worse with the predicted impacts of climate change.

The NNNSI Co-ordinator gave a brief update on the activities of the project since the last Forum. A particular highlight of the year has been the launch of RINSE, an exciting new European project seeking to improve the management of invasive non-native species across four partner countries (working with nine partner organisations) in Western Europe. Other projects include the removal of Himalayan balsam on the River Wensum, filling of two ponds containing *Crassula helmsii* in Mile Cross (Norwich) and creation of five new ponds, as well as the continued success of the 'Be Plant Wise' and 'Broad Sweep' campaigns.

The Broads Authority's Senior Ecologist, Andrea Kelly, then updated the group on the status of Killer Shrimp in the Broads area. Andrea summarised the biology of the species and the measures that are being carried out in the Broads area to minimise the risk of further spread.

The day concluded with a presentation from Keith Vincent, who has been leading the review of Wildlife Legislation, including that relating to invasive non-native species, at the Law Commission.

Himalayan balsam – Well and truly bashed on the River Wensum in 2012!

Since a survey of Himalayan balsam was completed by The Ecology Consultancy in 2010, the NNNSI have been quick to start eradicating this highly invasive plant species from the River Wensum. Locations tackled this year include Fakenham, Lyng, Lenwade, Old Costessey, Drayton and Taverham.



Contractors Graham Bedding, Mark Rylands, Eddie Boosey and the NNNSI have been working hard come rain (and there has been lots of it...) or shine to eradicate this plant from the catchment. Access has not always been easy but these men have risen to the challenge and come up trumps, with the heavily infested areas now clear of Himalayan balsam. Spirits are high at NNNSI Headquarters and on the ground, this year an impressive **19,000m²** of Himalayan balsam being cleared. However, there is

still much work to do! The team look forward to tackling the invader again next year. The NNNSI hope to have almost completely eradicated the species from the River Wensum by the end of 2014.

Landowners have thanked the NNNSI for our help in removing the plant, which has been made possible thanks to a grant from Defra. The NNNSI would like to thank all those who have been tackling the dreaded plant alone and congratulate those who are now balsam free! To those who are still affected by the plant, please keep removing it in early summer before the seed pods begin popping. You can strim or hand pull the plant. Please see the link below for more information.

Link: <http://bit.ly/XAQZen>

Contributed by Emily Nobbs (Project Assistant, NNNSI)

‘Go Native for Norfolk’ Garden Centre Accreditation Scheme

The scheme funded through the Broads Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) is now well underway! The NNNSI has been out visiting aquatic plant retailers in and around the Broads area to see if they would be interested in becoming accredited as part of the ‘Go Native for Norfolk’ scheme, which has been developed by the NNNSI as a part of it’s ‘Broad Sweep’ project. Garden centres can become accredited if they demonstrate that they are committed to preventing further introductions of invasive aquatic plant species, by:



- not stocking any invasive aquatic plants (as detailed in the scheme’s guidelines);

- clearly labelling all aquatic plants, so customers are aware of the proper name and origins of each species on offer;
- making information available to customers on the impacts of invasive aquatic plants and guidance on safe disposal; and
- display the scheme's logo visibly in-store.

The NNNSI wants to work alongside aquatic plant suppliers in solving the problem of invasive alien aquatic plants, for the benefit of both the environment and the supplier in the future. There could be changes to legislation in the future with regards to invasive aquatic plants and it is in the best interest of the suppliers for them to be prepared. The NNNSI is currently finalising the list of suppliers that will be accredited, with the scheme launching in the Spring 2013.

Contributed by Emily Nobbs (Project Assistant, NNNSI)

Killer Shrimp in the Broads

Most of you are likely to have already heard about the Killer Shrimp (*Dikerogammarus villosus*) in the news and while out and about on The Broads, but for those of you who haven't, the Killer Shrimp is a voracious predator that lives in freshwater and feeds on fish eggs, larvae, invertebrates and small fish. Ecologists are very worried about the devastating impact this species could be having on The Broads ecosystem.



