



# One Day - One Record: Recording Form for Invasive Plants

## Descriptions to help you identify your plants:

JAPANESE KNOTWEED	HIMALAYAN BALSAM	GIANT HOGWEED
<p>Japanese Knotweed is a <b>perennial</b> plant growing in dense stands. The <b>stems</b> emerge in spring as a fleshy shoot of red or green and grow to a maximum height of <b>2-3 metres</b>. The mature stem is green with red/purple specks; and hollow with distinct nodes like bamboo. Japanese Knotweed dies back in winter but stems can persist as upright, brown, hollow stalks.</p> <p>The <b>leaves</b> appear triangular when the stem is developing, but the unfurled leaves are basically <b>oval with a squared-off base and a pointed tip</b>.</p> <p><b>Minute greenish-white flowers</b> are carried on long strands and appear in August to October.</p> <p>Japanese Knotweed is found on river banks, roadsides and disturbed ground.</p> <p>Amongst the problems Japanese Knotweed cause are:</p> <p><b>out-competing and shading native plants.</b></p> <p><b>fast-growing, and if growing in or near a watercourse, can cause flood events.</b></p> <p><b>growing through hard surfaces and causing structural problems.</b></p>	<p>Himalayan (or Indian) Balsam is an <b>annual</b> herb that germinates from seed in February/March and dies back each winter.</p> <p>The <b>stems</b> are reddish and the plant grows to between <b>1 and 2m tall</b>. The <b>long lance-shaped leaves</b> with toothed edges are arranged in pairs, or three to node and are mid to dark-green.</p> <p>The <b>purplish-pink flowers</b> which appear in July-September are large and distinctive.</p> <p>Seeds are produced in October from a capsule; hundreds of seeds explode out for a considerable distance.</p> <p>Himalayan Balsam prefers to grow in wet ground so is often found along river banks and smaller watercourses and in damp hollows in woodland.</p> <p>Amongst the problems this plant causes are:</p> <p><b>shading out native plants.</b></p> <p><b>competing for pollinators – bees prefer it to most other plants, which therefore produce less seeds.</b></p> <p><b>erosion - Himalayan Balsam dies back in winter leaving bare areas vulnerable to erosion by rain, high water etc, and the plants it shades out (grasses etc) have roots that would bind the soil preventing erosion.</b></p>	<p><b>Take care: Touching, or brushing against this plant can result in blistering and painful dermatitis.</b></p> <p><i>The plant exudes a clear watery sap, which sensitises the skin to ultraviolet radiation.</i></p> <p>Giant Hogweed looks similar to a large, coarse Cow Parsley or Hogweed.</p> <p>Giant Hogweed is <b>perennial</b>, beginning to grow in March/April and dying back in the winter months. Giant Hogweed grows to full height over four years, flowers and then dies.</p> <p>The <b>stem</b> is hollow, up to 10cm across, sparsely hairy, green but developing red/purple spots or blotches during summer. Eventual <b>height 3-5m</b> (that's 10 to 16 feet in old money).</p> <p>The <b>leaves</b> are <b>dark green</b> and <b>compound with deeply cut, ragged-edged lobes</b>. The lower leaves are up to 2.5m long and 1m across.</p> <p>There are <b>many small white flowers</b> forming one <b>large umbrella-like flower head</b> up to 50cm wide. Flowers appear in June/July.</p> <p>Giant Hogweed often grows in wet areas but also alongside roads and on disturbed ground.</p> <p>Amongst the problems Giant Hogweed causes are:</p> <p><b>out-competing native plant species, reducing the amount of suitable habitat available for insects, birds and mammals.</b></p> <p><b>leaving bare ground when it dies back during the winter - leading to an increase in soil erosion on river banks and steep slopes.</b></p>