

YISF Flash report—Updates and achievements

Who are YISF?

The Yorkshire Invasive Species Forum is a partnership formed in 2012 to support the coordination and action on Invasive Species throughout the Yorkshire Region. Since its formation YISF has continued to develop a more joined-up and strategic approach to invasive species control in Yorkshire. This is being achieved with the support of a wide range of organisations, stakeholders and volunteers throughout the region.

YISF Partner organisations:



**Yorkshire
Wildlife Trust**



**Environment
Agency**



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency are active partners within the Yorkshire Invasive Species Forum (YISF). We have been working with our partners to help deliver a co-ordinated and effective INNS programme of survey and treatment across Yorkshire. The Environment Agency now have a Yorkshire INNS Strategy for Flood Defence Works. This targets three key species (Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and Floating Pennywort) for potential management.

For example, working closely with the Canal & Rivers Trust (CRT) and the River Stewardship Company (RSC) we are finally getting on top of the highly invasive floating pennywort. See an example of our progress below:



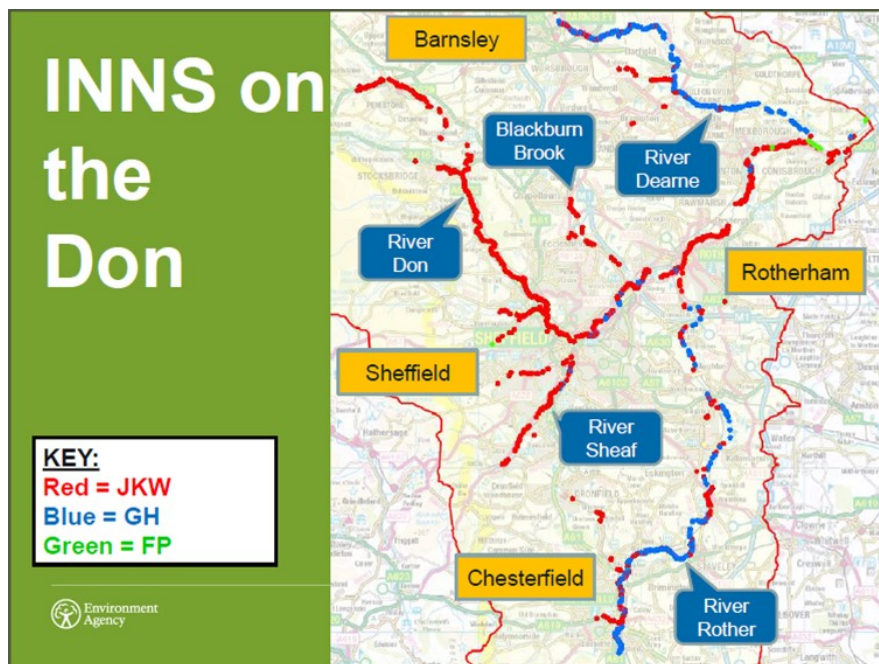
Crimpsall Sluice, Don Catchment
September 2017



Crimpsall Sluice, Don Catchment
September 2018



For the last four years the Environment Agency have also been piloting treatment of Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed on the River Aire from its headwaters in Malham down to the confluence with the Ouse, and also on the lower River Don. In 2018 we commissioned the River Stewardship Company to survey the entire River Don catchment for all these species.



We have used the information above to inform our ongoing INNS programme. As a result the Environment Agency will undertake the following INNS-related work in 2019/20 to protect flood defense assets:

Surveys for key INNS on the rivers of North Yorkshire (the River Swale, Ure, Nidd, Ouse, Wharfe and Hull);

Continuing to treat Floating Pennywort with our partners on all the main rivers of Yorkshire where it is found affecting our assets (the Don, Calder and Aire);

Continuing to treat Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed on the River Aire and the upper River Calder within the pilot area;

Commencing a new treatment programme to treat Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed on the River Rother, Don (from Rotherham), and the whole of the River Dearne where we have significant assets.

In 2019-20 our programme has attracted some match funding from Yorkshire Water. We are also working with Local Authorities, the first of which to sign up to our programme being Barnsley Council that have historically been proactive in seeking our guidance addressing this issue.

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

INNS treatment in 18/19 has focussed on 2 main species; Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed. We worked closely with the Yorkshire Derwent Catchment Partnership and volunteers to tackle giant hogweed in the Derwent catchment, East Yorkshire. With the support of volunteers we surveyed over 35km of watercourse along the River Derwent which helped support a further 15km of treatment of giant hogweed along infected locations of

the main river and it's tributaries. Giant hogweed treatment is to be repeated this year, with landowners contributing to treatment costs.

