

# Meeting Actions



Partneriaeth **Bioamrywiaeth** Cymru  
Wales **Biodiversity** Partnership

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**Title of meeting:** **WBP Invasive Non-native Species Group**

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**Date of meeting:** 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022      **Venue:** MS Teams

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**Time of meeting:** 10.00 – 12.45

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**Present:**      **WG:** Leasa Fielding (Chair), Alison Smith, Erica Dawson Davies, Tom Warren,  
**WBP:** Michaela Scrivin (secretariat)  
**Other:** Anna Holmes (NMW), Beverley Lewis (BBNPA), Chloe White (Dwr Cymru), Colin Russell (LERC Rep), Dawn Thomas (NWWT), David Jermyn (BBNPA), Debbie Murphy (CEFAS), Gareth Holland-Jones (WaREN), Holly Peek (NRW), Jennie Jones (NRW), Jess Minett (WaREN), Kirsty Brown (NWWT), Olaf Booy (APHA), Phil Stone (Canoe Wales), Robert Smith (Public Health Wales), Suzy Wood (CABI), Theresa Kudelska (NRW), Thomas King (Canal & Rivers Trust), Tomos Jones (WaREN)

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**Apologies:**      Chloe Powell-Jennings (NRW), Dan Forman (Swansea Uni), Gail Davies-Walsh (Afonydd Cymru), Gemma Williams (Dwr Cymru), Katie Havard-Smith (Cardiff Uni), Louis Macdonald-Ames (Wye & Usk), Lyn Byrne (NWWT), Niall Moore (APHA), Phil Horton (RYA), Simon Roberts (RSPB),

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[Partner Updates](#)

[WaREN Update](#)

[Gardening without INNS](#)

[National Forest Update](#)

[Biological Control of Crassula / Himalayan Balsam](#)

[Any Other Business](#)

## ACTIONS OVERVIEW

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Update
<b>Partner updates</b> 1. Any further partner updates to Michaela by end of November.	All to email <a href="#">Michaela</a>		
<b>WaREN Update</b> 2. No actions arising.			
<b>Gardening without INNS</b> 3. No actions arising.			



Action	Lead	Timeframe	Update
<b>National Forest Update</b> 4. No actions arising.			
<b>Biological Control of Crassula / Himalayan Balsam</b> 5. All to send Suzy/Theresa information about site which could be viable for crassula mite release.	All to email <a href="#">Suzy Wood/Theresa Kudelska</a>		
<b>Any Other Business / Next steps</b> 6. Michaela to organise mid Wales field trip for next June. 7. Michaela to circulate all presentations after meeting. 8. Michaela to send calendar invite for 8 <sup>th</sup> March 2023 meeting.	<a href="#">Michaela</a>  <a href="#">Michaela</a>  <a href="#">Michaela</a>		

## KEY POINTS & ACTIONS

Leasa Fielding welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies. The list of actions from the last meeting was reviewed:

### List of actions from March 2022 meeting

1. Any further partner updates to Michaela by end of March. **Done**
2. Phil Stone to circulate Check Clean Dry washdown station pdf. **Done**
3. Tomos to share Biosecurity strategy for comment once draft is finalised.  
**Ongoing, update at today's meeting. Draft to be circulated soon**
4. WBP INNS Group meeting to be organised for 9 November 2022. **Done**

### Partner Updates

Written updates circulated before the meeting. Additional points include:

- **Museum Wales:** Ben Rowson has been receiving the usual trickle of new Ghost Slug records, including another from Snowdonia (near Dolwyddelan). In June 2022, the large Turkish Escargot was found for the first time in Carmarthenshire, at Aberglasney Gardens. A photograph was uploaded to iNaturalist by a visitor (as *Helix pomatia*). With the help of the gardeners, the individual was re-found and is now in the Museum. Ben found no sign of further individuals, so it seems unlikely that the species is established there. However, it must have arrived at the gardens in the potted plant supply chain.
- **GBNNS:** Olaf asking people to report Chinese mystery snails. Biggish population found in south England and other locations also reported. GBNNS Board and Committee meetings held since March considering at the GB level is what is happening with the list of species of special concern post Brexit, the GB Committee is responsible for making recommendations about listing and delisting, so there will be some amendments in due course. Asian hornet nest found in England and eradicated. EA informed



