

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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TRUST'S NATIONWIDE EFFORT TO WIPE OUT NON-NATIVE PLANTS

IMAGES: Contractors at work at Balmacara and Torridon, removing invasive plant species - <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/8133Sk>

The National Trust for Scotland is getting back to its vital conservation work this month, beginning a nationwide effort to eradicate invasive plants.

The conservation charity had paused all projects because of the coronavirus pandemic which hit in March this year.

With lockdown restrictions continuing to ease, the charity has now commenced its biggest ever push to eradicate invasive plants, including Japanese Knotweed, American Skunk Cabbage and Rhododendron ponticum.

'Project Wipeout', will cover sites spanning Scotland over the next year, from Torridon in the North West Highlands, to Culzean Country Park in Ayrshire. The work is generously funded by the players of People's Postcode Lottery, the Nature Scot Biodiversity Challenge Fund and Baillie Gifford.

Contractors are already onsite at Kintail removing Rhododendron ponticum and at Balmacara and Torridon, while at Corrieshalloch Gorge, intrepid experts will swing on ropes to remove species from inaccessible ledges in the 60 metre gorge that runs through the national nature reserve.

The Trust's senior nature conservation advisor Jeff Waddell said: "This is the Trust's biggest ever effort to tackle these non-native plants which are spreading across Scotland's precious natural habitats, including temperate rainforests, crowding out the native flora.

"This is bad for our biodiversity – we need a range of native plants, so that we can have a rich, healthy environment.

"Using expert contractors and the latest removal methods, we'll be working from Wester Ross to Ayrshire to get rid of these plants and provide space for Scotland's native flora to flourish once again."

Will Humpington from People's Postcode Lottery said: "It's great to hear that this important project to protect Scotland's natural heritage is getting underway, and we are pleased that the players of People's Postcode Lottery are playing their part in making it happen."

Work will take place at sites across Scotland into 2021.

-ENDS-

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Notes for editors

The National Trust for Scotland is the charity that celebrates and protects Scotland's heritage. It relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy.

From coastlines to castles, art to architecture, wildlife to wildernesses, the National Trust for Scotland exists to protect the national and natural treasures we all love.

