

Cairngorms Non-Native Fish Project

The Cairngorms Non-Native Fish Project is a partnership consisting of the Pike Anglers Alliance for Scotland, Pike Anglers Club of Great Britain, SNH, Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), the Spey Research Trust, the Dee District Salmon Fishery Board and the Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan. This project is supported by Cairngorms LEADER+, SNH, CNPA and the Spey Research Trust.

This project aims to bring together fishery proprietors, pike, salmon and trout anglers, conservationists and other interested parties to develop a local strategy to stop the deliberate and accidental release of non-native fish to the River Spey and River Dee catchments.

Useful Contacts

Centre for Aquatic Plant Management
www.capm.org.uk • 0118 969 0072

Dee Fishery Trust
www.dsfa.org • 01339 880 411

Plantlife
www.plantlife.org.uk • 01786 478 509

Ponds Trust
www.pondstrust.org.uk • 01865 483 249

SEERAD
www.scotland.gov.uk/about/departments/ERAD
0131 556 8400

SEPA
www.sepa.org.uk • 01786 457 700

SNH
www.snh.gov.uk • 01479 810 477

Spey Research Trust
www.speyfisheryboard.com • 01340 810 841

The Wildlife Trust
www.wildlifetrusts.org • 01779 881 176

Send your sightings of non-native species to the
North East Scotland Biological Records Centre
www.nesbrec.org.uk
01224 273 633

Or contact the
Cairngorms LBAP Officer
14 The Square, Grantown-on-Spey, PH26 3HG
stephencorcoran@cairngorms.co.uk
01479 870 528
www.cairngorms.co.uk

For a large print version of this leaflet,
please contact the Cairngorms National
Park Authority for a copy,
tel: 01479 873 535

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WARNING - Alien Invasion



Golden-tench



River water-crowfoot



Roach and rudd fry



Orfe



Advice and information on non-native species

The native plants and animals of the Cairngorms represent a wealth of wildlife that forms a distinctive feature of the area. There are, however, a number of non-native species that can cause severe problems for our native wildlife.

Fish & Animals

The rivers, burns and lochs of the Cairngorms support internationally important populations of species like Atlantic salmon and fresh water pearl mussels and are internationally renowned for their fisheries.

Many species of fish which are native to other parts of the UK are absent from the Cairngorms. If introduced, new fish species could cause problems by transmitting disease and parasites to native stocks. They may also increase levels of competition and predation within existing fish communities. Some species of fish, already known to be present within the Cairngorms, such as rudd, roach, tench, golden orfe and bream can all be classed as non-native invaders.

With more anglers travelling overseas to fish, the risk of the introduction of infection to the Cairngorms rivers has increased. There is a potential threat in particular from the parasite *Gyrodactylus salaris*. This parasite, which affects Atlantic salmon, in other parts of Europe has already resulted in the loss of the species from over 20 Norwegian rivers. Thankfully this

parasite, originally from the Baltic, has yet to be recorded in Scotland. Other non-native animals that are regarded as threats to the native wildlife of the Cairngorms include American mink, and American grey squirrels. Two species which have not yet been recorded within the Cairngorms, but pose a significant risk, are the North American signal crayfish and American bullfrogs.

Plants

Non-native invasive plants can grow rapidly and take over from native plant species. They can block drains, cause fish mortality (by reducing the amount of oxygen), limit access to rivers, pose public health risks, lead to bank destabilisation or create a flood risk.

A number of aquatic plants that originate from overseas are considered to be a threat to local biodiversity. These include water fern, parrot's feather, floating pennywort and Australian swamp stonecrop. Other problem plant species include Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed, river water-crowfoot and Himalayan balsam.

What can I do?

- Clean, disinfect and dry all fishing gear or canoe equipment before using it in the Cairngorms area.
- Avoid moving fish, of any species, from one water body to another. Seek advice and permission from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) if it is a designated site, the relevant District Salmon Fishery Boards, the Scottish Executive Environment & Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD) and landowners.
- If fishing for pike avoid using livebait (most owners of lochs in the Cairngorms ban its use) and try a different fishing method.
- If you already have a pond or are building a new one, try to stock it with native species of fish or plants, or, alternatively, just let Nature colonise it for you.
- If you already have non-native fish in your pond please ensure they cannot escape and never move them to local ponds, rivers,

lochs, burns or ditches. Some fish require a licence from SEERAD to import or keep them.

- If you see any of the plants in this leaflet for sale alert the store manager to the problems they cause and avoid buying them.
- If you already have any of these plants dispose of them – burning is best. Do not put them down the drain or in the rubbish bin or dump them. Seek advice on how to dispose of them from Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) (some are classed as “controlled waste”).
- Never dispose of fish or plants from your aquarium in ponds, burns and rivers.

The issue of non-native species is considered to be one of the greatest threats to the biodiversity of the Cairngorms. Remember only one fish, or one plant could lead to the introduction of a non-native species, disease or parasite.

Goldfish



American mink



Tench



Japanese knotweed



Water fern

