



Actions Against Invasives

by Trish Murphy
for

Shared Island Local Action Group Workshop
23rd - 24th March 2026
Enniskillen



About the IRT

- Environmental charity in Inishowen
- 5 trustees on voluntary board
- 4 staff members



Awareness raising on Water Quality

Run Training programme for volunteers and stakeholders

Nature Based Projects – farming projects (Farming for Water, ACRES), Natural Flood Management, invasive species control, bank erosion control, ponds, riparian buffers, tree planting, fish passage



Awareness on Invasive Species

Tackling the Challenge of Invasives

- IRT aims to:
 - Increase understanding by public/farmers/community groups
 - Increase identification skills
 - Increase reporting to IRT and NBDC
 - Collaborate with other organisations
 - Control spread of invasives
- Activities:
 - Run workshops
 - Develop literature / media content
 - Develop online reporting forms
 - Mapping distribution
 - Invasives control projects
 - Innovate nature based solutions



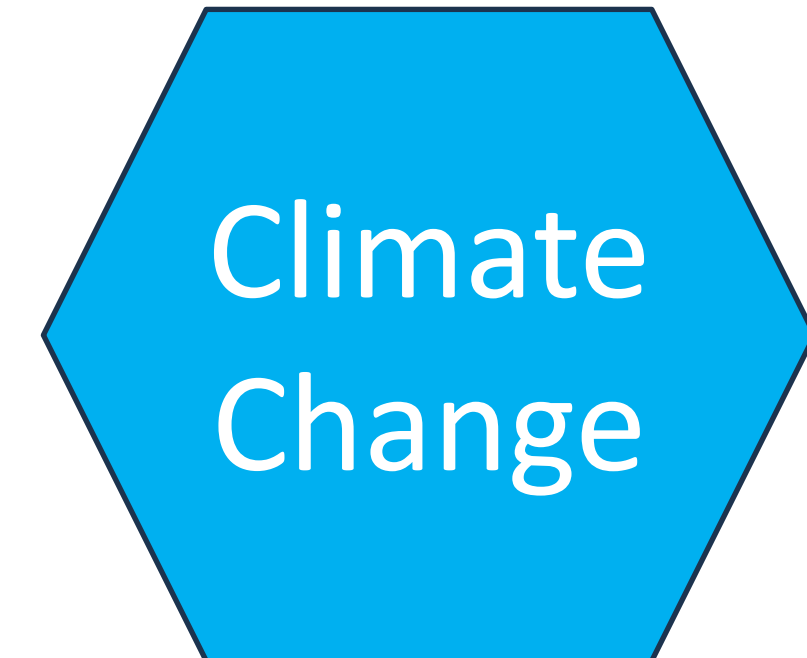
Raising Awareness

Improve understanding of how invasives impact:

- Alter habitats and threaten ecosystems
- Increase competition, outcompeting native species
- Threaten animal and public health – parasites, pathogens
- Dilute native gene pool
- Often faster growth rates
- Pioneer species tolerant of a wide range of conditions
- Reproductive strategies more effective
- Less natural predators in Ireland

Also:

- High cost to Economy
- How Climate change is increasing impact



Council	Spend Jul 2020-Aug 2024	Funding 2020-2024	Notes
Carlow	€83,700	€80,400	
Cavan	€41,198	€48,491	Estimates from different sections and schemes
Clare	€648,960	€189,174	
Cork City	€187,176	€93,150	
Cork County	€953,271	€256,151	
DLR	€375,490		
Donegal	€533,070	€318,932	
Dublin			

1 / 4

Source: Local authorities (via AIE requests) • Figures rounded to nearest whole number

Investigates

* Source: Article in The Journal. Jan 2025

[Fight against invasive plants costing councils millions and may never end](#)

Findings

- Easy for plants to be spread when people are not aware of plant's life cycle
- Transportation of materials e.g., rubble, on tyres, footwear, clothing etc
- Dumping of green waste
- Overuse / excessive use of pesticides
- Biosecurity is not common practice amongst general public

Several key species of concern in Inishowen / Donegal

- Japanese Knotweed;
- Himalayan Balsam;
- Salmonberry;
- Winter Heliotrope;
- Rhododendron;
- Himalayan Knotweed & Giant Knotweed.



