

# Invasive non-native plant species undermining the biodiversity health of Boggart Hole Clough Ancient Woodland



Rhododendron 23.1.2021



Himalayan Balsam 15.8.2015



Japanese Knotweed 13.9.2013

The Clough is an *Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland*, described by Natural England as “irreplaceable” & of “prime ecological & landscape importance.”

However, the *Boggart Hole Clough Biodiversity Management Plan* (Ecology Services UK Ltd, 2007), commissioned by Manchester City Council (MCC), reported that the woodland is in an “unfavourable condition” & on page 16 states: “The factors contributing to the unfavourable condition of the woodland .. are currently a high proportion of non-native tree and shrub species within the woodlands as well as .. invasive non-native species ..” This *Plan* can be seen on FoBHC’s website - [www.boggart.org.uk](http://www.boggart.org.uk)

The “invasive non-native species” which are smothering natural woodland plants are Rhododendron (primarily *R. Ponticum*), Himalayan Balsam & Japanese Knotweed - see photos on left, taken in the Clough.

Having already identified this ecological problem, in 2002 FoBHC volunteer conservationists began removing Rhododendron & Himalayan Balsam to help restore the woodland’s biodiversity health.

But, learning through experience that removing the growing swathes of these invasive non-native plants was beyond the capacity of volunteers, in 2013 we ceased this activity & concentrated on trying to persuade MCC to employ a team of properly paid & trained woodland conservationists to carry out this essential work.

We also continue monitoring the woodland & raising awareness re the woodland’s *unfavourable condition* & the urgent need for ongoing nature conservation management.

**Free Natural History Walks** every Saturday starting 10am outside the Lakeside Café with walk around the Lake carrying out our Weekly Waterbirds Survey. Walks on other days by arrangement. Manchester City Council covid rules, e.g. re physical distancing, are observed.  
FoBHC info: [www.boggart.org.uk](http://www.boggart.org.uk) ~ [facebook.com/boggart.org.uk](https://www.facebook.com/boggart.org.uk)

