



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Pilot Non-native Species Inspectorate

Iain Henderson

Non-native Species Secretariat
Animal and Plant Health Agency

Requirements of IAS Regulations

- Article 8: Ensure inspections are carried out by competent authorities to ensure compliance with permits.
- Article 13: Put in place action plans to address priority pathways of introduction.
- Article 15: Put in place official controls to prevent intentional introduction of listed species.
- Article 17: Respond within three months to detection of listed species to eradicate them.

- Action plans required for the following:-
 - raising awareness;
 - minimising contamination of goods, commodities, vehicles and equipment by specimens of invasive alien species.
 - ensuring appropriate checks at the United Kingdom's borders, other than the official controls pursuant to Article 15.

Background

- 2018 – Programme Board asks the Non-native Species Secretariat to explore the need for, potential roles, working and costs of a non-native species inspectorate.
- 2019 - Environmental Audit Committee of the House of Commons holds an inquiry into invasive species and makes a series of strong recommendations including creating a dedicated INNS inspectorate by the end of 2020.
- 2020 – Funding for six-month desk-based scoping study investigating sectors identified as posing particular risk, examining how existing inspectorates currently function, and how they could adapt to support the control of non-native species.

Details of work in 2020 – what was done

1. An investigation of the sectors that pose significant risk, assessing:
 - a. The ‘volumes’ of each sector (boating, angling, zoos etc.)
 - b. The approximate risks posed by each of these sectors
 - c. How much staff time it would take to adequately inspect each sector
 - d. What, if any, extra powers would be needed

2. An investigation of existing inspectorates, assessing:
 - a. Staff numbers, geographical coverage, taxonomic and other expertise, roles etc.
 - b. If existing inspectorates could cover potential INNS inspection roles

Details of work in 2020 – how it was done

- Collection of information from wide range of NGOs including RSPCA, Angling Trust, British Canoeing, Royal Yachting Association, Hawk Board.
- Some information provided by private individuals e.g. on escapes of falconry birds.
- Wherever possible the information provided by third parties was validated and reinforced by internet searches.
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Review of relevant literature
- Discussions with other inspectorates in Great Britain

Sectors identified:

- AT THE BORDER
- Boats
- Anglers
- Containers/Contaminants

- EVENTS
- Trade fairs
- Angling events
- Boating events

Sectors identified

- POST-BORDER
- Exotic pet owners
- Animal rescue centres
- Zoos
- Garden centres and nurseries
- Butterfly farms
- Falconry
- Exotic waterfowl
- Online sales
- Deliberate releases

Formation of pilot Inspectorate April 2021

- Step change – inspections on the ground for first time
- 3.6 FTE equivalents
- The main aim of the 2021-22 INNS Inspectorate pilot work was to attempt to fill in the significant gaps in our knowledge that remained following the scoping work of 2020 by carrying out inspections and investigations across a wide range of sectors. In particular to investigate the following.....