- **Natural Resources Wales:**
  - Continue to embed and implement the IAS Order including investigating a number of unsubstantiated sightings of species of special concern not previously present in Wales (e.g. raccoon dog, musk rat). Gathered information about floating pennywort distribution and management in Wales and assessed how the GB floating pennywort strategy can be implemented in Wales.
  - Continue to support and input to actions associated with the GB INNS strategy including attending the stakeholder forum, inputting to the refreshed GB Strategy and Horticultural PAP, and sitting on working groups (GB NNS Media & Comms, NNSIP, Research).
  - NRW Education will be inputting to the GB NNS Media & Comms new Education Working Group which will be looking at making recommendations to improve NNS coverage in education.
  - - WG has provided funding to NRW to control topmouth gudgeon initially at 2 sites in the Llanelli area. Preparation is underway (e.g. site plans, contractors, environmental permissions/assessments, public engagement). NRW will be working with the EA to undertake the eradication in early 2023.
  - Continuing to develop NRW Species Control Provision Guidance.
  - Continued to input to the development of the Sustainable Farming Scheme in relation to INNS.
  - Continuing to support the CABI biocontrol trial by identifying trial sites (Himalayan balsam & Crassula). Seeds collected from 4 Himalayan balsam sites this autumn (under licence). A longer list of Crassula trial sites have been identified, further discussion with landowners is currently taking place.
- **Biosecurity planning for Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation:**

The recently produced marine NNS identification guide is publicly available and able to be shared in both [English](#) and [Welsh](#). Also available on the marine section of the GBNNSS website.
- **Public Heath Wales:**
  - Avian flu taking up a lot of time, whilst it comes under remit of APHA & DEFRA. It can also be a public health problem and a severe drain on PHW resources. Most poultry problems so far this year have been in south east England but a few cases have occurred in Wales (Wales has a relatively younger poultry industry with better housing and biosecurity, although there are exceptions.) Cases in wild birds rather more prevalent especially in waterfowl and seabirds, and a Wales housing order likely to be implemented before too long. Wild birds – virus has predilection for brain and gut – makes handling wild birds a hazard. It is important that those handling dead wild birds without the benefit of full RPE and/or PPE have the seasonal flu jab and don't open thoracic and abdominal cavities. No bird flu reported in mammals in the UK to date, although 1 person tested in England in 2022 was found negative.
  - Tick work being undertaken nationally between 2017-2020 is being written up and shows a widespread expansion of *Ixodes ricinus* (the tick responsible for Lyme borreliosis) in many areas of England and Wales. Currently enhanced surveillance for West Nile virus being undertaken in Kent.
  - Of the 11,000 mosquitos tested for (*Culex modestus*) all were negative. There are now 50 sites in England and Wales for picking up invasive mosquitoes, primarily in England. Robert is trying to encourage Welsh government to expand sites in Wales. No mosquito eggs were picked up in ovitraps this year and this is particularly significant in South East England, possibly down to



- changes in truck movements / lorry parking, arrangements for which have changed since Brexit. A single *Culex modestus* was picked up in Stepney.
- Work being done on deer on the North York Moors together with the climate woodland cover. Deer density and sandy soils in particular appear to favour presence of tick species because they heat up and cool down rapidly.
  - **Welsh Government:** (Alison Smith) WG Property Infrastructure division continuing to support biocontrol project boards at GB level (advisory & planning/resourcing subgroup). Workshop held (by CABI) in summer looking at future risk and alert priority species, looking at how they could be prioritised for biocontrol research in the future. Continuing with practical treatments, focusing mainly on terrestrial species, now written into maintenance contracts etc as standard. Ecological surveys also tasked with identifying INNS.
  - **Welsh Water:** funding CABI to work on crassula in Llanelli

**Actions:** Anyone who hadn't managed to send a partner update to Michaela ahead of the meeting please send one by end November and this can be included with the minutes when circulated.

### WaREN Project: Phase 2 Update

Tomos Jones gave an update on biosecurity strategy, LAG training and toolkit, INNS Mapper, Ecosystem invaders, and the WaREN newsletter.

