

# Preventing the spread of invasive non-native species

Lucy Cornwell

GB Non-native Species Secretariat



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



The Scottish  
Government



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency

# Non-native species

- A plant or animal that has been introduced to GB by people
- > 2000 in GB
- Most are harmless but 10-15% become **invasive**





# Invasive non-native species

- = a Non-native species which spreads and has a negative impact:
  - Environment
  - Economy
  - Health



# GB Strategy



*Great Britain's biodiversity, ecosystems, people and the economy are protected from the risks posed by invasive non-native species through a strong partnership of government, voluntary organisations, researchers, businesses and the public*

- 55 actions across 9 areas

# GB Non-native Species Secretariat



- 3.6 staff
- Help coordinate action on non-native species on behalf of
  - UK Programme Board
  - GB Committee on non-native species

# GB Non-native Species Secretariat



- 3.6 staff
- Help coordinate action on non-native species on behalf of
  - UK Programme Board
  - GB Committee on non-native species



# Non-native Species Inspectorate



- Pilot in 2021 with 4 staff
- 10 inspectors + 1 AO → 16 + 1
- Aims:
  - Preventing establishment
  - Awareness raising
  - Collecting data on risks
  - Awareness and enforcement of legislation



# Non-native Species Inspectorate



- Inspections at:
  - Garden centres
  - Trade fairs
  - Angling / boating events
  - Pet shops
  - Animal rescue centres





# Restricted species



## Plants

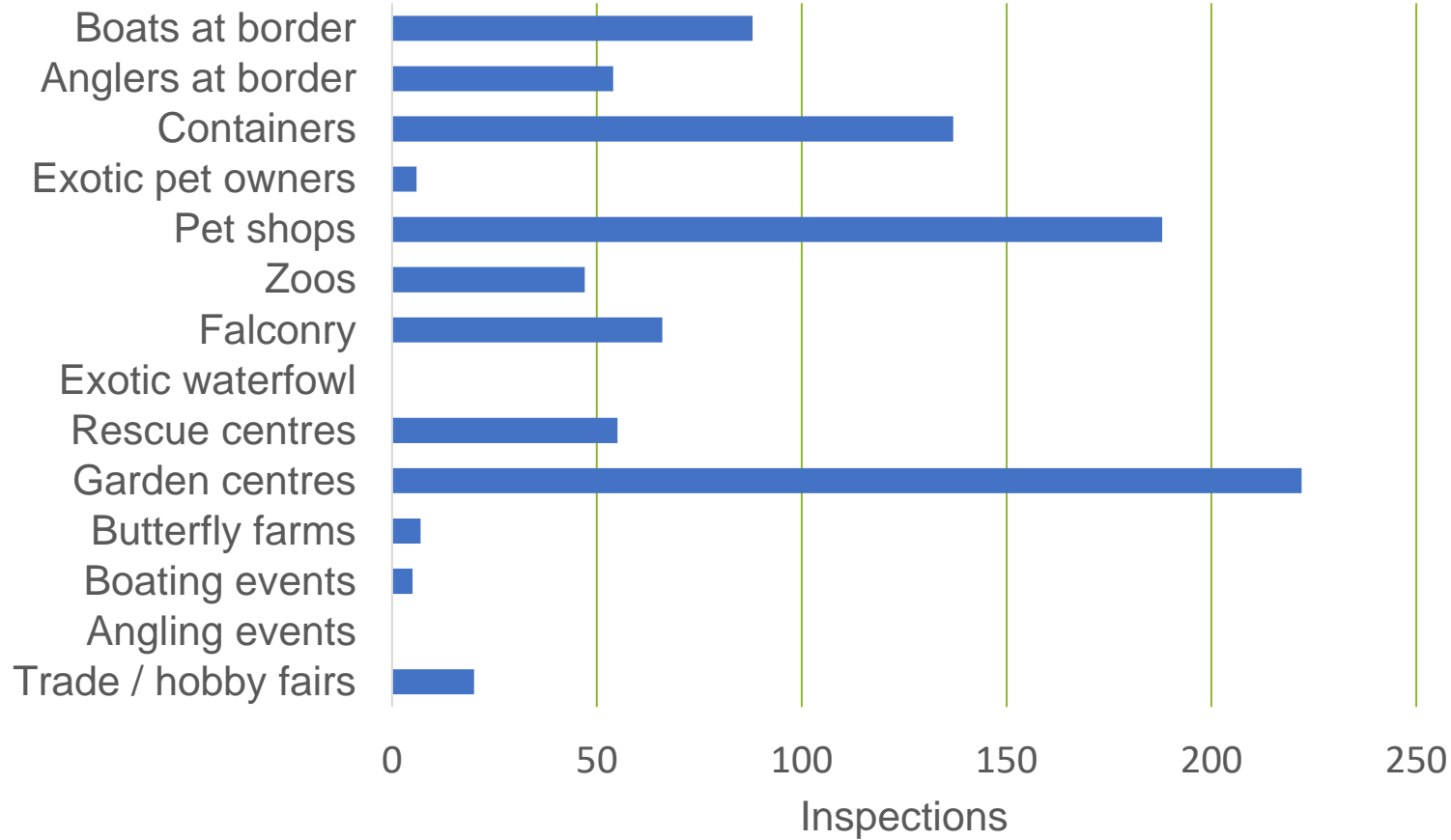
- 36 plant Species of Special Concern
- + 3 plant species banned under WCA