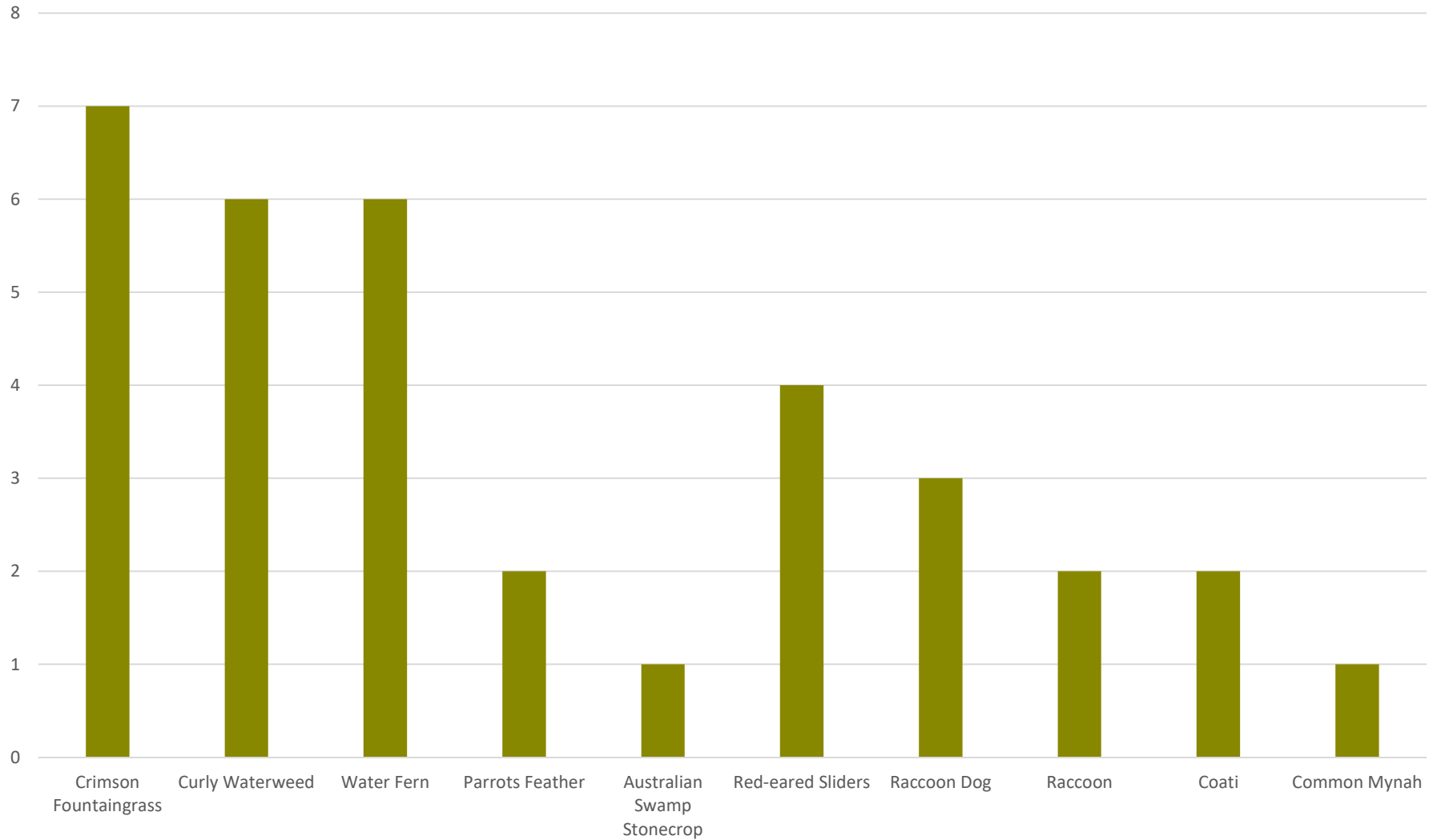
Filling in the gaps.....

1. The levels of contamination in certain sectors
2. The practicalities associated with inspections
3. The time that individual inspections/investigations would take
4. The inspection rates needed for some sectors
5. How an INNS inspectorate would interact with existing inspectorates and other government agencies
6. Geographical scope/needs
7. The likely level of compliance with a voluntary/advisory approach
8. The need for extra powers and the prioritising of these
9. The level of involvement an INNS inspectorate should have in contingency and rapid responses.

Results from 2021/22

- Widespread lack of awareness of IAS Regulations across a wide range of sectors.
- There were 22 (14%) cases of legal non-compliance identified involving five different sectors: garden centres, pet shops, exotic waterfowl, animal rescue centres, and ZOOS.
- Online sales is a particular problem. The inspectorate found 40 listings (involving 10 different listed species for sale online and this is probably the tip of an iceberg.

Cases of Legal Non-compliance by species



Existing powers

- Currently held in respect of IAS Order (2019) covering 66 species of plant and animal.
- Powers to enter (but not private dwellings), take samples, and seize animals if “reasonable grounds to suspect” an offence.
- Authorised by Scottish Government to use some WCA powers and in consultation with Defra to receive similar powers in England.

Specific problems with animals

- Identifying exotic pet owners – very secretive for high-risk species e.g. raccoons and raccoon dogs.
- Animal rescue centres – many do not hold correct permit for Species of Special Concern e.g. raccoons, raccoon dogs, coatis.



Specific problems with plants

- Taxonomic confusion
- Distinguishing closely related species e.g. *Elodea densa* and *Elodea nuttallii*
- Poor labelling in garden centres e.g. to genus level only
- Poor understanding of legislation e.g. continued sale of Species of Special Concern (e.g. *Myriophyllum aquaticum*) and species banned under WCA (e.g. *Crassula helmsii* and *Azolla filiculoides*)



British Waterways and RPS Group plc

Working in partnership

- The inspectorate works closely with a wide range of governmental and NDPB on non-native species issues:-

Defra, Welsh Government, Scottish Government, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, NatureScot, CEFAS, SASA, Border Force.

- Also forging links with other inspectorates to avoid duplication of work, particularly Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate.

The future

- Funding obtained for gradual increase in size over next three years. A fully-formed inspectorate is expected to have around 20 FTEs.
- Need to recruit staff with appropriate skills and identify additional support where required e.g. eDNA analysis of water samples, high-level botanical skills
- Need training in gathering of evidence if prosecutions a possibility.
- Role in contingency and rapid responses e.g. Baccharis removal, Acrobat ant removal in 2021/22

With particular thanks to.....



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