

Environmental TBT

Himalayan Balsam

Himalayan Balsam was introduced to the UK 150 years ago as an ornamental plant but rapidly spread into the wild, largely due to each plant producing up to 800 seeds in each pod that burst when touched and disperse seeds up to 7m away.

It is commonly found growing along linear corridors, such as along rivers or railway lines. The invasive plant dominates a habitat by outcompeting and shading out native species.

It is an illegal offence “to plant or otherwise encourage” the growth of Himalayan Balsam. This includes cutting the plant or roots and distributing or moving surrounding soil that may contain root material or seeds. Doing so can bring financial penalties and damages to reputation to both companies and individuals.

Do

- ✓ Have a preliminary ecological appraisal of the works area at the beginning of a project.
- ✓ Stop all work within 7m of confirmed or suspected Himalayan Balsam.
- ✓ Inform a line manager if you believe Himalayan Balsam has been found.
- ✓ Contact specialist contractor for removal or disturbance if it cannot be avoided.
- ✓ Employ robust bio-controls on site with plant, equipment, and personnel to prevent spreading.
- ✓ Usually transferred as non-haz (plant-tissue) waste from site; ensure waste receiving facility is permitted to accept Himalayan Balsam.
- ✓ Contact the project’s Environmental Advisor and/or Ecologist if evidence of Himalayan Balsam or suspected presence is discovered during works.



INF-SHE-SOP-9400-1000
Biodiversity

INF-SHE-SOP-9400-1050
Ecological Surveys

INF-TPT-2100-0300 Vegetation
Permit to Clear

Don't

- ✗ Enter or conduct works within a 7m exclusion zone.
- ✗ Disturb the seed pods.
- ✗ Excavate or move soil that may contain seeds or other plant material.
- ✗ Stockpile material suspected of containing Himalayan Balsam within 10m of a watercourse, gully, or drain.
- ✗ Drive plant and vehicles through Himalayan Balsam.

Himalayan Balsam can be identified by its clusters of pink/purple helmet shaped flowers, that grow between June – October. It will grow to between 2-3m in height.

