

Press release: Invasive non-native plant species found in Derbyshire brook

American Skunk Cabbage, one of the hundreds of invasive non-native species which threaten Britain's native plants and animals, has been found in the East Midlands area for the first time, at Thulston Brook in Derby.

The invasive plant species is native to north-western America and was originally introduced to the UK at the beginning of the 20th century as an ornamental plant in gardens. Since then it has spread and established large populations across the UK.

The ornamental bog plant has big yellow flowers and emits a strong skunk-like odour. Its large leaves form dense colonies, over-shading native plants and impacting other water life. Once established, American Skunk Cabbage can spread quickly. Infestations can dominate large areas and crowd out native species in important habitats such as wet woodlands.

Officers from the [Environment Agency](#) in the East Midlands are working to eradicate the invasive species by removing the flower heads to prevent them seeding and spreading.

Louise Hill, Biodiversity Officer at the Environment Agency said:

We are working to eradicate the American Skunk Cabbage from Thulston Brook before it becomes too established.

Invasive non-native species pose one of the biggest threats to our environment by outcompeting native species, altering the status quo and introducing disease. It is important we tackle invasive non-native species such as American Skunk Cabbage to protect our country's native plants.

In 2016, American Skunk Cabbage was banned from sale in the UK. Now gardeners are being urged to make sure that they ["Be Plant Wise"](#), dispose of plants correctly and ensure they do not discard this species in the natural environment.

Invasive Species Week

This week (13 to 17 May 2019) is [Invasive Species Week](#) and the Environment Agency is working with organisations across the UK to raise awareness of invasive non-native species to help prevent their spread, to protect the environment and recreational spaces for future generations to enjoy.