

Helping to prevent the spread of invasive non-native species

Horticultural code of practice

Advice and guidance on the safe use, control and disposal of invasive non-native plants for everyone engaged in horticulture and related activities that involve the use of plants.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

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Foreword

As the Ministers with responsibility for nature protection in England and Wales we welcome this Code of Practice for the Horticultural sector.

Considerable problems are caused to native biodiversity when invasive non-native plants escape from landscaped areas to the wider environment. This Code provides guidance to practitioners at all levels - from landscape designers to those using plants in their own back garden – and will enable everyone to work together to protect our natural heritage.

Of course, not all non native plants are invasive. The enormous benefit that trade in exotic plants brings to our gardens and public places, and to the agricultural, horticultural and forestry industries is recognised. Nobody would want to stop the use of non-native species; we simply need to use them wisely. A robust Code of Practice will prevent the further spread of invasive non-native plants and protect our native biodiversity.

The Code is a living document. It will need regular updating to reflect current best practice. For this reason it is being produced only in electronic format on the Defra website. A leaflet summarising the Code's action points is also available, and this will be widely publicised.

Congratulations are due to everyone who has been involved in producing this Code. It could not have been possible without the efforts of trade representatives, who know the practicalities of their business operations and the potential difficulties involved in preventing the spread of these invasive species. It is good to see trade and Government working together to produce a Code that is proportionate, with clear and achievable benefits.

We hope this will be the first of many such Codes, aimed at sectors providing a pathway for non-native species to enter Great Britain.

Ben Bradshaw MP
Minister for Nature Conservation
and Fisheries

Carwyn Jones AM
Minister for Environment, Planning
and Countryside

March 2005

CODE OF PRACTICE

Scope

1. This Code applies to everyone engaged in horticulture and related activities that involve the use of plants in Great Britain.

Aim

2. The Code is voluntary. However it aims to promote a standard of reasonable behaviour that, if followed carefully, will help ensure compliance with legislation and prevent the spread of invasive non-native species¹ into the countryside.

3. This Code has been produced in electronic format only. This enables the document to be kept up to date with any amendments in legislation, best available techniques, changes to websites or information on newly discovered invasive non-native plants. This Code may be downloaded and printed; however, to ensure you have the latest version you should always refer to the Defra website (www.defra.gov.uk).

Background: Why a code is needed

4. One of the primary threats to Great Britain's native plants and habitats is from invasions of non-native plants, many of which were introduced into gardens and parks over the last couple of centuries and have subsequently escaped "over the garden wall" into our countryside. When these plants were introduced, the gardeners of the time could not have foreseen the problems that some of these plants would eventually cause. Decisions on plant selection have generally been made in line with the custom and practice of the time. Almost certainly, no plants have been introduced with the deliberate intention of causing harm to native wildlife or other interests.

5. When non-native species become invasive they can transform ecosystems, and threaten native and endangered species. Invasive non-native species also damage economic interests, such as agriculture, forestry and infrastructure, and can threaten public health. The problems they cause are serious; so serious that the introduction of invasive non-native species is identified as one of the main causes of biodiversity loss worldwide. This includes the loss of the distinctive local biodiversity that makes each area special. With increasing global trade and world travel, these problems are likely to continue to grow. (extract from the Working Group Report on Review of Non-native Species, Defra 2003).

6. Many non-native plants do not become invasive nor cause problems. Indeed, the horticulture industry would not be as successful, and the private and public gardens so beautiful and varied, in Great Britain without the non-native plants that are imported and cultivated. This Code does not seek to stop trade in these plants. However, by setting out good practice for all those involved in horticulture it does seek to prevent the further spread of invasive

¹ Invasive non-native species means a species introduced by human action outside its natural past or present distribution and whose introduction and/or spread threatens biological diversity. (Working Group report on Review of Non-native Species Policy, Defra 2003)

non-native plants into our landscapes and natural habitats, where they become a danger to the environment and costly to control.

Legal framework

International

7. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) provides an overarching international framework for action, including the development of a set of guiding principles. This Convention requires contracting parties as far as possible and as appropriate, to prevent the introduction of, and control or eradicate, alien (i.e. non-native) species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species (see www.biodiv.org/programmes/cross-cutting/alien/ for more details). Other international conventions and agreements, for example, the Bern Convention, address invasive non-native species to some extent. In December 2003, the Bern Convention produced its strategy on invasive non-native species within the Convention area (see www.coe.int/t/e/Cultural_Cooperation/Environment/Nature_and_biological_diversity/Nature_protection/sc24_inf01e.pdf?L=E).

