

Weed Biological Control in Europe: A Reality

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Abstract

2010 saw the release of the psyllid *Aphalara itadori* (Shinji, 1938) against Japanese knotweed, *Polygonum cuspidatum* Sieb. & Zucc. (= *Fallopia japonica* (Houtt. Dcne.), in England, arguably the first foray into weed biological control by any EU country. This project took 21 years from concept to license and has cut a path through the regulations for future bio-controllers to follow. This paper summarizes the lessons learned during the research and licensing phase of the project before providing the latest data from the on-going post-release monitoring plan. Progress with the research on other European weed targets is presented and the reasons for their selection are discussed in an attempt to determine what the real drivers are in this new area of operation.