

Off-track – Management of invasive and hazardous weeds

Scope Includes: Management of invasive and hazardous weeds on Network Rail controlled infrastructure
Excludes:

Preparation

Tools, equipment and plant items required but not limited to:

- Scythe
- Sickle
- Gloves
- Face mask
- Weed wipe
- Knapsack sprayer
- Controlled Droplet Applicator

Work planning considerations:

- Weather conditions
- Access over 3rd party land
- Environmental/legislative restricted areas
- All operations shall ordinarily be undertaken during daylight hours.
- A site inspection (in daylight) before commencement of work.
- Pre-notification requirements

• Invasive and hazardous weeds

The following weeds are considered invasive and hazardous for the purposes of this document.

Name	Latin name
common ragwort *	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
broad leaved dock *	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
curled dock *	<i>Rumex crispus</i>
spear thistle *	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
creeping thistle *	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Japanese knotweed **	<i>Fallopia japonica</i>
giant hogweed **	<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>
buddleia	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>
giant knotweed	<i>Fallopia sachalinensis</i>
hybrid knotweed	<i>Fallopia × bohemica</i>
Himalayan balsam	<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>
field horsetail	<i>Equisetum arvense</i>
rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>

Species marked * are listed in The Weeds Act 1959

Species marked ** are listed in The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

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Method

Methods of control shall be selected based on the operative's competency, experience, weather and time of year.

1. Weeds listed in the Weeds Act 1959

- Thistles
Where specified, spot treatment with suitable herbicide shall be undertaken
Manual cutting before opening of flower buds (no later than mid-July)
- Docks
Where specified, spot treatment with suitable herbicide shall be undertaken
- Common Ragwort
Before and during flowering (no later than mid-August), where specified, spot treatment with suitable herbicide shall be undertaken
Where herbicide treatment has not been possible and control of spread is required, hand pulling of the whole plant including the root shall be undertaken
Avoid skin contact with the plant or inhalation of the pollen

2. Weeds listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Cut material from these species shall be left where it was growing or shall be disposed of at a licensed landfill site

- Japanese Knotweed
Growth > 1.0 metre tall shall be cut and laid over the cut stumps
Growth < 1.0 metre tall shall be treated with suitable herbicide
Where possible and where plant growth does not affect safety, herbicide application should take place in August/September
- Giant Hogweed
Growth > 1.0 metre tall shall be cut and laid over the cut stumps
Growth < 1.0 metre tall shall be treated with suitable herbicide
Flowering heads or mature seed heads shall be covered with a plastic sack, severed, and disposed of at a licensed landfill site
Avoid skin contact with the plant's sap

3. Other invasive and hazardous weeds

- Giant and hybrid knotweed
Growth shall be controlled as detailed for Japanese knotweed
- Himalayan balsam
Early spring – treatment with a suitable herbicide as plant is in active growing phase
Before and during flowering – cut at ground level and lay over stumps no earlier than June
After flowering – no work as seeds will be readily dispersed
- Field horsetail
Growth shall be extensively bruised using a stiff brush, grass roller, or similar tool then treated with a suitable herbicide