EASTERN UP INVASIVE: Himalayan Balsam

Purpose:

**Himalayan Balsam** (Impatiens glandulifera)

**CONTROL METHOD**

Mechanical control, by repeated cutting, mowing, or grazing, is effective for large stands. Himalayan balsam can be controlled by spraying the foliage with glyphosate. The plants should be treated in the spring before flowering. Do not disturb plants if seeds pods are visible.

**WHY THE CONCERN?**

Planted as an ornamental, Himalayan balsam (Impatiens glandulifera) is a non-native flower. It competes heavily with native species and alters the behavior and composition of pollinating insects. If allowed to monopolize a streambank, Himalayan balsam’s shallow roots can lead to erosion.

**FEATURES OF HIMALAYAN BALSAM**

This plant grows 3-6ft tall with showy pink flowers reminiscent of orchids. The stems are hollow and smooth with a purple or reddish tinge. Ripe seed capsules explode when touched. The native species jewelweed is a look-alike with orange flowers.

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*Photos courtesy of Barbara Tokarska-Guzik, University of Silesia, and Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org*