## Animals

- 30 animal Species of Special Concern

[www.nonnativespecies.org/legislation](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/legislation)

# Non-native Species Inspectorate



Nearly 1000  
inspections in  
2022/23

# Non-compliance



- Premises keeping, selling etc.  
banned species without appropriate  
paperwork

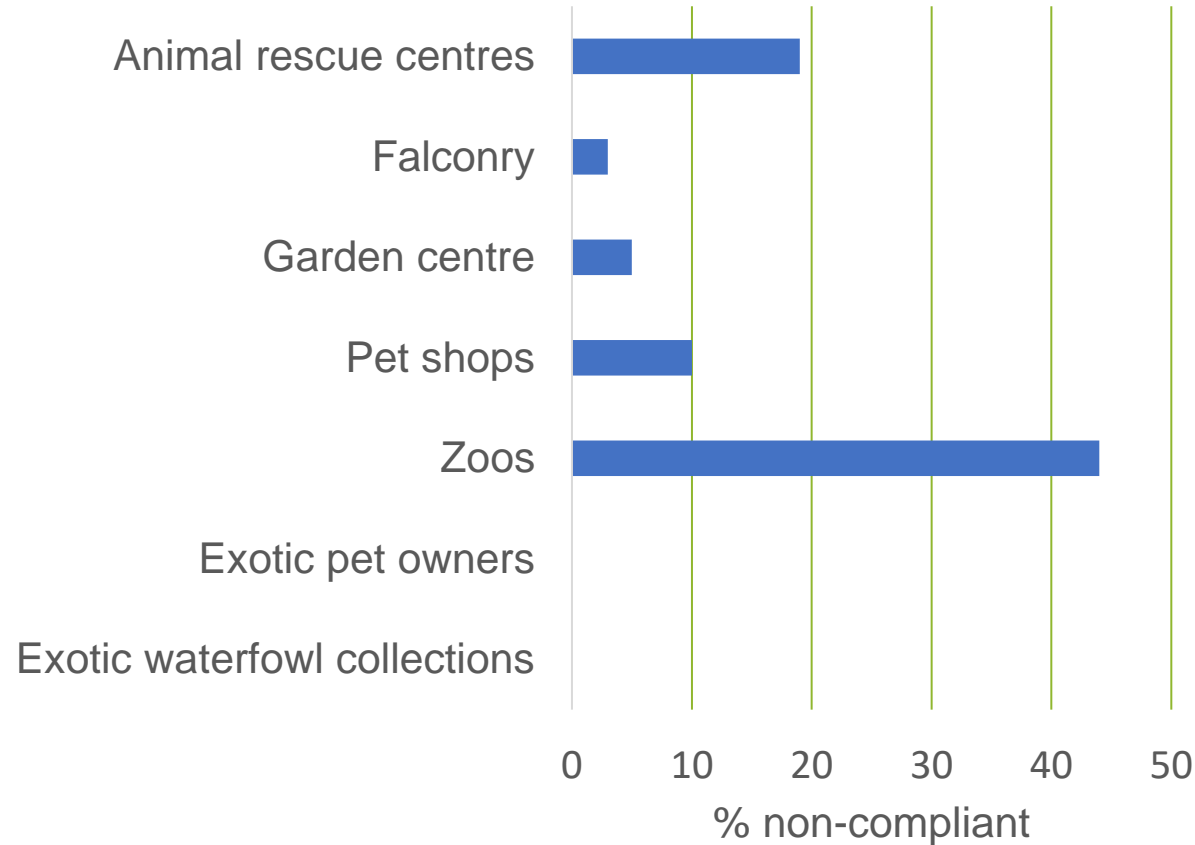
10% overall

- Web search using fixed strategy 4  
x per year

>500 webpages selling  
banned species



# Non-compliance



19% of rescue centres

10% of pet shops

44% of zoos

# How local authorities can help



- Awareness raising
- Making sure staff practice good biosecurity
- Looking out for and reporting alert species
- Working with Local Action Groups

# Be Plant Wise campaign



- Choose the right plants for your garden, pond aquarium or water features



- Keep your plants in your garden, don't plant them, or allow them to grow, in the wild



- Make sure nothing you remove from your garden or pond gets into the wild.





# Free materials available



# Check Clean Dry campaign



**CHECK**

- Check equipment clothing and footwear when you leave the water. Remove any mud or plant material and leave it at the site.

**CLEAN**

- Clean everything thoroughly as soon as you can.

**DRY**

- Dry everything for as long as you can before using it again as some species can live for over two weeks in damp conditions.



# Border biosecurity



2016: four weeks  
 2017: ten weeks  
 2018 onwards: six months  
