Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust

Invasive Non-Native Species and Biosecurity

Peter Savage – Canal Project Adviser
Cotswold Canals Connected

Wilder Frome Community Event, Thursday 4th September 2025

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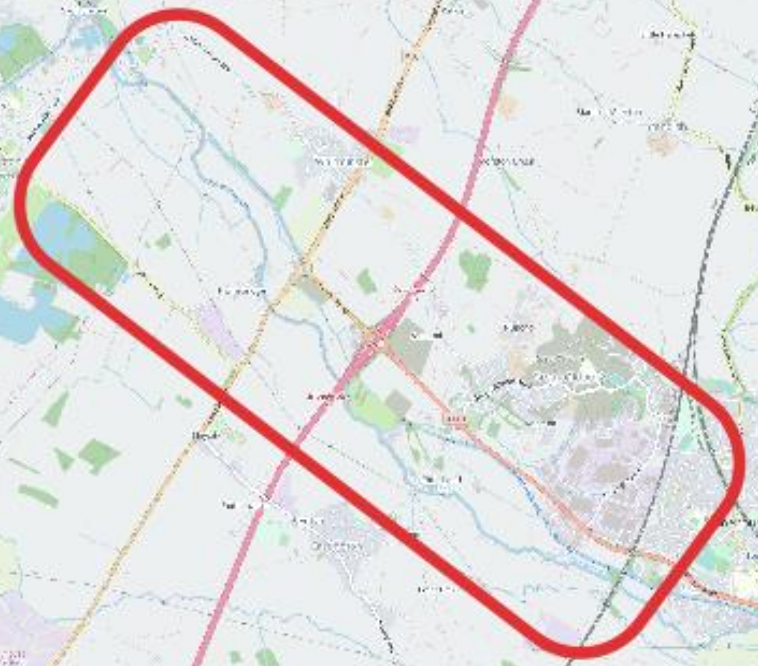
Cotswold Canals Connected Phase 1b



- River Frome and Cotswold Canals have close relationship and share channel
- CCC Project Between Saul Junction and The Ocean Railway Bridge, Stonehouse
- Partnership project – Stroud District Council & Cotswold Canals Trust
- Other partners – GCC, SVP, SNAC, STT, CBM
- GWT advise on environment and lead on biodiversity sites

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INNS

Image - Didier Descouens

- **Himalayan Balsam**
- **Japanese Knotweed**
- **Giant Hogweed**
- **Signal Crayfish**
- **American Mink**

Floating Pennywort, Rabbit, Buddleia, Orange Balsam, Zander, Muntjac, Demon Shrimp, Asian Hornet, Sycamore, Grey Squirrel,

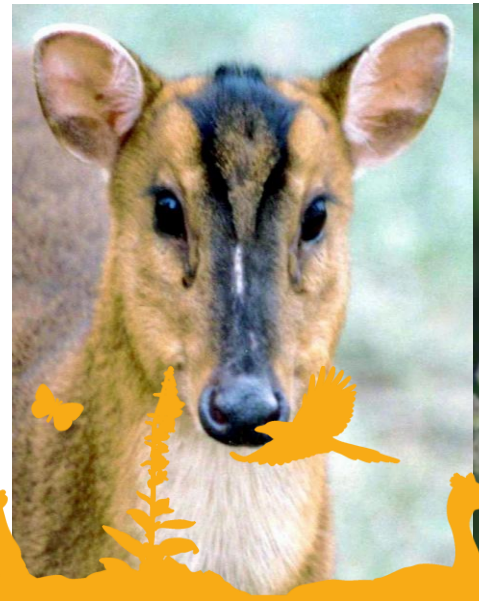

Image - Clare Gray

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Himalayan Balsam

Impatiens glandulifera

- **Distinguishable features**
- **Grows and spreads very quickly**
- **Seed head ‘pop’ and get fired several metres**
- **Outcompetes native plants**
- **Annual - Increases erosion on riverbanks**
- **Pull plants from the base**
- **Rust Fungus being trialed**
- **Common throughout Frome catchment**
- **‘Downstream’ of Chalford on Thames and Severn Canal**
- **Seeds can travel on clothing**

