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## **Mission 'Inns-possible' – Trust's gravity defying methods to manage invasive species**

What could've been confused for a scene from an action-packed Hollywood blockbuster was just a normal day for the National Trust for Scotland, as its specialists abseiled down the sides of a perilous gorge to tackle invasive plant species at a Highlands beauty spot.

The gravity defying feat was undertaken to tackle the invasive non-native species (INNS), including Japanese knotweed and *Rhododendron ponticum*, that had established itself in the crags of the 60m deep gorge at Corrieshalloch Gateway to Nature. The National Nature Reserve in Wester Ross is one of eight reserves cared for by the conservation charity across the country.

Property and conservation staff surveyed the gorge identifying sites where invasive plants had established themselves on the vertical cliff sides. Specialist rope access contractors have been deployed to wipeout the invasive plants by different methods - mainly using stem treatment to apply a targeted dose of herbicide.

The INNS project at Corrieshalloch is supported by funds raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery and awarded by Postcode Earth Trust. It follows the publication of the National Trust for Scotland's new Plan for Nature, which sets out its ambitions to conserve the nature in its care, which the Trust has special responsibility for. The plan outlines the actions the charity will undertake to address INNS which have been identified as a main driver of nature loss in Scotland.

Rob Dewar, National Trust for Scotland INNS Project Officer, said: "Our work at Corrieshalloch is part of our ongoing nature conservation to remove invasive non-native species and demonstrates the extreme lengths we go to, to protect the places in our care. These gravity defying feats are undertaken by our rope access specialists who support our conservation efforts in these hard-to-reach places where these species can quickly establish themselves, like on the vertiginous sides of the gorge.

"The National Trust for Scotland's INNS work is focused on eradicating invasive non-native plants, including Japanese knotweed, American skunk cabbage and *Rhododendron ponticum*. The work helps to tackle these species and protect native flora from being crowded out of their natural habitat to safeguard the biodiversity of Scotland's wild landscapes.

“It is thanks to the continued generosity of our members and supporters, including players of People’s Postcode Lottery, that we’re able to continue our vital work to care for and protect Scotland’s natural heritage at this special place for everyone to enjoy, now and into the future.”

Players of People’s Postcode Lottery have supported the conservation charity’s Love Our Nature project since 2022 which benefited from £900k last year. Further funding will support nature conservation work across a variety of different habitats including coastal and marine areas, peatlands, wetlands, woodland, and the eight National Nature Reserves cared for by the Trust.

Head of Charities at [People’s Postcode Lottery](https://www.postcode.org/), Laura Chow, said: “Players of People’s Postcode Lottery will be delighted to know that they are supporting the important work of the National Trust for Scotland to protect the biodiversity of our country’s beautiful landscapes. Tackling invasive non-native species is vital to ensure the survival of our native plant-life by protecting the natural habitats in which they thrive.”

Players of People’s Postcode Lottery have now raised over £3.4m since 2014 to support the National Trust for Scotland. The funds are awarded through Postcode Earth Trust.

The Love Our Nature project supports the National Trust for Scotland’s vision to care for, protect and share Scotland’s nature, beauty and heritage for everyone, as outlined in its 10-year strategy, launched in 2022. For more information on the National Trust for Scotland, visit [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk).

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to Editor:**

**Images:** <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/CsdQk494c0>

[National Trust for Scotland Plan for Nature](#) - Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Actions:

- The Trust will remove the six most troublesome non-native invasive plants from its estate: Rhododendron Ponticum, Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed, Salmonberry, Skunk Cabbages and New Zealand Broadleaf. The Trust will also liaise with neighbours to promote control and coordinate this work. It will gradually remove non-native invasive shrubs where they are protecting gardens from coastal spray.
- A risk-based monitoring programme will be in place for the above six INNS, to identify recolonisation events, and undertake follow up control, before the problem increases significantly.
- The Trust will review new, emerging INNS threats. The focus will remain on directing resources towards a short list of high priority species, in order that

progress can be made against those which are most invasive and have the highest ecological impact.

### **About the National Trust for Scotland**

Established in 1931, the National Trust for Scotland is Scotland's largest conservation charity and cares for, shares and speaks up for Scotland's magnificent heritage. Over the last 90 years the Trust has pioneered public access to and shared ownership of some of the most magnificent buildings, collections and landscapes in Scotland. It cares for more than 100 sites, from ancient houses to battlefields, castles, mills, gardens, coastlines, islands, mountain ranges and the plants and animals which depend upon them.

In March 2022 the National Trust for Scotland launched Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone, its ten-year strategy which sets out the ambitions of the charity over the coming decade. From speaking up for Scotland's heritage which doesn't have a voice, to improving the lives and wellbeing of people across the country, and responding to the climate and biodiversity crisis, the Trust will build on its work in recent years to grow its impact and conserve and restore more of Scotland's heritage, as it moves towards its centenary in 2031.

Scotland's largest membership organisation, the National Trust for Scotland relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work. For more information on the National Trust for Scotland visit [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk). The National Trust for Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410.