

DITCH THE HITCHERS



PROTECT CUMBRIA...

from the invasion and prevent
the spread of freshwater invasive
non-native species



What are Invasive Non-Native Species?

Invasive non-native species (INNS) are those that have been transported outside of their natural range and that can damage our environment, environmental services, the economy, our health and the way we live. Impacts of INNS are so significant, they are considered to be one of the greatest threats to biodiversity worldwide. They threaten the survival of rare native species and damage sensitive ecosystems and habitats.



Why should we worry?

The freshwater resources of Cumbria – its many tarns, lakes, rivers and becks – are of great ecological and economic significance. We love spending time in and on them so protecting them from freshwater INNS is something we all need to take responsibility for.

Freshwater INNS are able to 'hitchhike' on our equipment, footwear, clothing and boats. When we move to a new river, tarn or lake, the species may be transferred and may become established, often having devastating effects.

What Can Be Done?

Whether you enjoy boating, angling, swimming, sailing, picnicking or walking around our lakes and rivers, you are essential in helping us to protect Cumbria.

Given the devastating ecological consequences and high costs for control, the emphasis needs to be on preventing the introduction and spread through biosecurity measures before they become established.

What is Biosecurity?

Biosecurity refers to taking action in order to minimise the risk or prevent the movement or transmission of invasive non-native species. You can do this by:



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Help to protect our freshwaters from the invasive non-native species! Follow this three step process every time you leave any river, tarn or lake:



Check your equipment and clothing for living organisms. Pay particular attention to areas that are damp or hard to inspect.



Clean and wash all equipment, footwear and clothes thoroughly. If you do come across any organisms, leave them at the water body where you found them.



Dry all equipment and clothing – some species can live for many days in damp conditions.

BE PICKY WITH YOUR PLANTS



American skunk cabbage dominating lake shore and river bank habitats including reedbeds and wet woodlands

Consider which species of plants you buy from the garden centre for your garden, pond, bog plants and aquaria. Ensure you manage and maintain these species and compost any you don't want to prevent them from escaping into the wild.

DO NOT release these species into the wild streams, rivers, lakes and tarns of Cumbria.

To report a species sighting, want advice on control or would like to get involved please contact your local INNS Officer:

**Cumbria Freshwater Invasive
Non-Native Species Initiative**

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