 2023: posters and adverts in onboard magazines covering 7 ports





# Free materials available



## Video guides

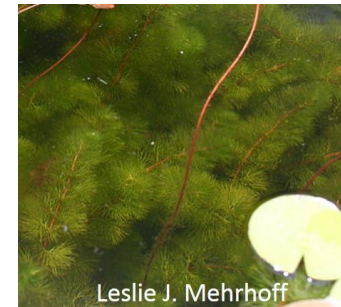
View handy video guides from the [RYA](#) (external link) and the Green Blue.



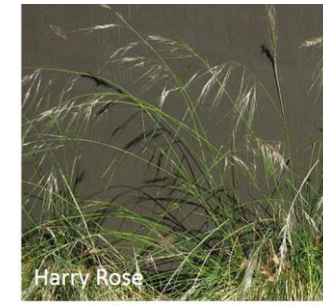

Find out more about invasive plants and animals and how you can help to stop the spread at [nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry](https://nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry)



# Alert species



Leslie J. Mehrhoff



Harry Rose





# Alert species

- iRecord
- [alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk)
- Asian Hornet Watch app

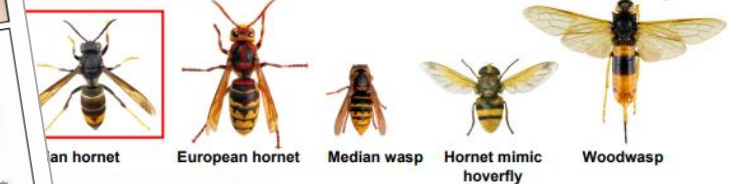
## Have you seen this insect? Asian hornet, *Vespa velutina*

### What is it?

A highly aggressive predator of native insects that poses a significant threat to honey bees and other pollinators. Originally from Asia, in 2004 this invasive non-native species was accidentally introduced to France where it has spread rapidly and into neighbouring countries. Since 2016 a number of sightings have been recorded in the UK.



Slightly smaller than the native European hornet. May be confused with other species, shown below in actual size for comparison.



### Where might I see it?

Can be seen on flowering plants, around beehives, around rotting / fermenting fruit and protein, and at street markets attracted by sweet fruit stalls. Active February to November across England and Wales.

