

NOBANIS Newsletter

No 6, October 2012

News from the NOBANIS secretariat

The secretary at NOBANIS, Helene Nyegaard Hvid will be back from her maternity leave on October 8, 2012. Christina Fevejle Nielsen, who has substituted for Helene over the past year, will end her employment on August 31 and would like to take this opportunity to thank all partners for a good collaboration.

News from the NOBANIS website

Remember to use the new section *News* on the front page of the NOBANIS website to keep yourself updated on what goes on at NOBANIS and on upcoming meetings and conferences. If you have news or stories which could be relevant to share in the *News* forum please send it to nobanis@sns.dk.

The photo bank at the website is regularly expanding and now contains photos of more than 30 species and five pathways of introduction. We thank everyone who have contributed with photos and are still interested in receiving photos of species and of actions taken on IAS. If you have photos we can use please send them to nobanis@sns.dk.

Projects by NOBANIS

Risk-mapping for 100 Non-native Species in Europe



This report by NOBANIS, funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers is now available for free at the NOBANIS website (Download a PDF version by following the link at the image of the report).

The report aims at providing NOBANIS countries and other European countries with a useful tool for prioritizing their measures to prevent the introduction of IAS. Recognising which species will become invasive is very difficult. A useful predictor can be the invasiveness in other countries with similar conditions and since few species are able to colonise the full range of climatic conditions in Europe, this pleads for the use of a biogeographic approach when dealing with early warning, rapid response issues. The project further develops the use

of biogeographic regions as a tool for warning European countries when a new, potentially invasive species is under establishment. By mapping the current distribution of 100 selected alien species from terrestrial, brackish and freshwater environments, whose distribution range is expectedly still expanding, risk profiles are created and hence the countries will be able to make national alarm lists for these species. The primary target group of the project is managers in both the cooperating NOBANIS countries and other European countries.

Meetings and congresses

EEA-ESENIAS workshop: Managing Invasive Alien Species in East and South European countries - the way ahead.

ESENIAS (East and South European Network on Invasive Alien Species) was formed in two previous meetings in 2010 and 2011 organized by the EEA/EIONET. The network is composed of the West Balkan countries and their neighbours (Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo under UNSC resolution 1244/99, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey). Visit their website at www.esenias.org.

ESENIAS has invited a representative from NOBANIS to participate in their workshop in September 27-28 2012 in Belgrade, Serbia. Among the objectives of the workshop are establishing a secretariat for ESENIAS, follow up on the initiative to develop a regional inventory, explore options for cooperation with other regional and international organisations such as NOBANIS and the IUCN and in general to agree on the way ahead. NOBANIS looks forward to a close cooperation with ESENIAS in the future.

News from the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, a population of Pallas' squirrels (*Callosciurus erythraeus*) has been removed from the natural environment. The Pallas' squirrels are present in and around the city of Weert (Province of Limburg). The squirrels were captured with live traps and then sterilized and kept in captivity. Not killing the squirrels seemed to contribute significantly to the level of support for this 'eradication campaign'. The campaign started at the 15th of December 2011. The number of captured Pallas' squirrels at 9 March 2012 were 131 Pallas' squirrels (out of an estimated total population size of approximately 175 squirrels). This campaign proves that live traps are an effective method for removing squirrels, as long as the right traps and trapping procedures are being used.

News from Ireland

Be Plant Wise

The *Be Plant Wise* campaign was formally and publicly launched in both Northern Ireland and Ireland on the 08 March 2012. In Northern Ireland, **Mr. Alex Atwood MLA**, the Minister for Environment, launched the campaign. In Ireland, **Mr. Jimmy Deenihan T.D.**, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht launched the campaign.