Actions Against Invasives

Training

City & Guilds training offered to community groups / farmers on pesticide use with particular focus on Stem Injection for JK - PA1, PA6, PA6INJ

Presentations – to public

Online information on website/socials

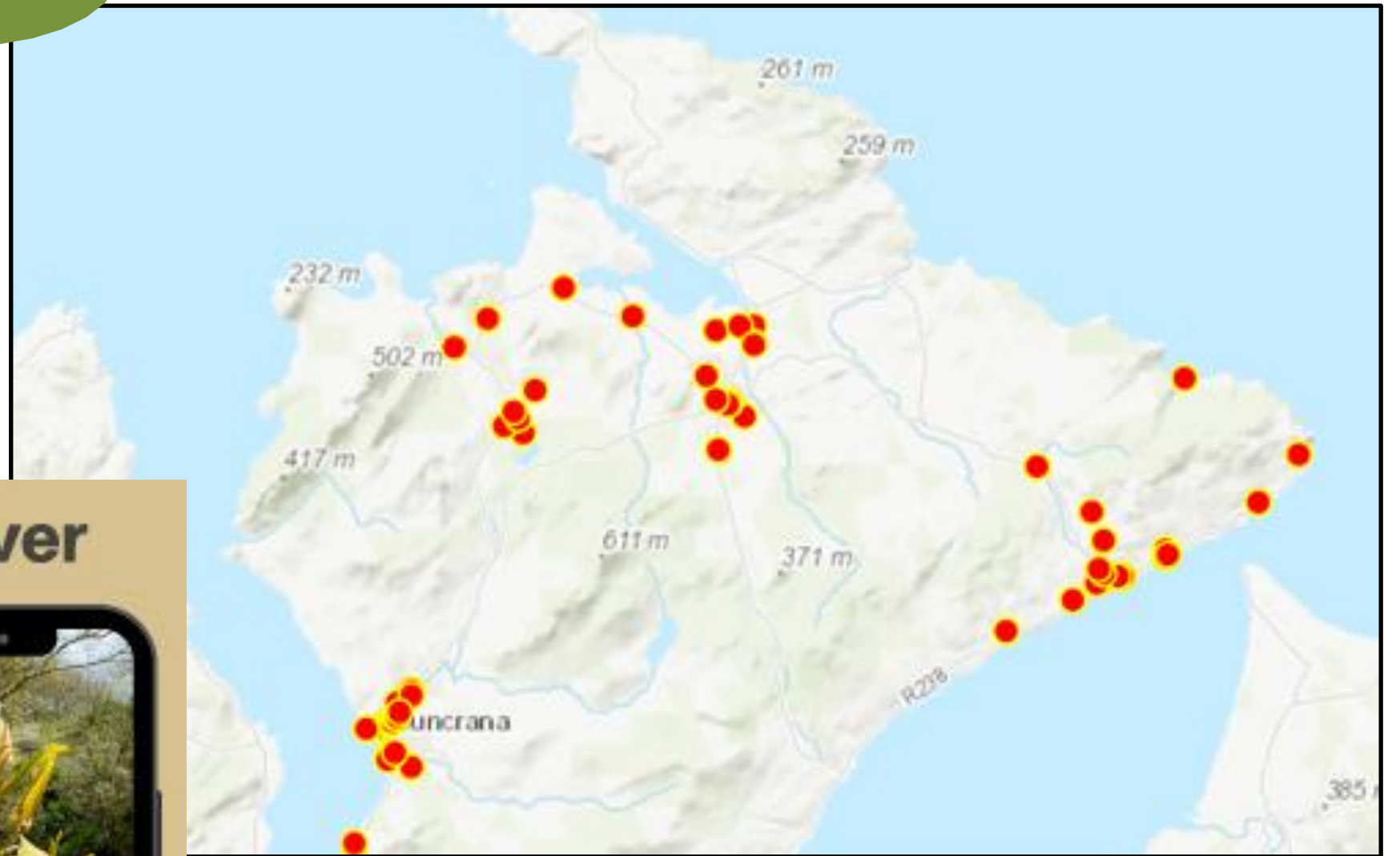
Workshops – include a training element on how to carry out control

Specifications – how to control mostly follows the specs as documented on ACRES Landscape Actions.



