



The Wyre Estuary Biosecurity Plan

In 2020 the Wyre Rivers Trust created a biosecurity plan for the Wyre Estuary. The plan outlines the invasive non-native species (INNS) that pose a risk to the Wyre estuary as well as steps which can be taken by river users in order to reduce their impact on our catchment and its native flora and fauna.

Through the plan we hope to reduce the risk of introduction and spread of marine INNS as well as promoting monitoring and control of existing INNS.

The biosecurity plan can be found on our website at www.wyriverstrust.org

The Wyre Rivers Trust

Our driving goal is to improve the environment across the Wyre Catchment in North West Lancashire. We work with stakeholders across the Wyre catchment to improve water quality, water quantity, habitat quality and connectivity, we also work to promote natural processes, reduce flooding and increase the resilience of ecosystems to climate change.

Contact Details

For more information visit www.wyriverstrust.org or contact tom@wyriverstrust.org



BIOSECURITY IN THE WYRE CATCHMENT

Protecting against invasive non-native species



WYRE RIVERS TRUST
"from Bowland to Bay"

What is Biosecurity?

Biosecurity refers to a suite of measures aimed at preventing the introduction and spread of organisms that could be harmful to our native wildlife.

Invasive Non-Native Species

Invasive non-native species (INNS) are organisms (including plants, animals and bacteria) which have been introduced into areas outside their natural **range** where they pose a risk to native wildlife.

INNS can introduce and spread disease, block sunlight from reaching other plants, out-compete native species for space, food and nutrients and can smother both natural and artificial surfaces. This can have huge economic impacts; DEFRA have estimated that INNS cost the British economy around £1.7 billion per year.

Why is it important in the Wyre Estuary?

The Wyre estuary is internationally recognised for its mud flats and salt marsh which provides a home to a huge variety of birds, fish and invertebrates. New INNS have the potential to disrupt and damage these unique habitats and impact the local economy.



Chinese Mitten Crab

The Wyre estuary provides critical habitat for smelt, which are well known for their distinctive cucumber smell!



Invasive species in the Wyre Estuary

Many invasive non-native species are already widespread within our catchment. The bright pink flowers of Himalayan balsam crowd the river banks during the summer, preventing native plants from growing, whilst the acorn barnacle is often found fouling boats and other artificial structures around Fleetwood harbour.

Other invasive non-natives have not yet found their way in to the Wyre estuary. Look out for the hairy legs and claws of the Chinese mitten crab, which has been found to be present in Morecambe bay but has not yet become established in the Wyre catchment. These crabs burrow into the river bank causing serious damage to its structure and have recently been found on the River Lune.

Our Biosecurity plan has a full list of species which pose a risk to the Wyre. Species identification sheets can also be found at www.nonnativespecies.org.

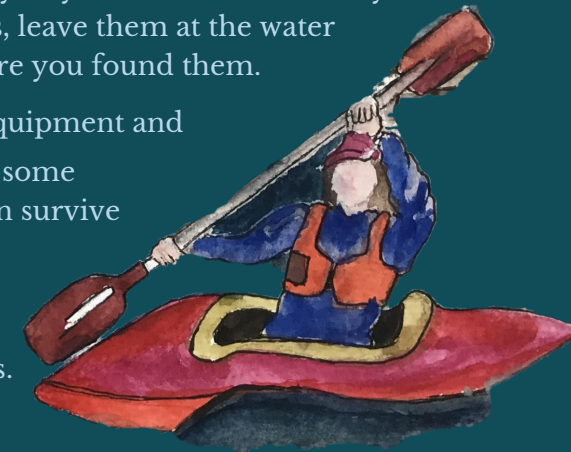
What you can do to help?

A number of measures can be undertaken in order to prevent the spread of INNS when walking, paddling, working and fishing near the river. Any site may have invasive non-native species and diseases that can be spread by contaminated clothes and equipment, so good biosecurity is always important.

Check equipment such as fishing rods or paddles and clothing for sediment and organisms - particularly in areas that are damp or hard to inspect.

Clean all equipment, footwear and clothing 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 survive for many days in damp conditions.



Monitoring and reporting

If you have any unusual sightings report them on the iRecord app. New INNS to the area should be reported to the NW Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA).