

# Himalayan Balsam

Extracted from <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/content/planning/environment/3213238/>



## Key Features

### Stems

- Pinky red colour
- Up to 3 metres tall
- Hollow and jointed
- Sappy and brittle

### Leaves

- Spear shaped
- Shiny and dark green with a dark red midrib
- Up to 150mm long
- Arranged opposite on stems or in whorls of three

### Flowers

- Purplish pink to pale pinks
- Slipper shaped on long stalks
- Appear June-October

### Hazard to Health

- No part of plant is poisonous

### Action if Found

- **Chemical Control:** Can use glyphosate or 2, 4-D amine. Need to be used while plant is actively growing in early spring for best effect.
- **Cutting/mowing/strimming:** Cut at ground level using a scythe, before the flowering stage in June. Do not cut earlier as this promotes greater seed production in any plants that regrow. Cutting should be repeated annually until no more growth occurs.
- **Pulling:** Shallow rooted plants can be pulled up very easily and disposed of by burning or composting, unless seeds are present.
- **Grazing:** Grazing by cattle and sheep is effective from April throughout the growing season. It should be continued until no new growth occurs.

## Dangerous plant found in Stroud

A dangerous plant has been found growing on one of Stroud's public green spaces.



The giant hogweed plant has been discovered in an area of The Long Ground off Cainscross Road.

The area has now been fenced-off whilst specialist advice is taken for its safe and effective removal.

Stroud Town Council has issued a warning to be on the lookout for the plant, which has also been reported at nearby Stratford Park.

"This is the first time we've found this plant on one of our sites," said town Clerk Sue Creswick.

"The Painswick Stream runs through The Long Ground and we believe it has arrived from water borne seeds.

"There have been reports of the plant further up the river at Pitchcombe and we would urge all landowners to ensure its safe removal before it becomes a real problem."

Severe blistering

The giant hogweed stands up to five metres tall, with coffee-table sized leaves and giant flower heads.

They spread only by seed, but each individual can bear up to 80,000 seeds, making them very successful propagators.

It was introduced by Victorians as a spectacular addition to their gardens.

However its sap causes severe blistering on contact with a person's skin followed by exposure to sunlight.

People are advised not to touch the plant.

Mostly found along river banks, landowners have a legal responsibility to prevent the spread of this plant, to protect the public from exposure to it and dispose of it correctly.

Source: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/gloucestershire/hi/people\\_and\\_places/nature/newsid\\_8757000/8757767.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/gloucestershire/hi/people_and_places/nature/newsid_8757000/8757767.stm)