

Non-Native Species Secretariat Newsletter Issue 3 – May 2012

Welcome

Welcome to the 3rd edition of the Non-native Species Secretariat Newsletter. Topics covered in this issue include:

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We are looking for contributions for the next newsletter. If you have any ideas please email: nnss@fera.gsi.gov.uk.

Species Alerts!

Asian Longhorn Beetle

In March the Asian longhorn beetle was discovered for the first time in the UK. Several larvae were found inside a poplar tree during a routine survey by the Forestry Commission at Paddock Wood area, Kent. Fera and the Forestry Commission are taking urgent steps to try to eradicate this population before it has the chance to spread to other areas.

This pest has the potential to impact on a wide range of tree species such as elm, willow and birch, potentially altering the species composition of wooded habitats and reducing biodiversity.

If anyone suspects they have seen an Asian longhorn beetle, or evidence of its presence



Courtesy The Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera), Crown Copyright

please contact the Fera Plant Health Helpline 0844 2480071 or email planthealth.info@fera.gsi.gov.uk.

Killer Shrimp Update

The invasive non-native shrimp, *Dikerogammarus villosus*, was first reported in the UK on 3rd September 2010 in Grafham Water SSSI in Cambridgeshire, and was then found in Cardiff Bay and Eglwys Nunydd reservoir near Port Talbot in November.

Over the last 18 months there has been an extensive surveillance programme in England and Wales involving over 4,300 sites. Recently, a further population has been discovered at Barton Broad in Norfolk, on 29th March 2012. As at the other sites, a local response operation, led by the Environment Agency and the Broads Authority was immediately established and one of the key actions was to issue a call to all water users to help reduce the risk of spread of the shrimp, and other aquatic INNS, by following the "Check, Clean, Dry" campaign.

The Broads Authority, the Environment Agency and Natural England are currently working together to investigate the presence of the shrimp in the broads, including its extent and risks of further spread.

The National Task Group and its Scientific and Technical Advice Group continue to maintain an overview, with the former monitoring the overall development of the issue for example,

and the latter advising on the risk assessment work in the Broads. The Task Group has recently published briefing note 5 which provides an update on developments and can be found, along with further information on all current species alerts at:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/alerts/index.cfm> .

Suspected sightings should be reported, as soon as possible, along with a photograph and details of where you saw it, to:

alert_nonnative@ceh.ac.uk .

EU Developments

EU Developments on Invasive Alien Species Strategy

Between 27 January and 12 April, the Commission held an online consultation concerning its plans for a dedicated legislative instrument on invasive alien species. This limited exercise asked some very specific questions on prevention; early warning and rapid response; and management and restoration. In March and April Defra held two briefing sessions to ensure key stakeholders were informed of developments and to discuss any issues of concern. A further opportunity for discussion arose at this year's Annual Stakeholder's Forum on 10 May. We anticipate having further sessions in due course covering more specific issues as they arise. The Commission's stated aim is to publish its proposal in Quarter 3 of this year and we are continuing to assist the Commission with advice and experience gained from implementing the GB Strategy.

INNS Species Focus

Scottish Mink Initiative

The Scottish Mink Initiative was launched one year ago in May 2011. The aim of the Initiative is to protect our native species such as water voles and ground nesting birds as well as

economically important species, such as pheasants and partridges, from predation by American Mink.

The Initiative signals a £920,000 investment in native wildlife conservation, thanks to support from Scottish National Heritage through the Species Action Framework, Tubney Charitable Trust, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Peoples Trust for Endangered Species, Scottish Government, European Community Cairngorms, Highland, Moray, Rural Aberdeenshire and Rural Tayside Local Action Groups LEADER 2007-2013 Programme.

The volunteer based project extends from North Tayside, Aberdeenshire, across the Cairngorms and Highlands. Volunteers come from various backgrounds from game keepers to householders, fishermen to natural history enthusiasts and are involved in monitoring and/or trapping. Only those individuals who have been trained are involved with dispatching mink.

By the end of 2011 314 new volunteers had been recruited, 306 new mink monitoring rafts and tunnels were in place and 152 mink had been dispatched. For further information about the initiative please visit:

www.scottishmink.org.uk .

Information & Awareness Raising

Pet Code & Pathway Toolkit

Two new international publications promoting responsible practices in the pet sector have been published to help prevent the establishment of invasive non-native species.

The European Code of Conduct on Pets and Invasive Alien Species

UK industry experts have been commissioned to draft a European code on the subject of pets and IAS. The Code: [click here](#), has been produced by Keith Davenport of OATA and Jim Collins of the Pet Care Trust under the

auspices of the Bern Convention's Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species. The Code promotes a comprehensive set of principles and behaviours aimed at reducing the IAS risks associated with the pet sector. It is recognised that the vast majority of people are responsible and adherence to the Code should not be hugely problematic; for others it is an excellent source of sensible advice prepared by key industry representatives and endorsed by the Convention's IAS experts. Topics covered include raising awareness within the industry and among owners and keepers of pets to help alleviate some of the pressures of invasive non-native species.

It identifies 14 areas for action or awareness-raising by governments, stakeholders and the public.

Through the GB Media and Communications Working Group, we will be considering how best to make the Code's advice most easily accessible for GB stakeholders, including to the possibility of producing a condensed version to complement our Horticultural Code of Practice.