European

8. The main areas of relevant European Union legislation include the EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the EC Plant Health Directive (2000/29/EC) (see www.europa.eu.int). The EC Habitats Directive requires Member States to regulate deliberate introductions of non-native species so as not to prejudice natural habitats or wild native fauna and flora, and where necessary, to prohibit such introductions. In Great Britain, this is transposed into domestic legislation by Section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. The EC Plant Health Directive guards against the import of non-indigenous plant pests, this is implemented by the Plant Health (Great Britain) Order 1993 (as amended). Defra is responsible for implementing the Order in England and Wales (on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales) and the Scottish Executive is similarly responsible in Scotland.

Great Britain

9. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is the principal legislation which regulates the release of non-native species. Section 14(2) prohibits the release of certain invasive non-native plants into the wild in Great Britain; it is an offence under Section 14(2) to “plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild” any plants listed on Part II of Schedule 9.

10. In Scotland, the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 includes measures to address further the threats posed by hybridisation and the unauthorised release of non-native species. The Act also improves the ability of Ministers to respond effectively to new threats posed by non-native species by providing a discretionary power to issue or approve guidance in relation to non-native species, by allowing greater flexibility in updating and amending Schedule 9 of the 1981 Act (which lists species which are established and which are prohibited from further release), and by prohibiting the sale of certain non-native animals and plants.

11. At the time of publishing this Code, two terrestrial plants are listed: Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*). This Schedule can be amended by the Secretary of State in England, Scotland or Wales at any time. There is no duty to report any plant listed on Schedule 9. Copies of Acts of Parliament and Statutory Instruments can be obtained from The Stationery Office (www.tso.co.uk).

Offences under Section 14 carry the following penalties:

- on summary conviction a £5000 fine and / or six months in prison, or,
- on conviction on indictment to a fine and / or imprisonment of up to 2 years.

12. Section 33 (1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 states that a person shall not:

- (a) deposit controlled waste, or knowingly cause or knowingly permit controlled waste to be deposited in or on any land unless a waste management licence authorising that deposit is in force and the deposit is in accordance with the licence;
- (b) treat, keep or dispose of controlled waste, or knowingly cause or knowingly permit controlled waste to be treated, kept or disposed of-
 - (i) in or on any land, or
 - (ii) by means of a mobile plant,except under and in accordance with a waste management licence
- (c) treat keep or dispose of controlled waste in a manner likely to cause pollution of the environment or harm to human health

A person who commits an offence under this section shall be liable-

- (a) on summary conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or a fine not exceeding £20,000 or both (in Scotland the maximum fine is £4,000 under amendments introduced by the Antisocial Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004); and
- (b) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or a fine or both.

13. Section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty of care on all non-domestic waste producers to ensure that any wastes are disposed of safely and that a written description of the wastes, and any specific harmful properties, are provided to the site operator. Householders are covered by Section 33 of the Act. **Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed and soil containing particles of these plants are regarded as controlled waste.** Further information on controlled waste can be obtained from the Environment Agency (www.environment-agency.gov.uk) and from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) in Scotland (www.sepa.org.uk).

14. Problems are also caused by invasive native weeds, such as common ragwort. This is beyond the scope of this Code, however, further information on the Weeds Act 1959, which is the legislation which pertains to such species is available online at www.Defra.gov.uk/enviro/weedsact/default.htm

15. Plant Health legislation (principally the Plant Health (Great Britain) Order 1993) implements the EC Plant Health Directive, 2000/29. Similar legislation applies in Northern Ireland. It requires all plants that are permitted to enter Great Britain from non-EC countries to be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate. This is essentially a statement that the plants have been officially inspected in the country of origin, in order to ensure that they comply with the EC's import requirements and are free from specified pests and diseases and substantially free from other harmful organisms. All plants entering Great Britain are liable to inspection by plant health inspectors on arrival to ensure that they meet import requirements and are free from pests and diseases. The Plant Health Order 1993 gives inspectors powers to require the destruction, detention, or re-export of plants which do not meet import requirements or which are carrying pests and diseases. The legislation also requires many plants moved within the European Community to be accompanied by a plant passport. Like the Phytosanitary certificate, this is an indication of freedom from specified pests and diseases.