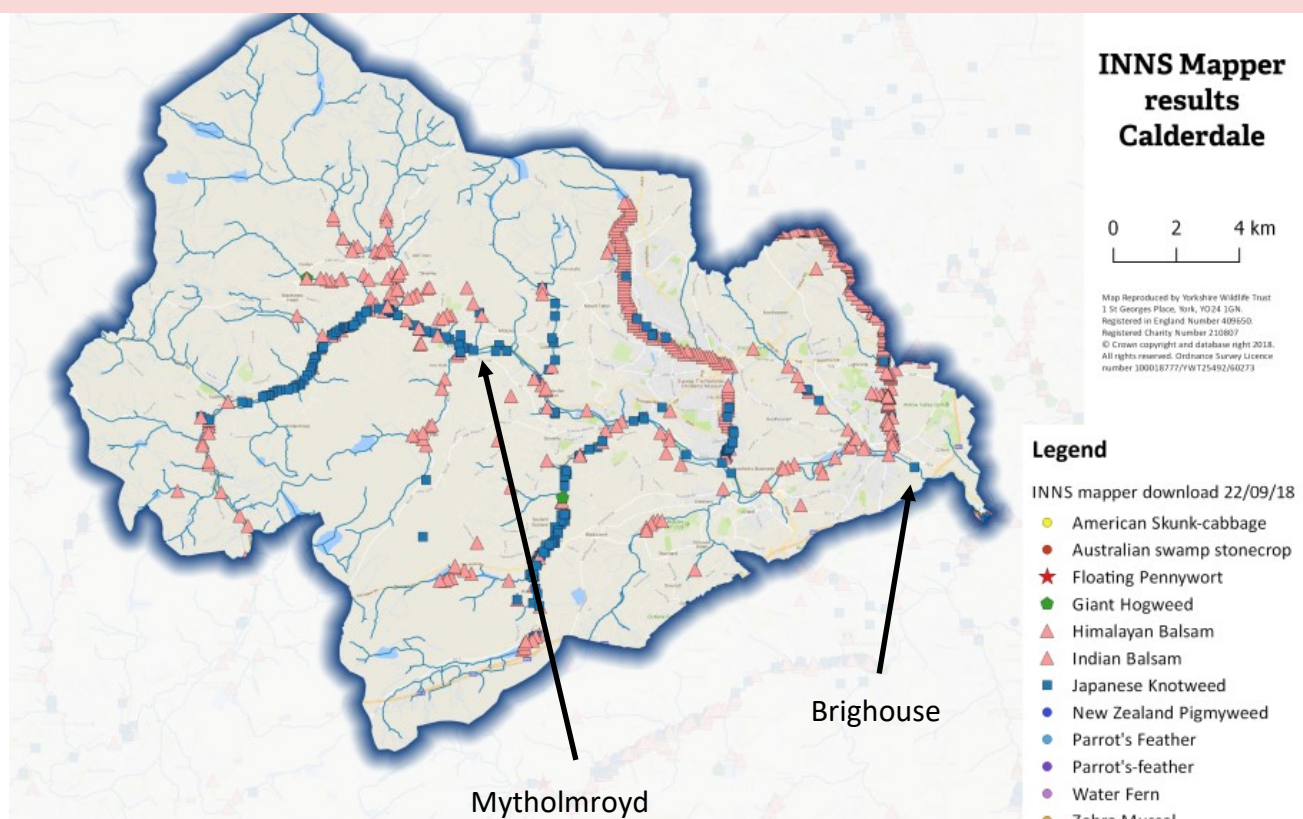
Our Japanese knotweed treatment programme along the R Colne in Huddersfield continued last year. Advancing into Huddersfield town centre, 15km of riverbank was treated by YWT and a whopping 27,000 Japanese knotweed stems injected during treatment. We also worked closely with Barnsley Council to begin a 3 year programme of Japanese knotweed control at Dearne valley country park.

