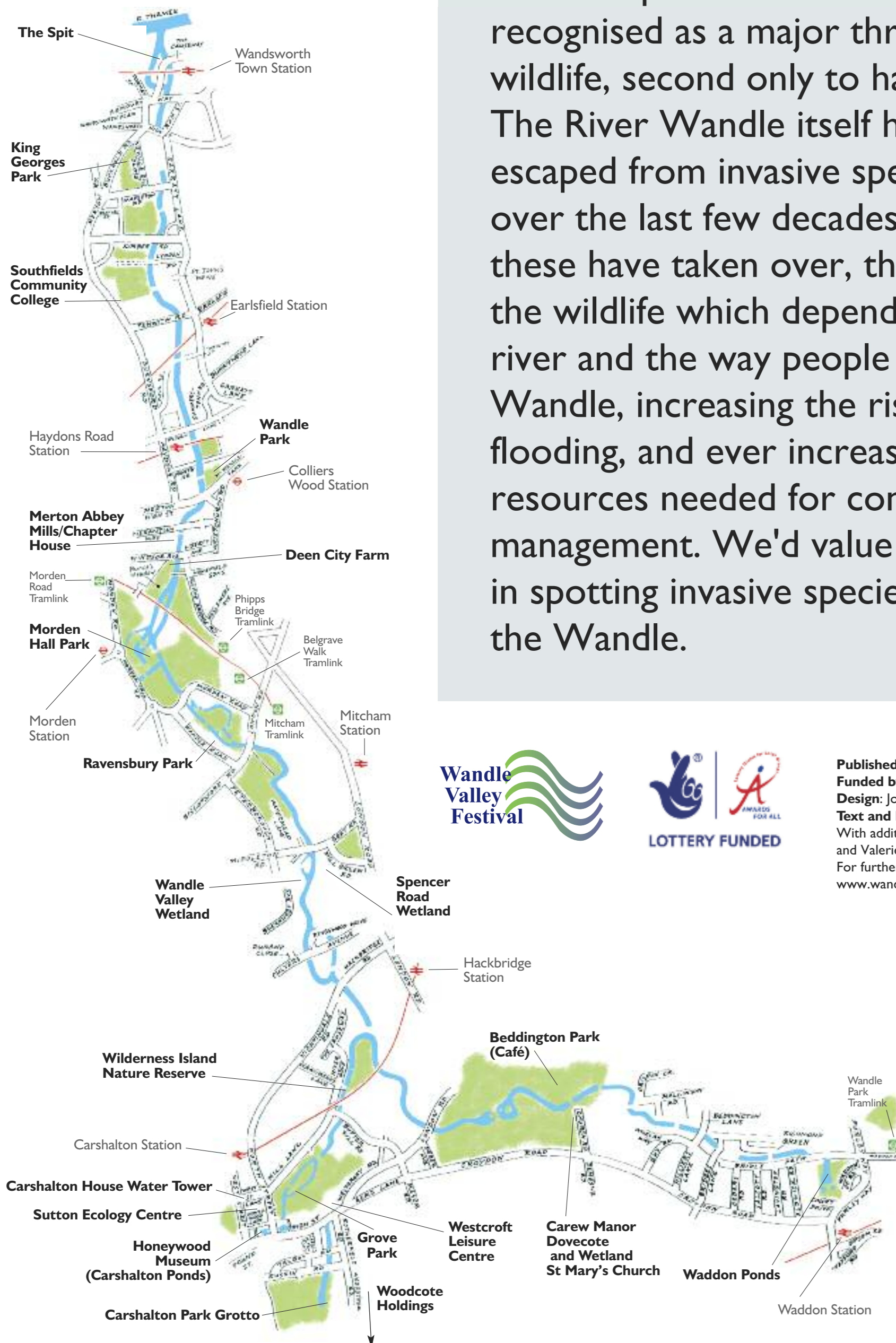


# River Wandle Invasive Species

## What is an Invasive Species?

An invasive species is one which has the ability to spread causing damage to the environment, the economy, our health or the way we live. Invasive species are also widely recognised as a major threat to wildlife, second only to habitat loss. The River Wandle itself has not escaped from invasive species, and over the last few decades many of these have taken over, threatening the wildlife which depends on the river and the way people enjoy the Wandle, increasing the risk of flooding, and ever increasing the resources needed for control and management. We'd value your help in spotting invasive species along the Wandle.