Responsibilities to control the spread of invasive non-native plants

16. This Code contains links to guidance on the best available techniques for control and disposal of invasive non-native plants that should help to minimise their spread for use by landowners who decide to undertake their control and removal. There is currently no statutory obligation to control or report the location of invasive non-native plants.

Assessing the risk of invasive non-native plants

17. Because of the threat that Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed pose to native ecosystems, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 make it an offence to plant or cause them to grow in the wild (see paragraph 9 for details). There are also several other non-native plants not currently listed on Schedule 9, such as *Rhododendron ponticum*, Australian swamp stonecrop/New Zealand pigmy weed (*Crassula helmsii*) and floating pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*) that are invasive and have become established in the countryside. Details of plants such as these can be found on various websites (see paragraph 21).

18. Some other non-native plants may not be invasive at present but have the potential to become so in the future, for example, as climate change causes conditions which are more favourable for them. There is also usually a lag phase before a species becomes invasive. Kowarick (1995) identified that, on average, there was a time lag of 147 years (170 years for trees and 131 for shrubs) between the introduction of the species and the initiation of invasion. Therefore, even in the absence of climate change, considering the recent rate of introductions into Britain by the horticultural trade and others, an increased rate of future invasions can be anticipated. Defra is funding research into a risk assessment methodology, with the long term aim of developing a package that would allow the scientific risk assessment of any plant. Those plants deemed to pose the highest potential risk to native wildlife could be placed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act in the future.

Guidelines and Guidance

19. The information below provides sources of guidelines and good practice that if followed, will help prevent the spread of invasive non-native plants. This list is not exhaustive and website links are subject to change.

20. The Working Group on the Horticultural Code of Practice strongly encourages any organisation or company involved in selling, planting, or the management and disposal of plants to ensure that all staff or volunteers are aware of and comply with the Horticultural Code of Practice for invasive non-native plants.

Know what you are growing – all users

This section contains guidance for all those engaged in horticulture and related activities that involved the use of plants in Great Britain.

21. If you are unsure whether a non-native plant has invasive qualities, it is good practice to take a precautionary approach and follow the guidance contained in this Code to help keep plants “in the garden”. It is also worth giving careful consideration to a non-native plant’s invasive qualities when you exchange plants with friends, or grow plants from imported seeds. This Code does not deal with specific information on individual plants. However, the following organisations’ websites contain information on the biology and identification of plants.

The Environment Agency (for aquatic invasive non-native species)
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/conservation/840870/840894/840941/?version=1&language=e

The Centre for Aquatic Plant Management (for aquatic invasive non-native species)
www.rothamsted.bbsrc.ac.uk/pie/JonathanGrp/JonathanInformationSheets.html

The Cornwall Knotweed Forum (for Japanese knotweed)
www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/knotweed

The Applied Vegetation Dynamics Laboratory (for all invasive non-native species) www.appliedvegetationdynamics.co.uk

The Global Invasive Species Programme (for general information on invasive non-native species biology) www.gisp.org/ecology/index.asp?side=3

The Royal Botanic Gardens - Kew (for one of the most important botanical reference sources in the world) www.rbgkew.org.uk/library/index.html

Beware of hitch-hiking pests on plants and in soil – importers/buyers

This section contains guidance for those involved in the import of any plants, for example, nurseries, superstores, garden centres, botanic collections, aquarists.

22. Plant Health Regulations relate to pathogens and pests and not to potentially invasive plants or seeds transported unintentionally. It is therefore good practice to quarantine imported plant material by keeping it well away and isolated from locally produced plants and those growing in the wild.

23. There are dedicated websites that clearly explain the statutory requirements for the importation of plants:

www.defra.gov.uk/planth/impexp.htm

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Agriculture/plant/17937/10774

www.rhs.org.uk/conservation/conservation_and_environment_abroad.asp

24. Topsoil should be free of weeds and all viable propagules of invasive non-native species, rhizomes, seeds, corms etc. Always ask for a representative sample and seek guidance on the source. Inspect on delivery. See British Standard number 3882 for the Recognition and Classification of Topsoil (see <http://bsonline.techindex.co.uk>).