Data Capture

Data capture using Survey123 on a smartphone



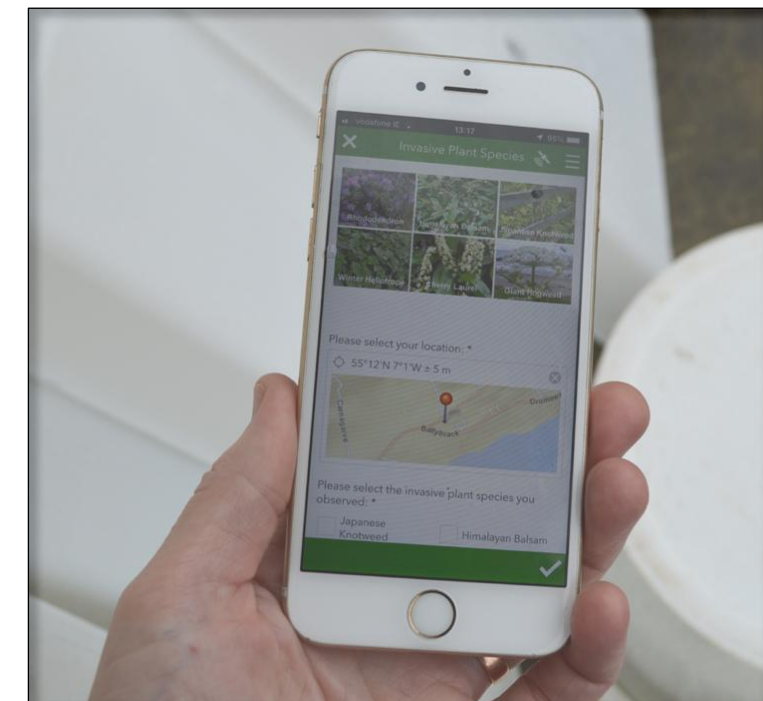
Invasive Species on the Glennagannon River

We are delighted to announce that the Trust has been awarded funding under Donegal County Council's Development Fund Initiative for 2021. This funding will support a project to investigate the extent of the highly invasive Japanese Knotweed on the river and possible non-chemical approaches for control. If you live on the Glennagannon we would love to hear from you. You can submit records of JK on our Invasive Species form. Simply scan the QR code below with your smartphone and start recording. You can also visit the link below or call us and we can come to examine the extent of the invasion!