- Biosecurity strategy workshop held during recent WBP Conference – stakeholder feedback to being incorporated, Tomos to share Biosecurity strategy for comment once draft is finalised.
- LAGs contacted to ask what training they want/need, training being rolled out accordingly. LAG toolkit available online. Designer producing physical toolkit also.
- INNS Mapper: occurrence record database and integrated monument action reporting tool. Draft app being built (beta due Jan), website under development (beta due Feb). Project Board giving feedback on species and management lists, and report content.
- Ecosystem Invaders campaign: aimed to increase awareness of INNS and their impact across Wales, targeted at gardeners and recreational water users. Leaflets and banner developed, online videos etc. Be Plantwise and Check Clean Dry campaigns promoted respectively. 6% increase in awareness demonstrated.
- WaREN newsletter aims to share successes, challenges and opportunities. To be sent every second month.

Discussion around funding for next year – recent request for funding unsuccessful, so current end date for WaREN project is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Looking for alternative avenues for funding streams.

### Gardening without INNS

Lucy from GBNNSS noted gardeners are a key INNS introduction pathway. Focus on Be Plantwise over next few months. Materials available in English and Welsh on [GBNNSS website](#). Know what you grow – choose the right plants, aim for native plants or non-invasive alternatives. New guides on gardening, landscaping, and keeping ponds without harmful invasive plants launched here: [Materials and resources » NNSS \(nonnativespecies.org\)](#). Range of categories for recommended



plants as substitutes for INNS e.g. buddleia. Plan to work with IT to create more interactive table which can be refined by users to highlight what they want.

### National Forest update

National Forest aims to extend the length and breadth of Wales and provide multi-functional usage. Six guiding outcomes: Must be well designed and managed; accessible to people; and have community involvement. Desirable to have connectivity; multi-purpose; demonstrate learning & research. Hub and spoke model – 14 exemplar ‘hubs’ on WG woodland estate (e.g. Coed y Brenin), looking at process to add non-WG sites. Spokes to connect – might take time to happen but will be organic process. Working with Data Map Wales to pull together five story maps, explain the process within GIS map layers which include the woodlands opportunity map. Working on specific connections map, to conceptualise how areas can be connected – local authority looking at possible connections in their areas. Seven Woodland Officers now in post, hosted by NRW, embedded in local areas. A lot of different areas of work being undertaken - visit [National Forest for Wales | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/national-forest-for-wales) for more details.

### Biological Control of Crassula / Himalayan Balsam

Suzy Wood (CABI) gave update on work trialling biocontrol methods in Wales. INNS arrive without natural enemies – some of these damaging insects/pathogens may be specific enough to be safely released as biocontrol agents. Control should ideally become self-sustaining.

- Himalayan Balsam rust fungus investigated – 75 species tested to ensure rust will only affect HB – found to be highly host specific. First biocontrol agent introduced against a weed in Europe in 2014. Limited spread, further strain collected from Pakistan. Not all test sites infected by either rust strain. Site specific tests now being done before rust released on new sites.
  - Three Welsh sites tested in 2022 – one susceptible to rust, but sadly trial cut short due to consequences of heatwave (grazed by sheep!).
  - Four further sites to be tested next year, and eight sites as part of the Rivers for Life project.
- Crassula mite investigated – host range very narrow, 40 species successfully tested to ensure that crassula helmsii the only host. Approved for release in 2018, 18 sites across UK targeted between 2019-2022. Variable success so far, 2 metre spread at Brechfa Pool. Three more sites this year. Mites survived on all sites to varying degrees, some affected by heatwave. Plan to re-assess in spring and release more mites. Grazing needs to be considered in future.
- 2023 – scoping crassula mite trial sites, monitoring 2022 sites and producing mites for release. Testing HB sites for rust susceptibility, releasing rust, training collaborators in monitoring.

**Action:** if you know of any Crassula sites suitable for mite release please contact Suzy/Theresa.

### Any Other Business

- Latest Wales Sentinel Site Network newsletter circulated last month
- Autumn 2022 GBNNSS newsletter also circulated last month



- Now a legal requirement for professional pesticide users to register with DEFRA (Leasa to send link to Michaela)
- Discussion around future meetings – attendees agreed that meetings should remain online only, but yearly field trips to be organised around late spring (June)
- Next meeting to be organised for 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

**Action:** Michaela to organise mid Wales field trip for next June. Michaela to circulate all presentations after meeting. Michaela to send calendar invite for March 8<sup>th</sup> 2023.