25. The Code of Practice to Prevent the Spread of Non-indigenous Flatworms, developed between SEERAD and Defra, can be found at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/planth/pestnote/flat.htm>. The Code is a practical guide to help producers and traders of nursery stock to detect and thereby to limit the spread of non-indigenous flatworms, notably the 'New Zealand' flatworm, *Arthurdendyus triangulatus*, and the 'Australian' flatworm, *Australoplana sanguinea*.

Know what you are supplying/selling - suppliers/retailers

This section contains guidance for those involved in the supply or retail of plants, for example, nurseries, superstores, garden centres, aquarists.

26. Invasive non-native plants are not good garden or pond plants. There are usually many alternative plants better suited to gardens or ponds. Avoid selling non-native plants that are known to be invasive, and are already posing a threat to native biodiversity. If you continue to sell invasive non-native plants then as a very minimum ensure they are clearly and correctly named, labelled and give an indication of growth rates. Labels on plants should identify the dangers to the wider environment if these plants were to escape from gardens or horticultural premises.

27. There are many pieces of legislation affecting retailers and retail activities and the requirements change regularly. The British Retail Consortium publication – A Retailer's Guide to Legal Compliance - outlines these requirements and offers retailers guidance about how to operate them (see www.brc.org.uk/brctrading/publications_guides.htm).

28. The Trade Descriptions Act 1968 makes it an offence to apply a false or misleading description to goods. Descriptions can be given verbally, in writing, by illustration or by implication. This is a strict liability offence therefore it is possible for a trader to commit an offence without intending to do so. Information relating to the Sale of Goods Act and Trade Descriptions Act can be found on the Trading Standards Central website (www.tradingstandards.gov.uk). The site is supported and maintained by the Trading Standards Institute (the TSI). It provides a wealth of information for consumers and businesses, schools, advice and information centres, community organisations, local councils, business support agencies and trade associations.

29. Information on plants which you are advised 'not to stock' can be found on the websites of the following organisations:

PlantLife International

(www.plantlife.org.uk/html/influencing_change/influencing_change_campaigns_alien.htm)

The Ornamental and Aquatic Trade Organisation (www.ornamentalfish.org)

Royal Horticultural Society

(www.rhs.org.uk/conservation/Conservation_and_environment_nonnative.asp)

Gardening Which?

(<http://www.which.net/gardeningwhich/campaigns/aiplants.html>)

Label plants clearly and accurately – suppliers/retailers

This section contains guidance for those involved in the supply or retail of plants, for example, horticulturalists, nurseries, garden centres, aquarists, voluntary organisations.

30. Invasive non-native plants are not good garden or pond plants, they are invasive in gardens as well as the countryside. These plants tend to require high maintenance within the garden and generate copious waste that must be disposed of with care. There are usually many alternative plants better suited to gardens or ponds. Where potentially invasive non-native plants are sold, ensure they are clearly and correctly named, labelled and give an indication of growth rates. Labels on plants should identify the dangers to the wider environment if these plants should escape from gardens. Information relating to the Sale of Goods Act and Trade Descriptions Act can be found on the Trading Standards Central website (www.tradingstandards.gov.uk). Always use the correct Latin genus and species name in conjunction with the common name to avoid confusion. If you are not certain of the correct Latin name you should not be selling the plant. If you are unsure what the plant is do not sell it.

31. Information about the Horticultural Trades Association voluntary Code of Practice on labelling of plants can be found at www.the-hta.org.uk

(members only can access this voluntary Code, non-members should email info@the-hta.org.uk with enquiries about the plant labelling Code).

Know what you are specifying – landscape architects, garden designers, design engineers, tutors, authors and publishers of gardening books

This section contains guidance for those identifying species to be used in planting schemes, for example landscape architects, garden designers, design engineers, landscape and garden course tutors, authors and publishers of gardening books.

32. Do not specify invasive non-native plants. Always use the correct Latin genus and species name in conjunction with the common name to avoid confusion. Be aware of the current lists of plants considered to be problematic or invasive (see paragraph 25). Consider revising or withdrawing old publications encouraging the use of invasives such as *Azolla filiculoides* and *Crassula helmsii*.