Calder Greening Project

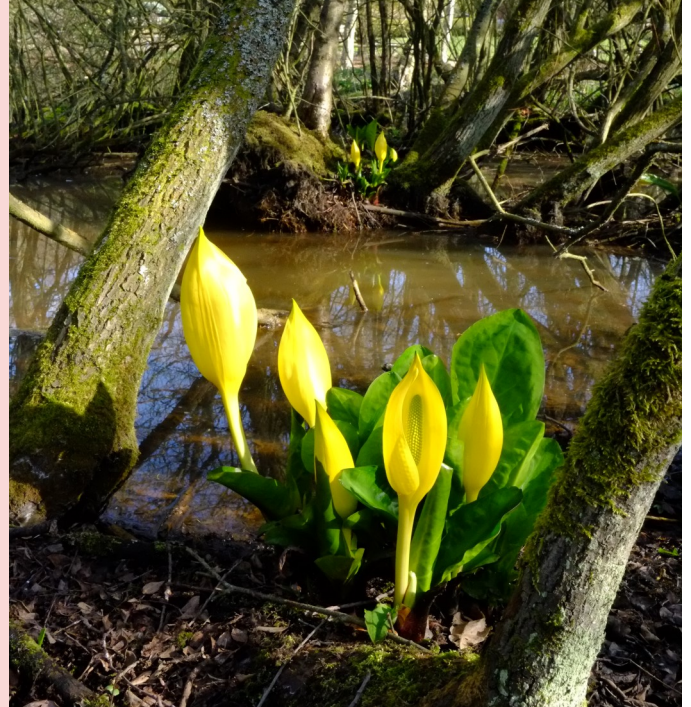
Following a successful bid to the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF), funding has been awarded as part of a £1.3m package to support natural projects within the Calder Greening programme.

Delivered in partnership with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and the Environment Agency, and with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Calder Greening will look to create and improve green spaces across the borough, delivering new and enhanced wildlife habitats and improving biodiversity to an area of the Calder Valley totalling around 156 hectares.

An important part of the project is to tackle invasive species Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed. YWT will be working with landowners to control these species in a headwaters down approach within the project area (map below).



YWT also began a volunteer –led project to tackle American skunk cabbage in the Aire & Calder catchment, as part of the RAPIDLIFE programme of works coordinated by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). This species has recently been added to the EU list of species of union concern. Volunteers will be undertaking surveys and trialling hand-removal of these invasive plants . Any known records of this species within the Aire & Calder catchment can be submitted to invasives@ywt.org.uk



University of Leeds & Yorkshire Dales INNS Steering Group

The Yorkshire Dales Biosecurity and INNS Steering Group received NERC funding in 2017 to carry out a project focused on Biosecurity, working with key partner organisations across the Dales to identify areas of greatest risk and to tailor practical biosecurity measures to combat these risks.

The project which has taken best practice advice from the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission has worked with a variety of partner organisations.

Nidderdale AONB have led the way, they now have a biosecurity action plan which they are starting to implement with workshops to train their staff and volunteers, as well as staff having their own biosecurity kits. Biosecurity is embedded into planning, training and information for volunteers, projects and for events.

We have also collaborated with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, helped develop and embed internal biosecurity protocols, shared information and learned from their experience.



We are in the process of investigating Yorkshire Water's operations and putting together a Risk assessment and biosecurity action plan tailored to their organisation, as well as working with Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority to get biosecurity embedded in their everyday practice. This will be done by working with key members from different teams to understand what risks they are posing when they get out in the field and develop biosecurity solutions that will work for them.

In addition to this Risk assessments are being put together by the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust and the National Trust to understand their biosecurity risks and act upon them in an informed manner.