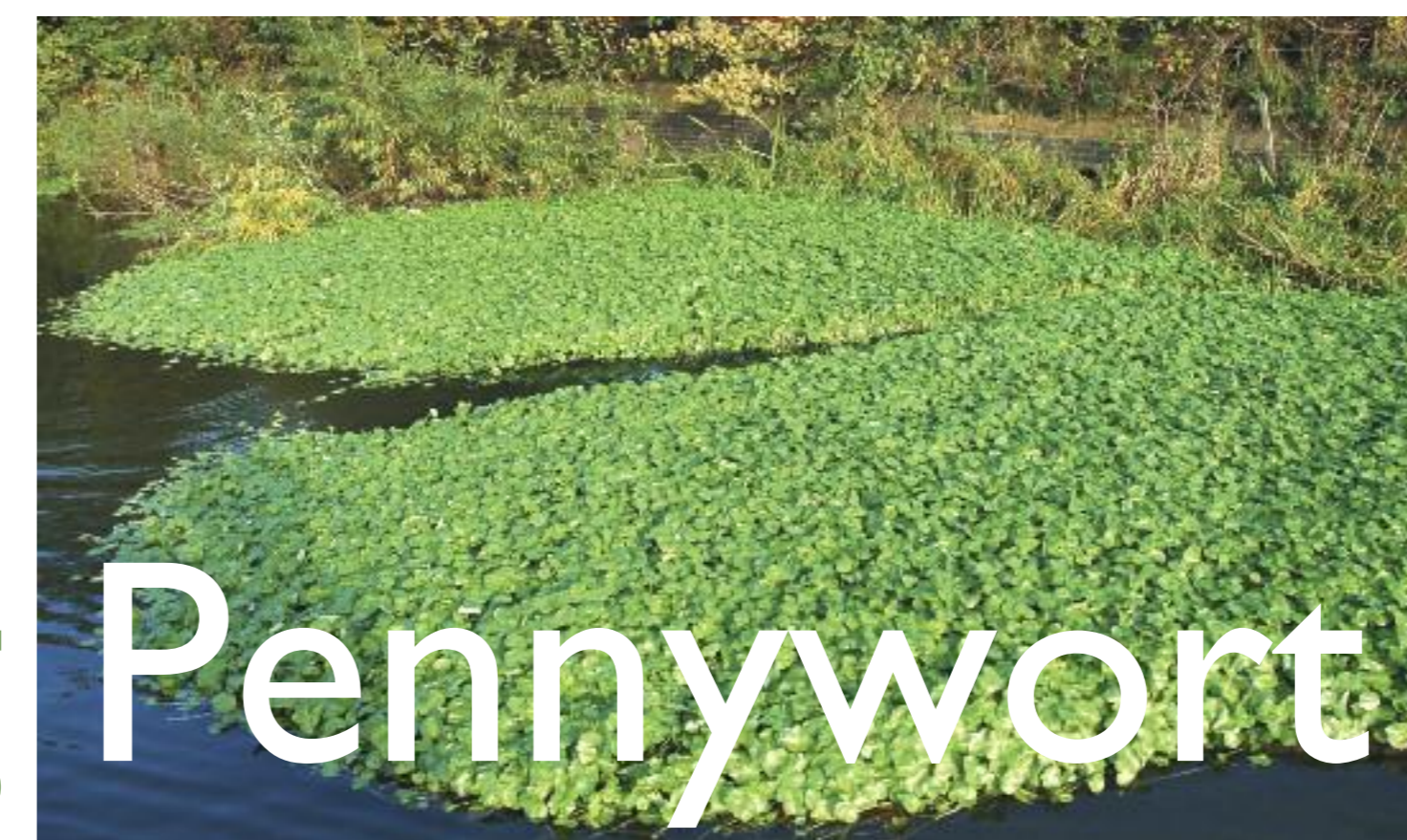


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## Parakeet

The **Rose-ringed Parakeet**, an unwelcome introduction whose growing population is taking over nestholes of our native species and causing a nuisance among fruit growers.



## Floating Pennywort

There are also some 'invasive' species, such as the **Floating Pennywort**, which have to be regularly removed. It forms dense interwoven mats of vegetation, which grow up to 20cm per day and quickly cover the water surface. Found in slow flowing part of the river and in still water. Needs to be removed carefully as the smallest fragment can regrow.



## Mitten Crab

A fresh water species the **mitten crab** was introduced to Britain accidentally in the bilges of cargo ships unloading at a range of ports. The crabs have spread and undermine and erode river banks.