The Royal Botanic Gardens - Kew
(for one of the most important botanical reference sources in the world)
www.rbkew.org.uk/uhtbin/cgiirsi/BG64e6YsOE/177130033/123

The Royal Horticultural Society (for information on understanding the complexities of botanical names)
www.rhs.org.uk/rhsplantfinder/plantnaming.asp

Dispose of plant waste responsibly - never fly-tip in the countryside – all users

This section contains guidance for those responsible for the disposal of garden or horticultural waste, for example, gardeners, botanic collections, landscape architects, garden designers, allotment holders, local authorities, garden contractors, developers.

33. Plant material should never be disposed of in the countryside or even over the garden fence. Much can be composted or taken to municipal recycling centres. Remember that controlled waste (see paragraph 13) must be disposed of in accordance with Section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which applies to both commercial and domestic waste producers.

34. Section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty of care on all non-domestic waste producers to ensure that any wastes are disposed of safely and that a written description of the wastes and any specific harmful properties is provided to the site operator. A Duty of Care Code of Practice is available from www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/management/doc/index.htm. Soil and waste containing any invasive non-native weed is deemed to have the potential to cause ecological harm and therefore does not qualify for exemption of Section 34 of the Environment Protection Act 1990. Further

information on waste regulations can be found on www.environment-agency.gov.uk/netregs .

35. Some weeds should not be composted for example, Japanese knotweed. Advice about the disposal of Japanese knotweed, including a Code of Practice for its management, destruction and disposal on development sites and sites of production, is available from www.environment-agency.gov.uk and www.sepa.org.uk. For information on whether you can burn garden waste in your area contact your local authority; to find contact details for your area, see the Direct Government website at www.direct.gov.uk

36. Advice on composting can be found on the following organisations websites:

The Ornamental and Aquatic Trade Association (for aquatic plants) (www.ornamentalfish.org/aquanautconservation/invasiveplants.php)

The Royal Horticultural Society (for practicalities of composting for gardeners) (www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profiles0903/compost_heap.asp)

The Composting Association (www.compost.org.uk)

The Soil Association (www.soilassociation.org.uk)

The Waste and Resources Action Programme (www.wrap.org.uk/publications/CompostSpecificationsLandscape.pdf)

Henry Doubleday Research Association (www.hdra.org.uk)

Know what you are buying - consumer/end-user

This section contains guidance for all those buying plants, for example, gardeners, landscape architects, garden designers, garden contractors, local authorities.

37. Avoid using plants or seeds known to be invasive, consider alternatives and when using native plants, use those of local origin from certified sources where available. (See Flora Locale's Guidance Note "Planting with wildlife in mind: An overview of issues concerning the sourcing and use of native plants" at www.floralocale.org.) It is also worth giving serious consideration to a non-native plant's invasive qualities when you exchange plants with friends so that you don't pass the problem on. Check all plants supplied against specifications – it is important to ensure when buying plants that you get what you ask for.

Take advice on best control techniques – all users

This section contains guidance for those wanting to control invasive non-native plants, for examples, gardeners, local authorities, garden contractors,

landscape architects, garden designers, voluntary organisations, other land managers.

38. Invasive plants can be difficult to control but timely action will reduce the scale of the task. With species like Buddleia, that spread by seed, dead-heading immediately after flowering will reduce the problem. For plants with strong rhizome systems use root barrier fabrics to contain their spread. Gardeners have access to a limited range of effective herbicides compared with professional contractors. For guidance on how to find a contractor see www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profiles0203/contractors.asp

39. For information on the best available control techniques for invasive non-native species see

The Environment Agency (www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/conservation/840870/840894/840941/?version=1&lang=e)

The Centre for Aquatic Plant Management (www.rothamsted.bbsrc.ac.uk/pie/JonathanGrp/JonathanInformationSheets.html)

The Royal Horticultural Society (www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profiles0604/japanese_knotweed.asp)

Be aware of relevant legislation – all users

This section contains guidance on legislation for everyone who uses plants.

40. Legislation regarding non-native plants and their safe control and disposal should be followed at all times. Further details on EU and GB plant health legislation can be found on the Defra website, www.defra.gov.uk/planth/ph.htm

41. For information on Section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, contact Defra or the Welsh Assembly Government. For information on how the 1981 Act has been affected by the provisions introduced by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, contact the Scottish Executive. (see Annex A for contact details.)

42. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is not available as a consolidated document electronically from The Stationery Office website. Paper copies and Statutory Instruments amending the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 are available from The Stationery Office (www.tso.co.uk).

43. For information on The Weeds Act 1959, see www.Defra.gov.uk/environ/weedsact/default.htm.

44. For the Ragwort Control Act 2003, or the Environment Protection Act 1990 see www.tso.co.uk.

Control invasive non-native plants safely – all users

This section contains guidance on health and safety and environmental safety for those wanting to control problem plants, for example, gardeners, landscape architects, garden contractors, local authorities.

45. Care should be taken when using herbicides and machinery. The use of herbicides near water is illegal, unless you are properly qualified. There is a requirement to consult the Environment Agency (England and Wales) or SEPA (Scotland). Guidance for the control of invasive weeds in or near fresh water can be found on the Environment Agency website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/yourenv/eff/wildlife/213341/509287/?lang=e&theme=®ion=&subject=&searchfor=Guidance+control+invasive+weeds#invasive.

46. Manufacturers instructions and recommendations on mixing and use of herbicides must always be followed. It is a statutory requirement under the Control of Pesticide Regulations (1986) that the instructions on the container label are followed when using any approved herbicide.

47. Only herbicides and uses approved under the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 (as amended) or the Plant Protection Products Regulations can legally be sold, supplied, stored, advertised and used. Current lists of approved products can be found on the Pesticides Safety Directorate website at www.pesticides.gov.uk. The range of pesticides available to the amateur gardener is limited, however, the guidance above on safe use applies.

48. Further information on undertaking a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessment can be found at www.coshh-essentials.org.uk. General information relating to Health and Safety can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website www.hse.gov.uk.

49. Many species of plants are not toxic to humans, although care should always be taken to check toxicity before handling plants. The sap of giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) is known to contain a toxic chemical that sensitises the skin and can lead to severe blistering when exposed to sunlight. The following websites give guidance on the precautions that should be taken when controlling this plant, www.environment-agency.gov.uk and www.capm.org.uk.

50. Information on poisonous plants can be found from:

The Royal Botanic Gardens - Kew
www.rbgekew.org.uk/scihort/nightshade.html

The Royal Horticulture Society
www.rhs.org.uk/conservation/conservation_and_environment_harmful.asp

The Horticultural Trade Association www.the-hta.org (members only can access information on poisonous plants).

The Working Group on the Horticultural Code of Practice

51. In 2001, recognising concerns that present arrangements for handling issues relating to non-native species were insufficient, Defra commissioned a Review of Non-native Species Policy. A range of organisations was represented on the working group, and its report was published in March 2003 (www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/resprog/findings/non-native/index.htm). The report contained eight key recommendations, one of which, was to “Develop codes of conduct to help prevent introductions for all relevant sectors in a participative fashion involving all relevant stakeholders”.

52. In its response to the Review report, the Government, endorsed the importance of measures to prevent further unwanted introductions of non-native species and considered the development of codes of practice as a sensible and proportionate way to proceed.

53. The use of non-native species in horticulture is widely recognised as an introductory pathway, and one where there is no blanket prohibition on introductions into the wild (as there is for animals, for example). Good practice therefore has the potential to deliver significant benefits in terms of preventing introduction and spread of non-native plants, where these are likely to cause problems. There has been increasing awareness of the issue in the horticultural sector and an indication from a number of organisations that they would support codes of practice. The Government decided to initiate discussions with the horticulture industry and relevant interests with a view to developing and piloting a code of practice for the horticulture industry, aimed at encouraging best practice and avoiding unwanted introductions.

54. The working group is comprised of Defra, the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly Government, Gardening Which?, the Garden Centres Association, the Horticultural Trades Association, the Royal Horticultural Society, the National Trust, the Ornamental and Aquatic Trades Association, Plantlife International, and the Royal Botanic Gardens (Kew).

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the Code

55. The Working Group that developed this Code would welcome suggestions for improving it and feedback on any information that has been updated. The Working Group would particularly welcome information on implementing the Code. Please email species@defra.gsi.gov.uk.