<https://arcg.is/HreHv>

Inishowen
Invasive Plants



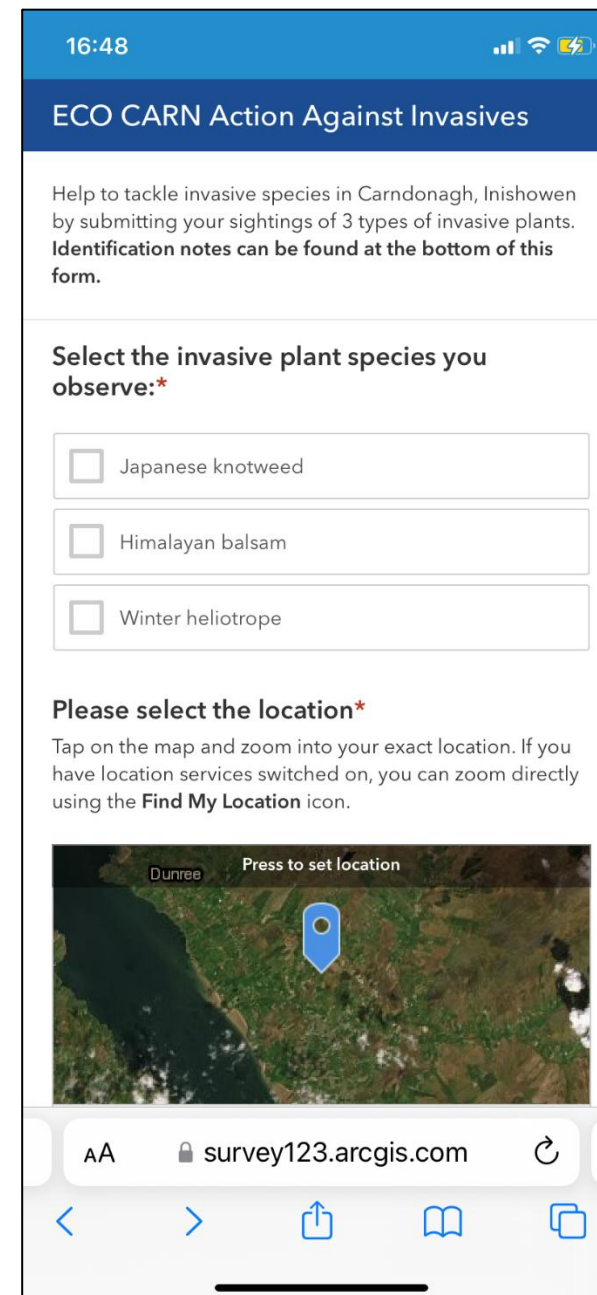
Collaborations

Collaboration with local groups to map invasives in village/urban area. ID Workshops and online forms, advertised online and with leaflets in local shops, agri retail stores etc.

Volunteers submit sightings using online form. Use QR code to access form using a smart phone.



<https://arcg.is/1W1n5L>



Balsam Bashing – Crana River

Community Engagement Project where balsam control was part of a wider project.

- Mapped balsam (and JK)
- 30 volunteers over 3 events
- 12 tons balsam
- 350 mail drops to households & 1500 leaflets on river



HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PLANT?

This is the invasive alien plant species Himalayan balsam. It is an attractive, tall plant which attracts bees but is highly invasive and damaging to our local biodiversity and habitats.

- It is an annual species which favours riverbanks and ditches.
- It spreads rapidly via exploding seed pods. Each plant can produce up to 700 seeds.
- It out-competes many native plants growing up to 10 feet tall
- In the winter when it dies down, it leaves the ground bare which makes the bank more vulnerable to erosion

If you see this plant along the Crana River, let us know using the online, Survey Form Records Himalayan balsam – Crana River (<https://arcg.is/1zLCC90>)

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about the project, contact Sally on 087 090 0862 or Trish on 087 647 8183 inishowenrivertrust@gmail.com www.inishowenrivertrust.com

