



Impacts

Ecological: With the ability to out-compete late flowering native species in BC's riparian zones, infestations of Himalayan balsam decrease the diversity of plants in these areas and can damage ecosystems.

Economic: The shallow root system and annual nature of the plant exposes invaded areas to erosion during winter when the plants die off.

Ecological Characteristics

Habitat: Prefers disturbed, riparian systems, it can also grow in shaded environments, wet meadows, forest cut blocks, and damp natural woodland. The plant is intolerant of drought.

Reproduction: An annual that reproduces by seed. Seeds can remain viable for up to 18 months in the soil and typically germinate in early spring, approximately 80% germination rate.

Dispersal: Up to 32,000 seeds can be produced per square metre in a dense stand of Himalayan balsam. Seeds are produced in explosive seed-pods, which can throw seeds up to 7 m.



Identification

Flowers: Exotic-looking with white to pink/ purple, helmet shaped flowers.

Stems: Stems are bamboo-like, thick, highly branched and purple to reddish tinged. Plants can grow over 2 m tall.

Leaves: Leaves are in whorls (usually in threes), oblong to egg-shaped, and have a serrated edge, often tinged with red.



Report!



If you see Himalayan balsam, report it to CSISS or use the Report A Weed App: reportaweedbc.ca

For more information



1-855-PUL-WEED



columbiashuswapinvasives.org



info@columbiashuswapinvasives.org



@ColumbiaShuswapInvasives



@columbiashuswapinvasives



@CSISS_Invasives



Himalayan Balsam

Have you seen this plant?

Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) is an exotic-looking annual with pink flowers and a hollow stem. Native to the Himalayas, this plant was introduced to British Columbia and has become extremely invasive in many regions. Himalayan balsam is spreading in Revelstoke and the **Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society** is working with land managers to help prevent further spread throughout Revelstoke.



Prevention and Control

Prevention

- Do not move any soil that could possibly contain seeds, specifically from riparian zones.
- Clean vehicles, personal gear, boots, and animals that have been in contact with contaminated soil.
- Maintain caution when working around infested areas; seedpods are highly explosive and can disperse seeds when touched.

Mechanical control

- Mechanical control should be performed before any flowers or seedpods are present to avoid the spread of seeds.
- Hand pulling is an easy and very effective way to remove plants in smaller infestations.
- Repeated mowing or trimming is an effective way to remove plants in larger infestations.
- Plants should be bagged and disposed of at the landfill, as regrowth is possible.
- Mulching or soil cultivation can be successful.
- Annual site monitoring is essential to assess regrowth.

Chemical Control

- Herbicide use must first consider site characteristics and be prescribed based on site goals and objectives. Herbicide labels and other sources of information must be reviewed before selecting and applying herbicides.
- Herbicide use is limited due to Himalayan balsam being found in wet areas. If used, herbicide runs the risk of entering the water column.

Choose non-invasive alternatives for your garden

Native and ornamentals to plant instead of Himalayan balsam include:

Wild Bleeding Heart, Cardinal Flower, Red Columbine and Pink Monkey Flower



Did you know?

Invasive Plant disposal is FREE at landfills and transfer stations within the CSRD! Ensure your invasive plants are sealed in clear bags to be disposed of in the household waste section NOT yard waste.