The key messages in the campaign are:

1. Know what you grow,
2. Stop the spread, and
3. Compost with care.



Materials have been developed for display in garden centres. If you know of a garden centre that wants these materials please get in touch by emailing john@invasivespeciesireland.com. You can find more information on the campaign on the following link:

- <http://invasivespeciesireland.com/what-can-i-do/be-plant-wise/>

The launch was supported with press releases for both Northern Ireland and Ireland:

- [Press release Northern Ireland – 08 March 2012](#)
- [Press release Ireland – 08 March 2012](#)

Be Plant Wise Trail

The National Botanic Gardens, Glasvenin, has established a Be Plant Wise Trail. The plants featured are garden plants that are known to invade habitats in Ireland. The labels feature pictures of the places they have invaded, along with a quick identification guide to the plants themselves. Find out more:

- <http://invasivespeciesireland.com/what-can-i-do/be-plant-wise/be-plant-wise-trail/>

Himalayan Balsam Bash 2012

Himalayan Balsam Bash 2012 is an initiative designed and run by Inland Fisheries Ireland as part of [Fisheries Awareness Week](#).

Himalayan balsam can take over large areas of river bank or damp habitat. As well as causing problems for native species, Himalayan balsam substantially increases the risk of riverbank erosion. It does this by stopping native bank side vegetation growing. The roots of these natives would bind the banks. With just balsam in the autumn, when it dies it leaves only bare soil that is easily eroded and washed away by rain or flood events.

During Fisheries Awareness Week (12 – 20th May '12) Inland Fisheries Ireland was running a number of 'Balsam bashes'. More information can be found on the following website:

- <http://www.faw.ie/himalayan-balsam-bash/>



National Invasive Species Database

Species browser

Have you taken a look at the Species Browser on the National Invasive Species Database? You can find a wealth of information including the date of first record, identified pathways of introduction, habitat data and recorded distribution of many non-native and invasive species. More information is available on the following link:

- <http://apps.biodiversityireland.ie/InvasivesBrowser/>

Spot the Alien

'Spot the Alien' has been re-launched for 2012. The **Spot the Alien** project was set-up to increase awareness of invasive species and to encourage reporting of them with an initial focus on 3 species:

- New Zealand flatworm
- Harlequin ladybird
- Red lily beetle



These species are often introduced into Ireland as 'hitch-hikers' in plant or garden products. To date, there has been a good response in the call for records of these species with the New Zealand flatworm and the red lily beetle being the most recorded species.

- <http://invasives.biodiversityireland.ie/spot-the-alien/>

Invasive Species Alert Tracking Table

Issuing an Invasive Species Alert is a key part of the early warning and rapid response to a new invasive species incursion. The purpose of issuing an invasive species alert is:

- To notify the public and stakeholders of the incursion of a new invasive species.
- An alert is a part of the triggering mechanism for rapid response to a new invasive species.
- To inform the public on what action may be required e.g. preventing further releases.
- Encourage the reporting of additional sightings of the species.

Species alerts are also intended to encourage the sharing of information and highlight the need for implementation of biosecurity measures by all relevant stakeholder groups. Key alerts issued/updated recently include the squirrel pox virus; muntjac deer; and wild boar and hybrids.

For quick reference, we have developed the Alert Tracking Table which summarises the current status of all alerts:

- <http://invasivespeciesireland.com/species-alerts/alert-tracking/>

Update on the harlequin ladybird

Harlequin ladybird larvae and pupae (with adults) have been recorded from two locations in Ireland. Both sightings have been confirmed by Dr. Roy Anderson (Ladybirds of Ireland). *“The establishment of wild populations of harlequin in Ireland is therefore confirmed”* Dr. Anderson.

- The first report was made by Mr. Brian Power on 15/07/2011 near Kildavin Co. Carlow. The larva was crawling on a pear tree in a garden. This species is confirmed as *Harmonia axyridis var. succinea*.
- The second report was made by Mr. John O’ Sullivan but for an earlier date of 19/10/2010 near Centre Park Road, Cork City. Larvae and many pupae were photographed on Griselinia bushes.

Mr. O’ Sullivan saw many harlequin larvae in the same area on the same bushes this year (21/10/2011). The species is confirmed as *Harmonia axyridis var. succinea*.

Following on from this development we would encourage reporting of the harlequin ladybird and also of native ladybird species. The following ID resources may be useful:

- <http://www.habitas.org.uk/ladybirds/>
- <http://invasives.biodiversityireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/Ladybird.pdf>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-14043356>

Projects Database

A small number of projects have been uploaded onto our Projects Database. This is intended to be a tool for every to use. You can find out about what projects are on in your area and also get a feel for some of the projects across both Northern Ireland and Ireland. If you have a relevant project running we'd be interested in hearing from you and possibly including your work on this database. Please submit any projects relevant to Ireland.

- <http://invasivespeciesireland.com/projects/>

Interest to all - new website to help ID crayfish

New website available from Buglife, funded by the Environment Agency. The UK Crayfish website www.crayfish.org.uk brings together up to date information about the UK's only native crayfish, the White-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobuis pallipes*) and its conservation. This website has a range of information of relevance to Ireland and Northern Ireland and also provides information about non-native crayfish species, their impacts and control. The website contains both professional and public channels to ensure that a wide variety of information is available on all aspects and issues relating to crayfish, regardless of what you know or what you want to know about crayfish, there will be something to interest you. This website also hosts information on the identification of crayfish.

<http://www.crayfish.org.uk/>

News from Denmark

Eradication project on signal crayfish (*Pascifastacus leniusculus*)

The signal crayfish (*Pascifastacus leniusculus*) is considered an invasive alien species in Denmark. It is known to compete for space and food with the indigenous noble crayfish (*Astacus astacus*) as well as be a carrier of the crayfish plague which is lethal to the noble crayfish.

In Alling river system in Jutland, Denmark a project aiming to eradicate the introduced signal crayfish has run from 2009 to 2011. Several methods were used for this eradication; Traps and artificial hidings were set up in the river system and nets were used to manually catch the signal crayfish. Additionally more than 3000 predatory fish (perches and trout) and 5000 noble crayfish were released in the river. At total of more than 80000 signal crayfish were caught within the three years. The results showed that not only did the numbers of caught signal crayfish decrease during the project period but the specimens were in average smaller in size than when the project was initiated.

A lot of the work including checking the traps regularly and catching crayfish in nets were done by volunteers.

Though it has proven difficult to fully eradicate the signal crayfish the project was considered a success and contributed to an enhanced knowledge on eradication of signal crayfish which is important for future projects.

New Danish management plan for American mink (*Neovison vison*)

The American mink (*Neovison vison*) is considered an invasive alien species in Denmark. It was introduced to Denmark in the 1930's to be bred at mink farms and the feral population originates from escaped animals. Today the species is widely distributed all across the country and hence it is not considered possible to successfully eradicate the entire population. It is feasible though to regulate the population within certain limited areas. The management plan rests on a geographically focused effort and an application of more efficient regulation methods. A number of prioritized areas which require special focus will be selected. The criteria for selection are:

- seriously threatened habitats (for example Natura 2000, breeding sanctuaries and protected areas)
- registered negative impact of mink on for example ground-nesting birds
- possibilities for recruitment of volunteers
- possibly the occurrence of monitoring

The management plan will be evaluated during 2013 with special reference to the applicability and efficiency of the methods applied.



News from Sweden

The Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management is behind a new proposal to ban import of live American lobster (*Homarus americanus*) to Sweden. American lobster is considered potentially invasive in Sweden and invasive in Norway and lately it has become more frequent in Swedish waters. The American lobster poses a threat to the native European lobster (*Homarus gammarus*), due to the coinciding living conditions which can lead to competition on food and space as well as to the several highly contagious diseases they carry. These diseases have not yet been detected in Swedish waters though. In addition laboratory experiments have shown that the American lobster hybridizes with the European and if it also does so in wild conditions, it can have negative genetic consequences for the European lobster in Swedish and other European waters. In 2003 Sweden introduced a similar ban on import of live freshwater crayfish as a measure to prevent the spread of the IAS signal crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus*) and the crayfish plague (*Aphanomyces astaci*) that knocks out the indigenous noble crayfish (*Astacus astacus*).

For serious importers with the proper measures to prevent lobsters from escaping to the wild, it is suggested that it will be possible to obtain a certificate to continue import. It is not yet known when the ban will enter into force.

The full article from the Swedish newspaper Expressen (in Swedish):

<http://www.expressen.se/debatt/stopp-mot-amerikansk-hummer-nodvandigt/>