

The 'Norbury Bee a Pollinator' Project

Introduction

'Bee a Pollinator' aims to improve biodiversity around the rivers of the Norbury Programme area by removing plants that wouldn't normally grow in the UK, and replacing these with more varieties of native flowers. By tackling these Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) we aim to help more plants, insects and wildlife to flourish in the area.

The Norbury Programme area is defined as Norbury Brook, Lady Brook, Micker Brook and Poynton Brook.

This project is part of a wider programme of projects around Norbury, involving a range of charities, public bodies and community groups who aim to improve water quality and biodiversity in the area.

Careful monitoring has highlighted that these non-native (INNS) plants are having a negative impact on the biodiversity of the area. Our charities, Mersey Rivers Trust and Groundwork, want to work with local people to improve biodiversity by developing a community-led, sustainable approach to tackling this issue.

Mapping

We are asking people to help us by mapping where you can see three types of plants that are having a negative impact on other plant species, along Norbury Brook, Lady Brook, Micker Brook and Poynton Brook.

This project is particularly interested in Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) (see below).

<p>Himalayan Balsam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can grow up to 2m tall! • Stems are quite juicy and easy to snap. They have a red tinge in summertime. • Pink, trumpet-like flowers • Leaves are much longer than they are wide - they can grow up to 15cm 	<div data-bbox="563 1361 866 1749">  <p>Up to 2m tall</p> </div> <div data-bbox="898 1335 1110 1630">  <p>Pink (rarely white) often with spots and markings inside</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1137 1352 1374 1603">  <p>Leaf may have reddish mid-rib Up to 15cm long Leaves opposite, or in whorls of 3-5</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1062 1637 1374 1771">  <p>Leave have finely serrated edges Slender to elliptical</p> </div>
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<p>Japanese Knotweed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has purple speckled stems • Looks a bit like bamboo • Green, shield shaped leaves • Grows close together like a dense bush 		 
<p>Giant Hogweed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can grow up to 5m tall! • Have white and sometimes pinkish flowers • Have slightly spiky and divided leaves • Flowers grow in umbrella-like shapes • Stems have sharp bristles and some purple blotches 		 

Before you go to the brooks:

1. Familiarise yourself with the three plant species listed above. More detailed identification sheets can be found on the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat website

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=47>

2. Download the What3Words app to your phone. This website <https://what3words.com/> and app generates a unique 3 word address for every 3m square in the world that will never change. Therefore the 'address' gives us precise locations for mapping. The interactive map can be zoomed in to the 3m square you are standing in to record the start and finish of your survey and the location any INNS are observed.

3. Print out the survey form to record your findings on your walk. Take the printed form, a pen and your phone (for your app and camera) out with you. You can also send pictures to us via Twitter @GroundworkGM #BeeAPollinator with your What3Words address and we will add this to the mapping tool.

While on your walk:

1. Open the What3Words app and use the current location button to locate your position. If this is not accurate, use the grid and zoom facility and select your current grid position. Selecting the grid square will generate the precise location 'address' for the start of your river survey. Record this in the table at the top of the survey form along with the current time.
2. Walk along the brook. At any point that you identify one of the 3 relevant plant species, use the What3Words app to generate a new 'address' to record the location. Add this to the form on the next available sighting line. Then ring the species identified. If possible, take a photograph of the plant to be submitted with your survey later.
3. Continue your walk along the brook, making a note of the sightings of any additional INNS by following the instructions above or sending in your photo over Twitter @GroundworkGM #BeeAPollinator
4. At the end of your survey, create a final What3Words address to mark the end of the survey area and record it in the table at the top of the survey form along with the time.

On your return home:

1. Number your photographs to coincide with the number of the sighting on your survey form.
2. Scan or take a photograph of your completed survey form.
3. Send the copy of your form and photographs by email to suzanne.walton@groundwork.org.uk

What next?

We are using a special data collection tool called the INNS Mapper to record your sightings of Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed <https://ywt-data.org/inns-mapper/>. All the information will be gathered together to produce a map of the entire catchment area showing where these non-native species are located.

Following the mapping, practical events to remove the invasive species will take place and the planting of native wild flowers will commence to enhance the bio-diversity of the area.

Please contact suzanne.walton@groundwork.org.uk if you would like to take part in these events.