

Eden's invasive non-native plants

HIMALAYAN BALSAM

Did you know?

Himalayan balsam was introduced to the UK in 1839 as an ornamental garden plant but quickly escaped into the wild.

It prefers damp conditions, so is often found along river banks and in woodland.

Each plant can produce up to 800 seeds in seed pods - that's a lot of new plants growing next year!

In late summer, the seed pods explode shooting their seeds up to 7m away!

It is an offence to plant or otherwise allow this plant to grow in the wild in England and Wales - listed under Schedule 9 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981



What's the problem?

Himalayan balsam is a major problem in an ecologically sensitive area such as the Eden catchment as it:

Overshadows and out competes smaller, native plants. Over time, native species die, leaving only balsam.

Covers a large area so when it dies back in winter it leaves bare, exposed river banks at risk of erosion, and

Produces lightweight seeds that are easily carried by wind and water - spreading the problem downstream.

We can win the war against Himalayan balsam!

It is easy to pull out the plant and kill it before the seeds explode.

Himalayan balsam **can** be wiped out by tackling the same area for a few days each summer over a couple of years.

Eden Rivers Trust is working in the Trout Beck catchment to tackle Himalayan balsam and reduce its spread downstream ... and you can join the war!

**Call us on 01768 866788
or email volunteers@edenrt.org
to join our next balsam bashing day**

Sources:
rhs.org.uk,
NNSS GB non-native
species secretariat

