

Invasive species and wetlands

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The Scottish
Government



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Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

What are invasive non-native species?

Introduced to a new area by human activities

Cause negative impacts



American skunk cabbage



Brown rat

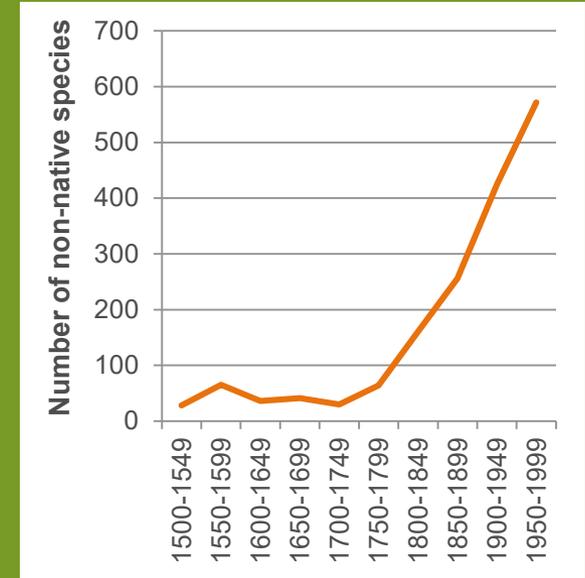


Why are we concerned?

Environment

Economic

Human health/social



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Asian hornet



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Brown tree snake



Non-native Species Secretariat

- Established 2006
- Small
 - 4.1 staff
- Coordinates action across government in GB



OTs unique biodiversity

OTs account for 94% of the UKs unique biodiversity



Yellow spikey woodlouse, St Helena



Blue Iguana, Cayman Islands



Bermuda cedar, Bermuda





Turks and
Caicos
Islands

Bermuda

Gibraltar

Akrotiri and
Dhekelia

Cayman Islands

British Virgin Islands

Anguilla

Montserrat

Pitcairn
Islands

Ascension

Saint
Helena

British
Indian Ocean
Territory

Tristan
da Cunha

Falkland
Islands

South Georgia
and South
Sandwich Islands

British Antarctic
Territory

Invasive species threaten the OTs

- Threats to all sectors:
 - Biodiversity/environment
 - Agricultural production and livestock
 - Public health



South Georgia pipit, was threatened by rats



King penguins, threatened by bird diseases



Impacts can be severe



©Ben Dilley

House mice on Gough



©Chris Malumphy

Pine tortoise scale in Turks & Caicos



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Fruit flies in many OTs



Invasive species and wetlands

- Invasive plants and animals can impact recreational activities and tourism:
 - Block channels
 - Cause deoxygenation when they die and decompose
 - Carry human and animal disease and parasites
- They can also impact native species:
 - Cover wetlands and waterways, pushing native species out and changing the habitat
- Examples are many weeds, mussels, snails



An example: Anguilla

- Anguilla is in the Leeward islands, 91km² & 213ft at the highest.
- Over 130 bird species reported, >50% dependant on wetlands, and 25% regionally or globally threatened.
- The wetlands also act as essential flood control areas during hurricanes.
- Threatened by habitat destruction and invasive species
 - mostly invasive plants



Hard to manage taxa

- Birds
- Plants
- Aquatic species

Very small window
for cost-effective
control or removal



Biosecurity is key

Biosecurity is the measures put in place to prevent the introduction of a new invasive species to an area

You can do this:

- Pre-border (don't let them near). The best!
- At the border (spot them on arrival).
Commonest approach.
- Or react to new pests and weeds once you've spotted them post-border. Hardest.



International collaboration

- You can't do this alone.
- Use international expertise and experience to help design appropriate mitigation measures:
 - Against new species arriving (biosecurity)
 - To manage existing species
- There is a lot of help available to the OTs – see <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/ots/otsMap.cfm>



Conclusion

- Invasive species can have major impacts on wetlands
- Invasive plants are particularly threatening
- Prevention is better than cure as management of established invasive species can be very challenging
- Biosecurity is therefore a priority



Thank you for your attention

Any questions?

