

INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES: FLOATING PENNYWORT

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ANGLING TRUST

POSITION STATEMENT

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Background

Invasive non-native species are any animal, plant or disease that has been introduced to a new area outside of its native range, either intentionally or accidentally, by humans. Their presence results in significant negative impacts on the environment, economy and/or human health. They present one of the top five drivers for biodiversity loss worldwide and the number of invasive species being introduced into the UK continues to grow due to accelerating human travel and trade.

Here we look at the impact of Floating Pennywort.

Why it matters

Floating Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*) is a freshwater aquatic plant native to the Americas. It was first introduced to the UK in the 1990s as an ornamental plant and became established in the wild in 1990. It has since spread to become widespread in the south-east of England, with growing populations in northern England. It presents a major threat to angling and native fish populations, particularly in slow-flowing rivers and lake systems.

Floating pennywort can grow up to 20cms a day, producing dense, multi-layered mats on the water's surface. These mats prevent light from reaching the water column below, causing native plants to die back, and can cause localised reductions in oxygen concentration.

The loss of native plants reduces habitat complexity, removing valuable habitat for insects and juvenile fish, decreases food availability and reduces water quality. These thick mats also reduce access for fishing, congregating along the edges of watercourses. In winter, these mats die back and break off presenting a potential risk of flooding.

What is the Angling Trust doing?

The Angling Trust sits on the GB Floating Pennywort Strategy Group working towards a more strategic, catchment-based approach to managing this species. The Angling Trust is working on a project with the Environment Agency and British Canoeing in the Thames Basin to refine and improve management techniques. The lessons learnt from this project will be used to produce guidance for anglers to enable clubs to undertake control in other impacted areas.

We regularly hold training and information workshops, both online and via our regional forums, and updates on the Floating Pennywort project are available on the [invasive non-native species page](#) of our website.



How can you help?

By joining the Angling Trust you can support our work on the management and removal of floating pennywort, as part of our broader work on invasive non-native species.

Clubs can receive advice on how to manage invasive non-native species and improve biosecurity at their site from our two Environment Officers:

Ian Doyle, Environment Officer North – ian.doyle@anglingtrust.net

Drew Chadwick, Environment Officer South – andrew.chadwick@anglingtrust.net

It is important to ensure you take action to protect biosecurity and follow the advice given as part of the Check Clean Dry code.

Check your gear after leaving the water for mud, aquatic animals or plant material. Remove anything you find and leave it at the site.

Clean everything thoroughly as soon as you can, paying attention to nets, waders, and areas that are damp and hard to access. Use hot water if possible.

Dry everything for as long as possible before using it elsewhere as some invasive plants and animals can survive for two weeks in damp conditions.

Thank You!

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We are a not-for-profit organisation representing anglers, fighting for fish, fishing and the environment. We are recognised by the Government as the National Governing Body for angling in England and partner with Visit Wales and Natural Resources Wales to promote Fishing in Wales. We are a member-based organisation made up of anglers of all disciplines providing a united front to represent, grow and protect our sport. By becoming a member of the Angling Trust you are helping to protect the waterways you fish in and the fish which live within them, ensuring their health and protection for future generations.

[Click here for more information about how to join the Angling Trust](#)

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