**This insect stings, do not disturb an active nest.**

**Please report sightings immediately with a photo:**

Use the iPhone and Android recording app: Asian Hornet Watch

or email at: [alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk)

or by email: [alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk)

Find out more and report a sighting:



For more information on invasive non-native species visit: [nonnativespecies.org](http://nonnativespecies.org)

**Asian Hornet Alert!**

Report sightings of this species:

- with the iPhone and Android recording app: Asian Hornet Watch
- online at: [www.nonnativespecies.org/alertnonnative](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/alertnonnative)
- by email: [alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk)

**Species Description**

**Scientific name:** *Vespa velutina*  
**AKA:** Yellow-legged Hornet  
**Native to:** Asia  
**Habitat:** Nests usually high in trees and man-made structures, sometimes closer to the ground; hunts honey bees, other insects and also feeds on fruit and flowers.

Not easily confused with any other species. Dark brown or black velvety body. Characteristically dark abdomen and yellow tipped legs. Smaller than the native European Hornet.

Introduced to France in 2004 where it has spread rapidly. A number of sightings have been recorded in the UK since 2016. High possibility of introduction through, for example, soil associated with imported plants, cut flowers, fruit, garden items (furniture, plant pots), imported containers, in vehicles, or in/on untreated timber. The possibility that it could fly across the Channel has not been ruled out.

A highly aggressive predator of native insects. Posses a significant threat to honey bees and other pollinators.

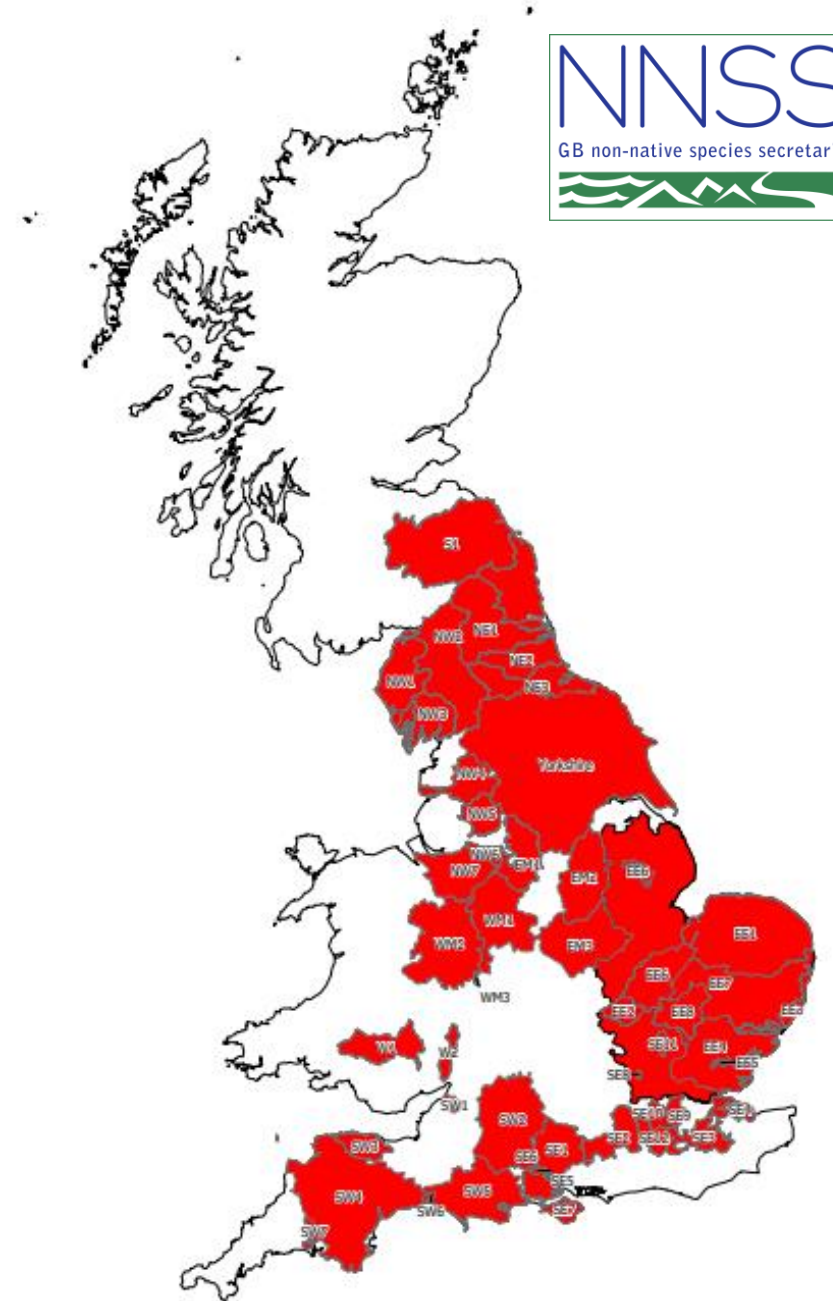
**Do not disturb an active nest. Members of the public who suspect they have found an Asian Hornet should report it with a photo using the details provided in the red box at the top of this ID sheet.**