On the 9th March 2012, *Dikerogammarus villosus* (Dv) was found in Barton Broad during routine invertebrate monitoring. Following further intensive surveying by the Broads Authority and the Environment Agency, Dv was found in the River Ant as far upstream as Wayford Bridge. It has also spread downstream from Barton Broad into the River Bure with this movement of Dv attributed to the flow of the river. The latest round of monitoring (02/01/2013) has discovered Dv in Wroxham Broad and as far downstream as St Benets Abbey. There have been several reports of Dv being found attached to floating debris in the river Bure, allowing it to move upstream with the tide. The Broads Authority are actively promoting awareness of the Killer Shrimp and the 'Check, Clean, Dry' measures that boaters and anglers need to take to prevent spreading it from site to site. Latest Killer Shrimp briefing notes from the Broads Authority are available here <http://bit.ly/UCOo0Y>



Contact: Will Burchnall **Tel:** 01603756003 **Mobile:** 07788438121

Email: will.burchnall@broads-authority.gov.uk

If you find the shrimp email: alert_nonnative@ceh.ac.uk (Please include location/date/photo)

Contributed by Will Burchnall (Wetland Biosecurity Officer, Broads Authority)

Ambitious new Mink Control Strategy aims to achieve control across all of Norfolk

For the past 8 years mink control has been undertaken in Mid-Norfolk, the Waveney and Broads under the auspices of the Norfolk Mink Project. Based on this experience, and the work of projects such as the successful eradication of mink in Eastern Scotland, the Steering Group has developed and adopted an ambitious new Mink Control Strategy. This aims to control mink over the whole of Norfolk, with control being planned and monitored on a catchment basis. Trapping and monitoring will be undertaken by volunteers. They will be trained and co-ordinated by four part time co-ordinators employed by the project. The next year will be an exciting one as we work to make the Strategy a reality on the ground. Additional funding has already been secured to expand the project on to the River Wissey and across North Norfolk (through the RINSE project). You can read the Strategy here: <http://bit.ly/13uX7bb>

Contributed by Simon Baker (Chair, Norfolk Mink Project Steering Group)

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Invasive reindeer to be eradicated from South Georgia

About 3,000 reindeer on an island near Antarctica are to be slaughtered to stop damage to the environment by the descendants of a tiny herd introduced a century ago for food by Norwegian whale hunters. More details can be found here: <http://reut.rs/XMKcSI>



Credit: Dean Biggins (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

New report from the European Environment Agency highlights the impacts of INNS in Europe

The European Environment Agency (EEA) has published a new report detailing the impacts of invasive non-native species across Europe. It features detailed case-studies of the impacts of 28 species, and is based on up-to-date scientific information from recent research and studies. The Report aims to educate stakeholders at all levels, and is no doubt designed to prepare the way for new European legislation in this policy area. The full report can be found here: <http://bit.ly/R6QAQW>

Invasive 'killer slug' found outside Norwich

Norfolk in the national media again, for all the wrong reasons... The BBC writes: 'A giant species of slug, which has attacked crops in mainland Europe and eats dead mammals, has been identified in the UK for the first time in a Norwich garden.' The full article can be found here: <http://bbc.in/UQMUpj>



UPCOMING EVENTS

12 May 2013: For a great family day out why not '**Go Wild at Barton Broad**' joining in with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust and Broads Authority fun-packed day at Barton Broad? The NNNSI will also be there, with a stall featuring a range of invasive 'nasties' and an opportunity to take part in our new Quiz! For more information, please visit:

<http://www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/Home/News/Go-Wild-at-Barton!.aspx>

18 May 2013: The Non-native Species Initiative will have a stall at this year's **Wild about the Wensum**, being held at the Pensthorpe Nature Reserve. The event provides a great opportunity to celebrate the natural history and heritage of the Wensum Valley, with loads of activities including a mini beast exploration, guided walks, nature quizzes and treasure hunts. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.pensthorpetrust.org.uk/wild-about-the-wensum.htm>

28 July 2013: This is the first confirmed '**Community Action Day**' for 2013. Get it in your diary and help the Marlpit RiverCare Group clear their stretch of the River Wensum of Himalayan balsam. Watch the NNNSI webpage and Facebook page for further details in the near future...

If you would like to contribute to the next NNNSI newsletter, then please contact Mike Sutton-Croft, Co-ordinator of the Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative. Tel: 01603 228977; E-mail: michael.sutton-croft@norfolk.gov.uk

The Norfolk Non-native Species Initiative was launched in 2008 to promote the prevention, monitoring and control of invasive alien species. It seeks to do this by:

- *Collating and monitoring data on the distribution and spread of non-native species in the county;*
- *Developing action plans to address the species of most urgent concern;*
- *Facilitating control and eradication projects at high priority sites; and*
- *Promoting awareness of the risks and impacts associated with non-native species.*

The Initiative has been established under the umbrella of the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership and works through a stakeholders' forum comprised of representatives from over 20 organisations. It is financially supported by the Broads Authority, Defra, the Environment Agency, Natural England, Norfolk County Council and the Water Management Alliance.