

## **HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PLANT?**

Himalayan Balsam is an introduced plant that has escaped from gardens and is rapidly colonising river banks and other areas of damp ground. It is an annual plant that forms dense stands which suppress the growth of grasses and native British plants leaving the banks bare of vegetation in autumn and winter and liable to erosion. As the plant grows annually from seed, any form of control carried out after the seed pods have formed will have no long term benefit.



### **HIMALAYAN BALSAM:**

- **is common on river banks**
- **has reddish coloured stems**
- **has dark green lance shaped leaves with jagged edges**
- **has large, brightly coloured flowers that are usually in variable shades of purplish-pink**
- **flowers from June to October**
- **grows up to 2m in height**
- **each plant lasts for one year and dies at the end of the growing season**
- **can produce around 2,500 seeds per plant each year**
- **has explosive seed pods that throw seeds over 6m away from the original plant.**

The plant is easy to cut if it can be reached, but often grows in more difficult places to get to. If it can be cut down to near ground level or pulled out completely for 2 years running, the plants should disappear unless seeds are spread via the watercourse.

If you see this plant and can easily cut it down or pull it out before the seeds are spread please do so. If there are too many plants to deal with or they are not easily reached, please let your Parish Clerk know.