**Key ID Features**

- Entirely dark, brown or black velvety body
- Legs brown with characteristic yellow tips
- Asian Hornet abdomen is almost entirely dark except for 4th abdominal segment
- Asian hornet "hacking" for honey bee prey
- Queens up to 30 mm long, workers up to 25 mm long
- Abdomen black / brown, fourth segment yellow / orange

# Local Action Groups

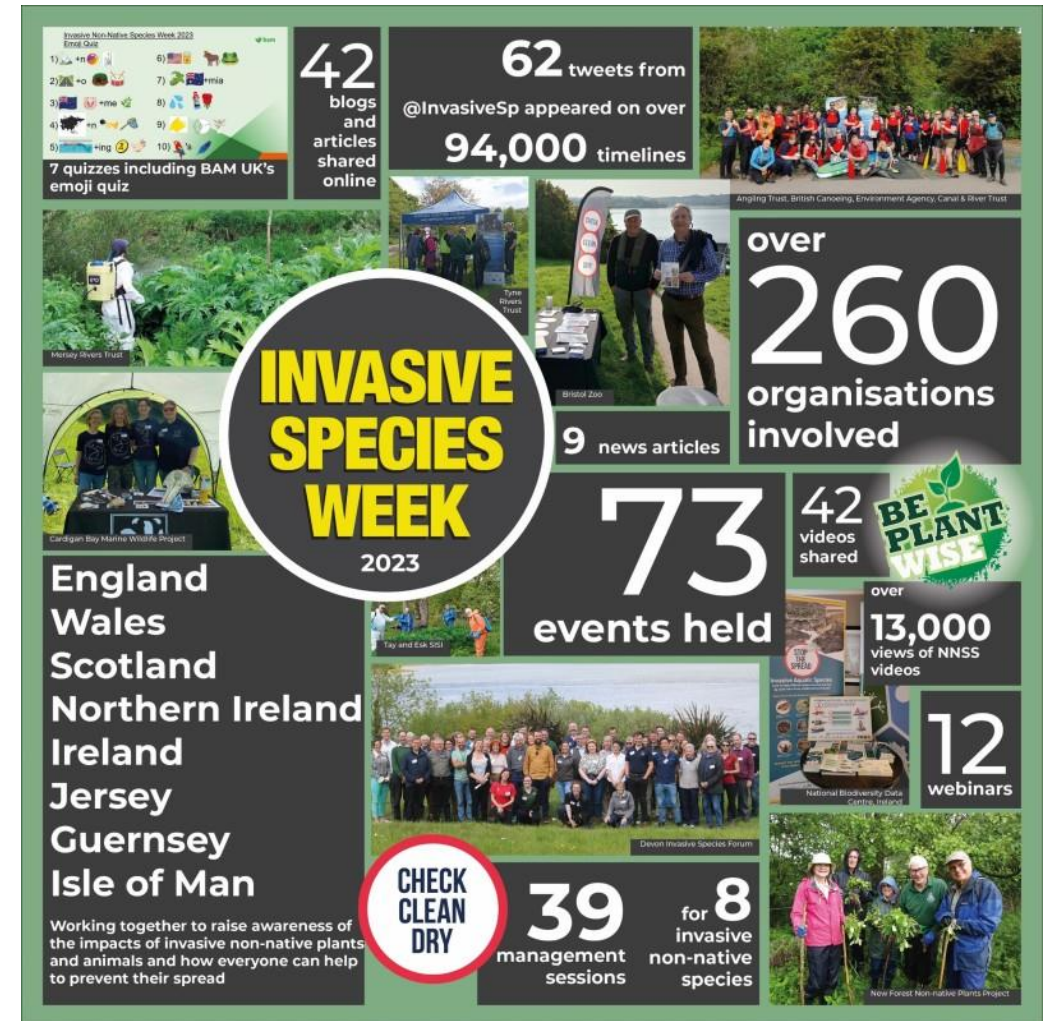
- Over 50 Local Action Groups
- Management and awareness raising
- Find local group on NNSS website



