

Environment Standard Operating Procedure 18

Parrots Feather Control

Waterways of the Broads have unique and important water plant communities. Working practices aim to prevent the spread of non-native invasive plant species and minimise their impact on native species and the waterways.

Aim

To control and eliminate current stands of Parrots Feather; and to prevent the spread of this plant in the undertaking of bankside operations.

Environmental Risk

Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
Spreading fragments within site	High	No works during high flow, use nets to stop fragments
Existing stands could out compete native plants	High	Control existing stands
Disturbance of water vole habitat	Medium	Pre-works survey



Delivery Method

- If new small outbreaks occur in priority areas, it should be eliminated immediately, treat with herbicide (See ESOP 16).
- Avoid fragments floating away by using hand-held nets to collect pieces or net across the whole channel downstream in high flow areas.
- Ensure that all equipment and PPE is cleaned to avoid spreading between sites.

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Standard Procedure

- Environment Officer to develop the most appropriate control method: usually manual extraction (hand pulling) and/or spraying (see below), with mechanical removal as the least favoured option.
- Establish if water voles are using the area to be cleared. If so, bank side clearance should only occur in April and September (see ESOP 10).
- Repeat method several times in a season (hand-pulling all year round, spraying April–October).
- Continue to check for re-growth and spread, until one whole year after no re-growth is seen.
- **Hand Pulling:**
 - When hand-pulling ensure the whole plant is removed – leaves, stems AND root
 - No roots to be left in the bank. If resistance is felt when gently pulling – STOP. Feel down the stem until the rather brittle roots can be removed
 - Pulled material either removed from site in bags to be burned in a controlled environment, or placed on impermeable membrane on site, allowed to dry out and burnt
- **Herbicide Spraying:**
 - Foliar spray each plant with glyphosate mix using the adjuvant Topfilm
 - This will ensure no native plants and/or animals are affected by the herbicide

Consultation Required

- Environment Agency – Herbicide application near water (see ESOP 15)
- Natural England – Control of species on designated sites

Further Information

<http://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/nonnativespecies/parrotsfeather.aspx>

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/>

http://www.ceh.ac.uk/sci_programmes/documents/ParrotsFeather.pdf