## Canada Goose

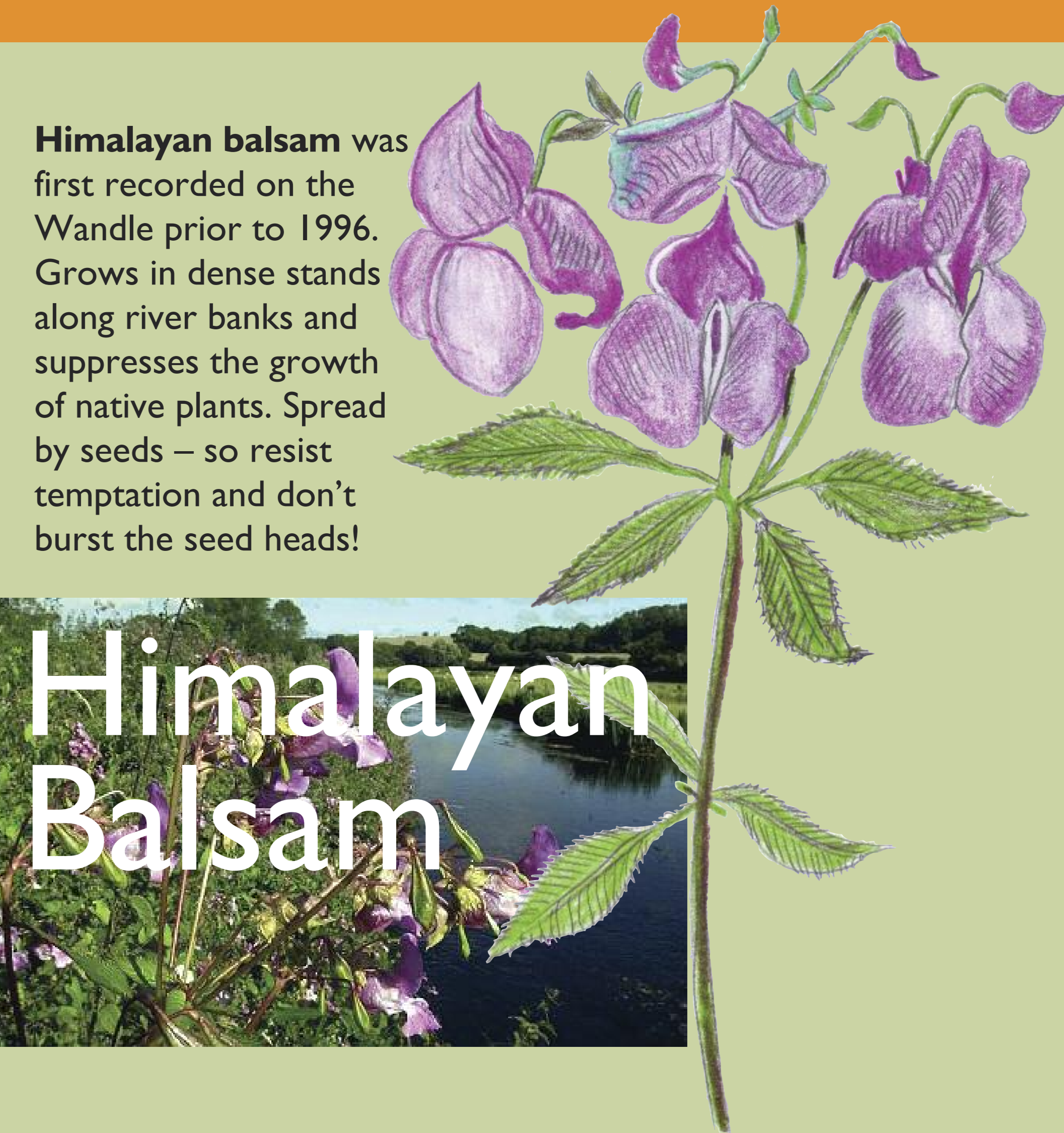


The **Canada Goose** needs no introduction. Now superabundant, noisy and messy. They form noisy flocks and are often regarded as a nuisance in areas where large numbers occur. They can outcompete other smaller ducks and geese for food and nesting spaces.



## Harlequin Ladybird

Arrived in 2004 and now spreading countrywide. Feeds on native ladybird eggs and larvae and other insects



**Himalayan balsam** was first recorded on the Wandle prior to 1996. Grows in dense stands along river banks and suppresses the growth of native plants. Spread by seeds – so resist temptation and don't burst the seed heads!



## Japanese Knotweed

Found along the river bank and on bare ground it forms dense stands, 2-3m tall, out-competing all other native vegetation. It spreads from the smallest piece of vegetation; leaf, root or shoot. Please do not break pieces off or remove it from a site as this will just make the problem worse.



## Giant Hogweed

The stems, edges and undersides of the leaves bear small hairs containing poisonous sap: the slightest touch causes painful blistering and severe skin irritation. Found along river banks and road sides, each plant can produce up to 50,000 seeds.