For more information on the project please contact E.G.Paganini@leeds.ac.uk

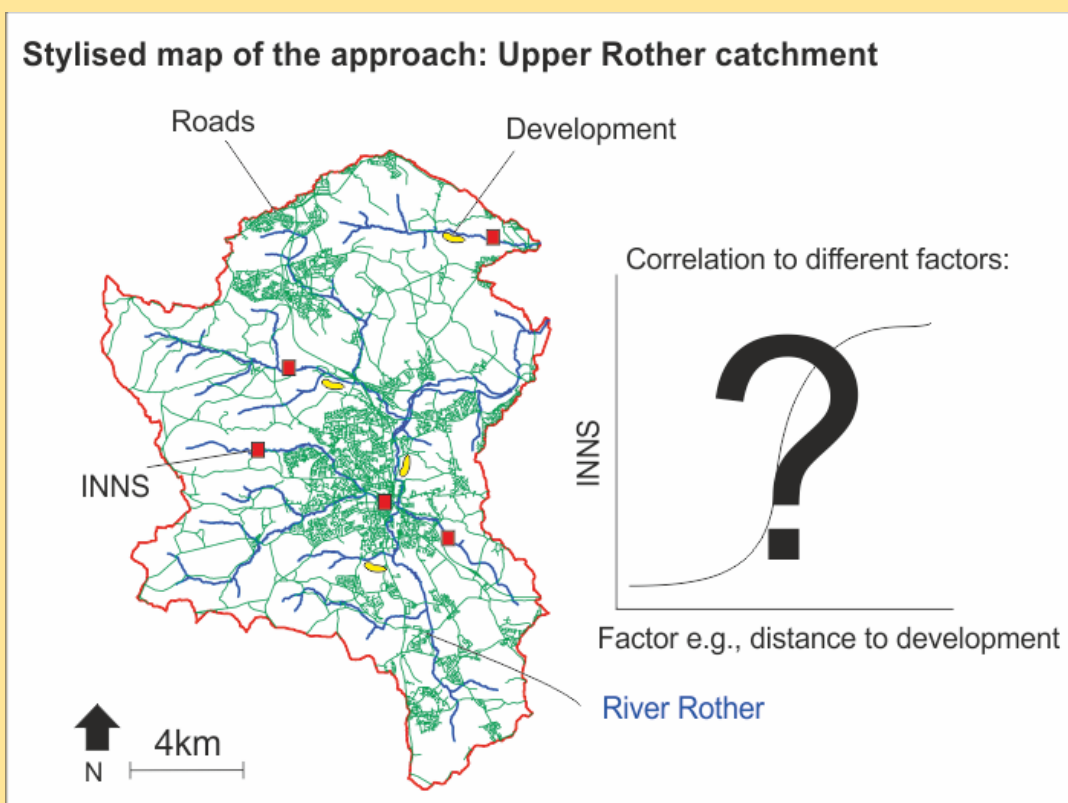


University of Leeds—iCASP INNS Project

Yorkshire Integrated Catchment Solutions Programme's new project on invasive non-native species

Yorkshire Integrated Catchment Solutions Programme (iCASP) launched a new project on invasive non-native species (INNS) recently. The project will use research evidence and expertise in biosecurity and GIS modelling to support the development of good biosecurity practices in local authorities to help reduce the spread of INNS. As with other iCASP projects, stakeholder engagement from the very earliest stages, when the project was just an idea being formulated, is critical to behavioural change and policy development and implementation. Long term the project will embed new strategies for helping curb the spread of INNS across Yorkshire that can be applied to catchments nationally.

More information at: <https://icasp.org.uk/projects/invasive-non-native-species/>



As part of the INNS project iCASP will produce maps that show where invasive species have been identified in a catchment. The invasive species data will be compared to key activities that occur within the catchment including development and location of access routes such as footpaths and bridges to see if there is a relationship between these activities and the spread of invasive species. The map shown is theoretical and has been produced to show the sorts of outputs that are planned.

Yorkshire Water

Updates

Yorkshire Water are active partners in the Yorkshire Invasive Species Forum (YISF) and contribute to systematic treatment programmes via the Environment Agency, YISF and River Holme Connections.

We have supported the field trials of two biological controls produced by CABI, Himalayan Balsam rust fungus and *Crassula helmsii* mite. Biological control agents are vital in the search for non-chemical treatments.

Several water companies support the GBNSS Check Clean Dry initiative. The initiative has been a success and has delivered a biosecurity border campaign, a survey to assess public understanding on INNS and biosecurity, practical biosecurity at sporting events, biosecurity training and work with partners in mainland Europe. Biosecurity is the most cost-effective method of managing INNS.

In addition to this we have worked with British Canoeing to develop a washdown facility on the River Washburn. The artificial release at Thruscross is very popular for canoeists but has the potential to introduce INNS into the waterbody and reservoir chain. This is one of the first permanent washdown facilities in the UK.

The year ahead

Yorkshire Water will continue building biosecurity into our way of working. We will look to do this internally with our staff and contractors but also across catchments with the users of our sites.

To ensure we can continue to deliver supplies of water, our water transfer network is complex and connected in the Yorkshire region. We will be assessing how our raw water network might enhance the spread of invasive species and where intervention could be suitable to reduce the risk of spread. We will be partnering with universities to undertake this novel research.



How can YISF support you?

The Yorkshire Invasive Species Forum engages and supports stakeholders throughout the Yorkshire region to coordinate action on invasive non-native species. We do this in many ways; collecting and sharing data through our open access INNS Mapper webtool <https://ywt-data.org/inns-mapper/> , hosting regional mapping workshops for catchment partnerships and sharing important regional INNS updates with stakeholders. We are eager to do more. Please get in touch if you would like our support

Contacting YISF:

Email: Invasives@ywt.org.uk