# Invasive Species Week 2024



- Annual week of awareness raising
- Over 260 organisations involved in 2023





# Contact details

## Non-native Species Inspectorate

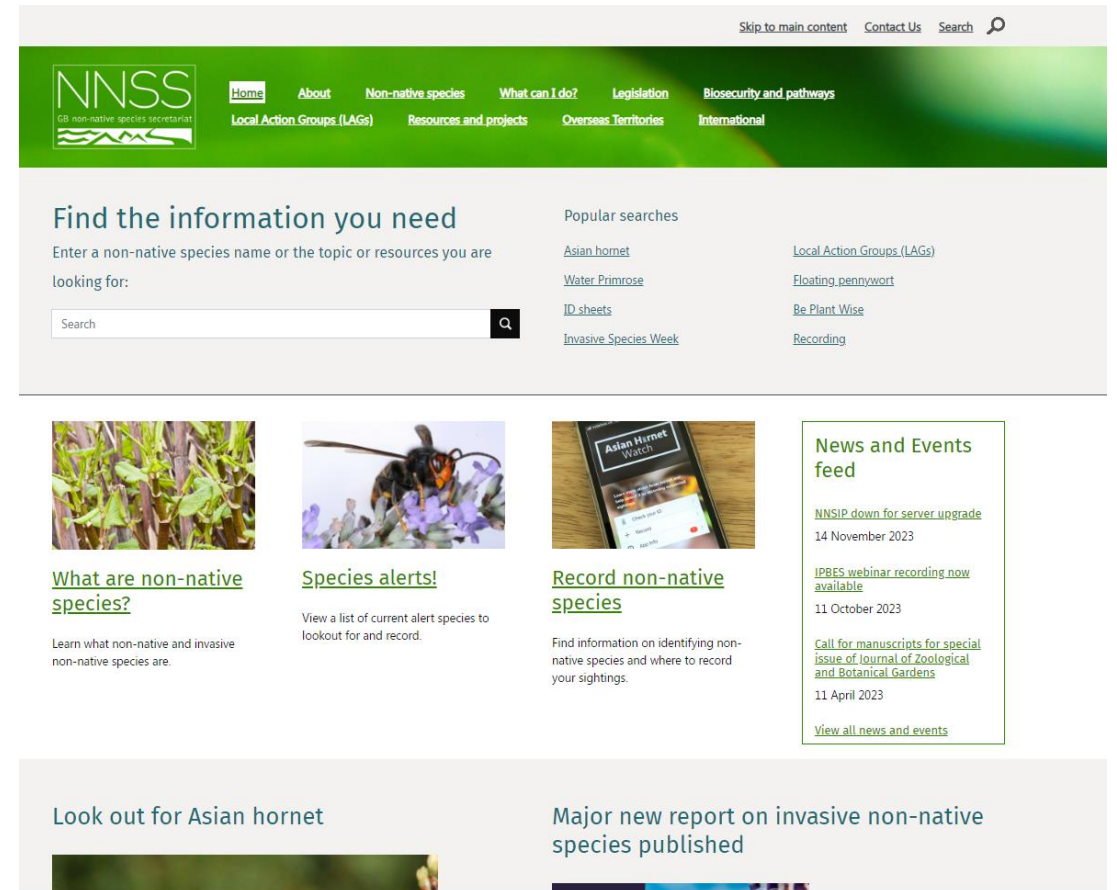
- Find local inspector
- Report listed species or others of concern

[nnsi@apha.gov.uk](mailto:nnsi@apha.gov.uk)

## Non-native Species Secretariat

- Awareness raising materials
- General queries on non-native species

[nns@apha.gov.uk](mailto:nns@apha.gov.uk)



[www.nonnativespecies.org](http://www.nonnativespecies.org)