56. New information or research on invasive non-native species may justify a review of this Code.

Glossary

BALI	British Association of Landscape Industries
CAPM	Centre for Aquatic Plant Management
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
HTA	Horticultural Trades Association
ILAM	Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management
LI	Landscape Institute
NFU	National Farmers Union
OATA	Ornamental and Aquatic Trade Association
RBG	Royal Botanic Gardens
RHS	Royal Horticultural Society
SE	The Scottish Executive
SEERAD	Scottish Executive Environment and rural Affairs Department
SEPA	The Scottish Environment Protection Agency
TSO	The Stationery Office

**Contact details for Government Departments/Agencies and other
Statutory Authorities**

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR
Defra Helpline by telephone on 08459 33 55 77 or by email at helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.defra.gov.uk

Scottish Executive
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
Enquiry Line: +44 (0)8457 7 41741(local call rate within UK)
Email (enquiries) : ceu@scotland.gov.uk
www.scotland.gov.uk

Welsh Assembly Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff CF10 3NQ
Tel: 029 20 825111
www.wales.gov.uk

The Environment Agency
Telephone enquiries: 08708 506 506
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Erskine Court
Castle Business Park
Stirling
FK9 4TR
Tel: 01786 457700
www.sepa.org.uk

The Health and Safety Executive
HSE Infoline
Caerphilly Business Park
Caerphilly, CF83 3GG
Telephone 08701 545500
Email hseinformationservices@natbrit.com
www.hse.gov.uk

Pesticides Safety Directorate
Mallard House
Kings Pool
3 Peasholme Green
York
YO1 2PX
Information Services Team on +44 (0)1904 455775.
www.pesticides.gov.uk

Contact details for horticultural organisations

The Garden Centre Association
19 High Street,
Theale,
RG7 5AH
Tel: 0118 932 3360
Email: info@gca.org.uk
www.gca.org.uk

The Horticultural Trades Association
Horticulture House,
19 High Street,
Theale,
RG7 5AH
Tel: 0118 930 3132
Email: info@the-hta.org.uk
www.the-hta.org.uk

National Farmers' Union
Agriculture House
164 Shaftesbury Avenue
London
WC2H 8HL
Tel: 020 7331 7200
Email: nfu@nfuonline.com
www.nfu.org.uk

Ornamental and Aquatic Trades Association (OATA)
Wessex House
40 Station Road
Westbury
Wiltshire
BA13 3JN
Tel: 0870 0434013
Email: info@ornamentalfish.org
www.ornamentalfish.org

The Royal Horticultural Society
80 Vincent Square
London
SW1P 2PE
Telephone 020 7834 4333
Email: info@rhs.org.uk
www.rhs.org.uk

Royal Botanic Gardens - Kew
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 3AB
020 8332 5000
info@kew.org
www.rbgekew.org.uk

Sources of any other technical advice for gardeners and landscapers on invasive non-native species

The Joint Committee for Landscape Industries is a technical committee and currently has representatives from the HTA, NFU, BALI, ILAM, The Landscape Institute, The Institute of Chartered Foresters and the Arboriculture Association. It has recently been restructured, meets four times a year and previously has been responsible for a number of guidelines that refer to plants in terms of handling.

www.the-hta.org.uk

www.nfu.org.uk

www.bali.co.uk

www.llam.co.uk

www.li.org.uk

www.charteredforesters.org

www.trees.org.uk

Japanese knotweed

www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/knotweed

www.cabi-bioscience.org/html/japanese_knotweed_alliance

www.capm.org.uk

Ponds

The Ponds Conservation Trust is a registered charity with a board of trustees, management committee and full-time staff. Trustees and committee members are appointed from the member and supporting organisations. They can offer pond conservation information and guidance through training courses, publications, lectures, demonstration ponds and their website.

www.pondstrust.org.uk

For guidance within Scotland on Ponds, Pools and Lochans

www.sepa.org.uk/guidance/hei/guidance.htm

References

Defra (2003) Review of non-native species policy, report of the working group (www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/resprog/findings/non-native/index.htm)

Kowarick, I (1995) Time lags in biological invasions with regard to the success and failure of alien species. pp15-38 in Pysek, P.K., Prach, M. Rejmarek and P M Wade (eds) Plant invasions: General aspects and special problems. SPB Academic Publishing, Amsterdam.