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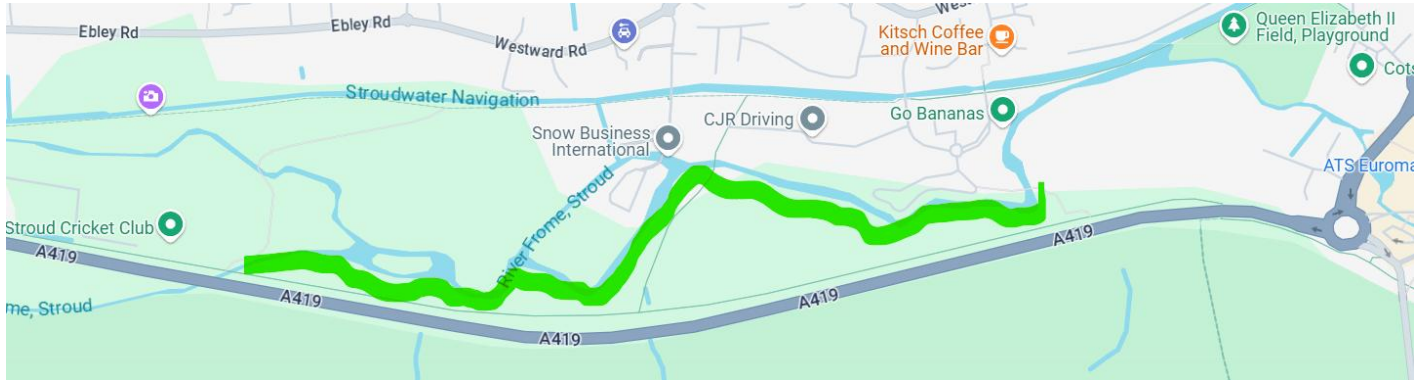
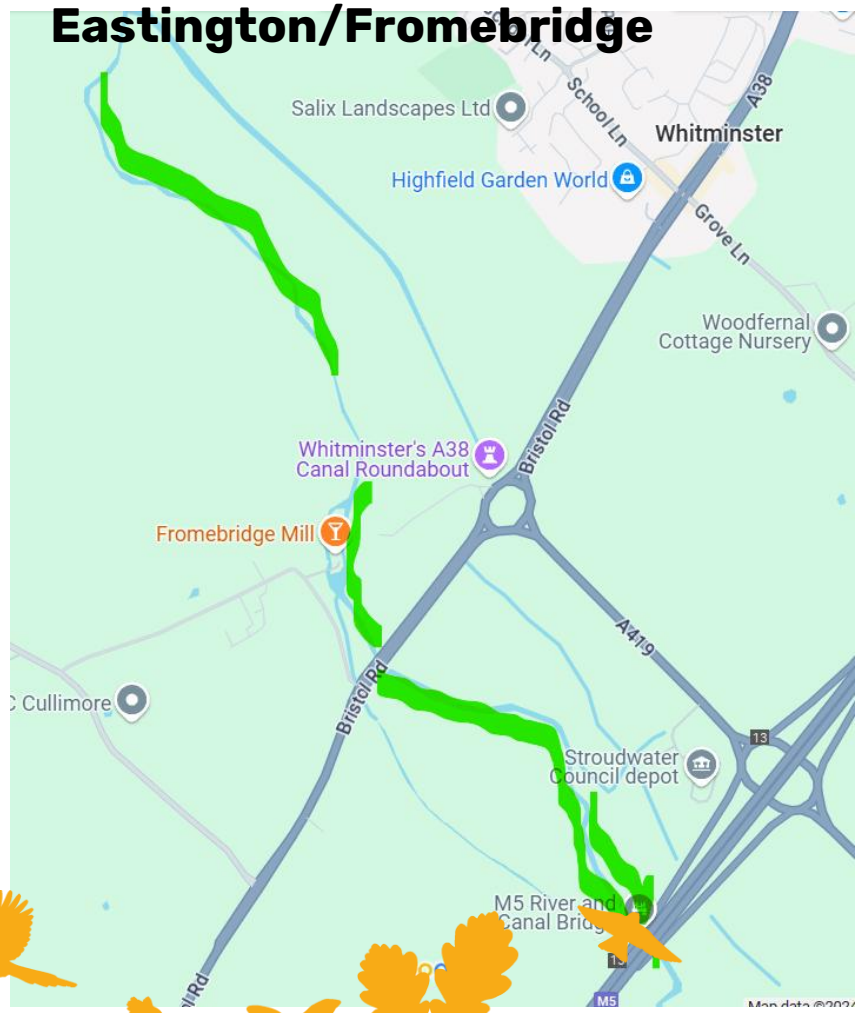
Himalayan Balsam