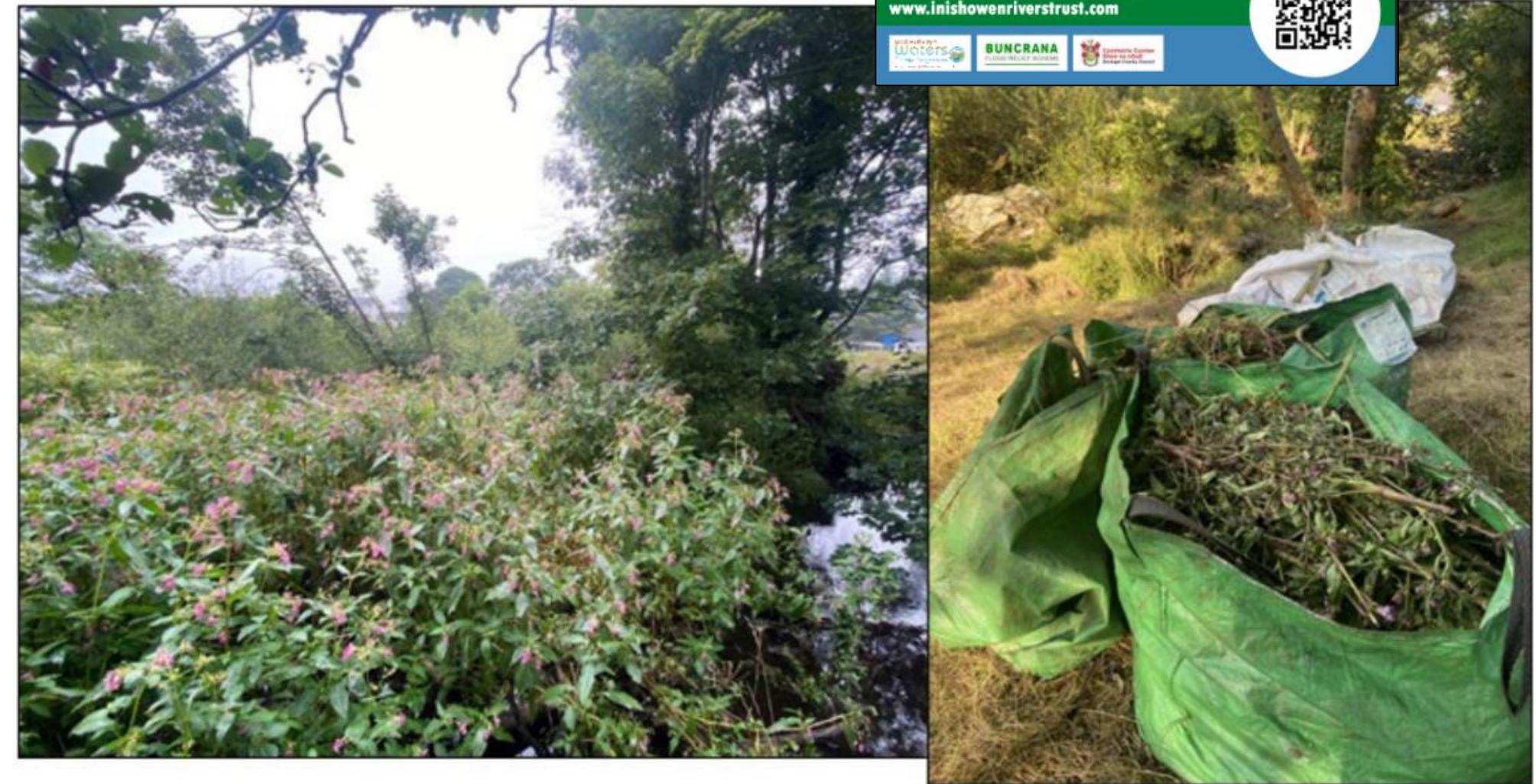


Figure 15: Map showing Himalayan balsam records along the Crana River (area between Magee’s Pool and Cockhill Bridge was almost continuously infested with balsam and not shown on map.)

Chain gang!



Balsam left to dry at high points on the riverbanks and secured with logs



Using kayaks to access more inaccessible part of the riverbanks



Mound of Himalayan balsam composting on site at Magee's in the weeks following the volunteer activities.

Knotweed Novel Organic Treatment (KNOT)



Working with
KPM Soils
(Malin based
consultant)





Treated sites 2021

Control

Using a specially formulated microbially activated compost to treat Japanese Knotweed. Trial experiment with Donegal CoCo using funding from Development Fund Initiative 2021.

Theory is that JK will not survive or is more limited in soils of a higher successional state (e.g. forest, higher fungal content in soils)



- Manufacture compost
- Mulch at base of plants
- Spray leaves with a Compost tea
- Monitor
- Plant native trees in area



An Roinn Caiteachais
Phoiblí agus Athchóirithe
Department of Public
Expenditure and Reform



Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council



OPW
Oifig na
nOibreacha Poiblí
Office of Public Works

Local Authority
Waters
Programme
vibrant communities | catchment assessment | healthy waters



Trials continued with Council using funding awarded through Public Service Innovation Fund 2022.

KPM Soils worked with Council over a further 3 years to demonstrate effectiveness and establish techniques with Council and OPW.

Thank You | Go raibh maith aguish

guardianship
clean waters
donegal **rivers**
restoration **community**
conservation
training