The Pet Pathway Toolkit

The Pet Pathway Toolkit: [click here](#), has been developed by the US Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council and the Global Invasive Species Programme with Defra funding support. It focuses on the pet/aquaria trade pathway and provides a living 'one-stop' source of practical information, advice and examples of initiatives to help manage the IAS risks associated with the pet sector. Examples include the US Habitattitude initiative, animal care guides provided at the point of sale, and even mentions our own "Be Plantwise" campaign.

The Toolkit is primarily addressed to industry members and to public authorities but the content can also help stakeholders at all levels to address the risks associated with introducing alien species as pets, aquarium and terrarium species at each stage of the pet trade pathway.

Both documents are available from the NNSS useful links webpage: [click here](#).

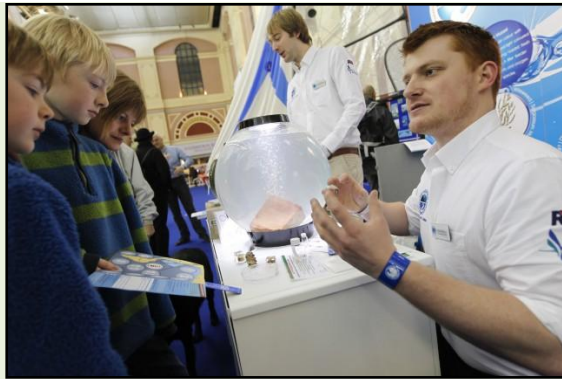
Freshwater Shrimp Guide

The surface fresh waters of the UK support 10 native species of amphipods (true shrimps), mysids (opossum shrimps) and isopods (hog louse). To these have now been added a further 7 introduced species. Evidence from the European mainland suggests that a further 15 species, native to the Ponto-Caspian region of south east Europe, are expanding their distributions across the continent and have the potential to arrive in the UK.

Defra commissioned the Freshwater Biological Association (FBA) to produce a guide to enable the identification of invasive non-native freshwater amphipods, mysids and isopods, including those species that are not currently recorded from the UK, in order to facilitate their detection should they manage to reach this country. The guide shows how to identify both currently present introductions and these potential invaders and how to distinguish them from the native fauna. The guide, which is designed to be printed as an A5 booklet, is available as a free download from www.fba.org.uk/downloads. The booklet will be available from the FBA as a printed booklet in a few months' time, once feedback has been received and incorporated on any errors that need correcting. Therefore, if you do have any comments, please email these to the author: mdobson@fba.org.uk.

The Dinghy Show - Alexandra Palace, London

The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Volvo Dinghy Show was held in London's Alexandra Palace over the weekend of 3rd - 4th March attracting an estimated 8,500 people. Officials from the NNSS and Green Blue (a joint BMF and RYA initiative) came together to promote the Check, Clean Dry campaign and raise awareness about invasive non-native species, particularly the Killer Shrimp (*Dikerogammarus villosus*).



Officials from The Green Blue explaining how to identify a Killer Shrimp. Courtesy The Green Blue Copyright

Display specimens of the killer shrimp were collected from Grafham Water in Cambridgeshire where a quick response by staff to implement robust biosecurity measures enabled sailing activities to continue. Staff and visitors alike are working hard to prevent any further spread.

The show was a success and it was very rewarding to find so many people of varying ages aware of the issues surrounding non-native species. All our display material was carefully sealed and returned to a secure decontamination facility after the show for disposal. For more information visit: www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry or www.thegreenblue.org.uk.

INNS Projects

Focus on Cornwall College

Student Invasive Non-native Group (SINNG) was set up by students at Cornwall College Newquay in 2010 as a Local Action Group to raise awareness and reduce the impact of INNS. Key actions include surveys, monitoring visits, removal, researching the effects on native wildlife and collaborations with other volunteer groups.

With the leadership of Project Coordinator Nicola Morris (a Newquay graduate) SINNG volunteers have focused on pond plants (including *Elodea*, *Lagarosiphon* & *Myriophyllum*), zebra mussels and alpine newts. These species offer the best chance of

surveys identifying where action can be effective, while also providing opportunities for awareness raising, research and engagement with partners. For example, the newt work involves close collaboration with local residents and landowners, the University of Kent, the Institute of Zoology and the Cornwall Reptile & Amphibian Group.



2nd yr FdSc Applied Ecology student capturing an Alpine newt in Cornwall. Courtesy Cornwall College Copyright

SINNG volunteers trained as Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths ambassadors are involved with several schools and run activities based on their own designs of games and materials to increase awareness of INNS and their impacts.

Workshops on biosecurity and identification underpin SINNG actions and work with schools and other sites. The workshops also help promote national “Be Plant Wise” and “Check, Clean, Dry” campaigns. Student volunteers have designed the SINNG logo, set up and manage social media (Facebook and Twitter) and the website – for more details and photos of SINNG’s activities visit www.sinng.org.uk.

Events

Future Events

Invasive organisms and globalisation Conference – Riga, Latvia 20th – 23rd Aug 2012. More information at: [Invasive organisms and globalisation](http://www.invasiveorganismsandglobalisation.org)



Invertebrates associated with invasive alien organisms - Riga, Latvia 16 – 18th August.
More information at: [Invertebrates associated with invasive alien organisms](#)

NEOBIOTA – Halting Biological Invasions in Europe: from Data to Decisions – Pontevedra, Spain – 12- 14 September. Topics include impacts and management of biological invasions.

5th Highland Invasive Species Forum – Glencoe, Scotland – 28 September. Includes themes on biosecurity and rapid response protocols and site visit.

For more information on any of these events see:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/news/events.cfm> .

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The next issue will be published in November 2012.