Stroud Valleys Project and Cotswold Canals Connected – Volunteer Pulling Efforts on the Frome

Frome at Ebley



Frome at Eastington/Fromebridge



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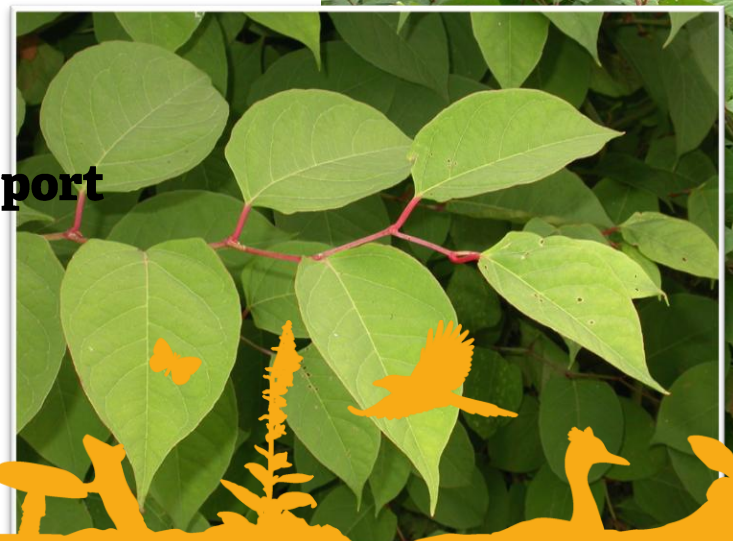
Japanese Knotweed

Fallopia japonica

Images - Philip Precey

- Distinguishable features
- Invasive – very fast growing
- Very large – shrubby plant
- Mostly female plants in the UK
- Spreads underground
- Rhizomes grow several metres
- Present in upper Frome catchment
- Needs specialist treatment – record and report
- Can lay dormant for several years



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Giant Hogweed

Heracleum mantegazzianum

- **Distinguishable features**
- **Umbellifer – Carrot family**
- **Very large – up to 5m tall**
- **Spreads via seeds – successful germination rate**
- **Phototoxic - causes phytophotodermatitis**
- **Pain lasts for several days**
- **Affected area can last years**
- **Needs specialist treatment – record and report**
- **Found near Frome and canal – Ebley and Eastington**

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Image: Bruce Shortland

Signal Crayfish

Pacifastacus leniusculus

- **Distinguishable features**
- **Outcompetes native species and carries crayfish plague**
- **Introduced from North America as a food source**
- **Illegal to exchange live in the UK**
- **Prevalent in Frome catchment including canal**
- **Plague is carried via clothing, equipment and dogs**

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American Mink

Neovison vison

- **Distinguishable features**
- **Brought to the UK for fur production**
- **Escapee/intentional release? 1950's**
- **Harmful to critically endangered water vole populations**
- **Can go down burrows, and dive underwater**
- **Countrywide eradication programmes**

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Thank You for Listening

Any Questions?

Peter Savage – Canal Project Adviser

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