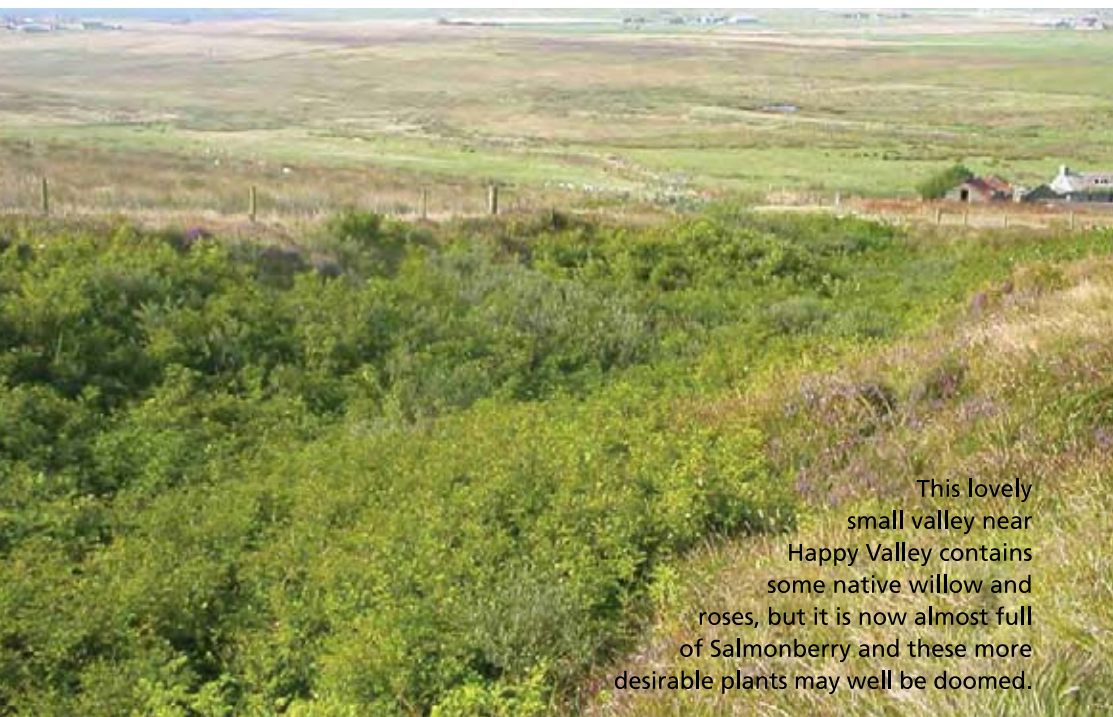


## Where can you see Salmonberry?

The 'epicentre' for Salmonberry in Orkney appears to be in the Stenness / Finstown area. One native willow carr off the Old Finstown Road is now riddled with the plant and saving the carr may be difficult. Trumland Woods on Rousay have also suffered greatly from this plant over recent years and it is also present in Happy Valley and Binscarth woods.



This lovely small valley near Happy Valley contains some native willow and roses, but it is now almost full of Salmonberry and these more desirable plants may well be doomed.

## What can you do?

Firstly, please **never** introduce the plant into the wild by either planting it, or by carelessly disposing of garden waste material. (All stems or roots of salmonberry should be burnt).

Secondly, please take note of anywhere you see it, particularly where it seems to be starting to colonise a new site. Any records of Salmonberry will help us to develop an action plan to try to keep this invasive plant under control.



ORKNEY  
WOODLAND  
PROJECTS

Please send your records to:

Orkney Woodland Projects,  
3 Manse Lane, Stromness, KW16 3BX.  
tel: 01856 851322  
email: [jenny@jtlarch.co.uk](mailto:jenny@jtlarch.co.uk)

**Thankyou for your help**



photos: Jenny Taylor design: iadesign



ORKNEY  
WOODLAND  
PROJECTS

Help prevent the  
spread of this  
woodland  
invader

**SALMONBERRY**  
(*Rubus spectabilis*)



## Introduction

Salmonberry is a deciduous, North American shrub, which was introduced into the British Isles in the early nineteenth century. It has been in Orkney for many years and may have initially been planted around large estates to provide game cover. It appears to enjoy milder, maritime climates like ours and is found on western coasts and islands of Scotland and in Ireland, but apparently rather less so on mainland Scotland.

The name Salmonberry is said to come from its use, by native American Chinook Indians, as a treatment for indigestion caused by eating too much salmon!

The extremely invasive nature of Salmonberry is causing increasing concern in Orkney, where a number of areas have been taken over, with alarming speed, by this species.



## Description and Identification

Salmonberry forms almost impenetrable thickets, which can be over two metres tall, in a variety of habitats and vegetation cover. The lower stems particularly are covered with strong prickles and it has rough-textured, trifoliate leaves. At a quick glance, it can be mistaken for raspberry.

The bright pink, delicate flowers appear very early in the spring and are very attractive, though they are rather short-lived.

The fruits, whilst palatable, are not particularly sought after, but are likely to be a good food source for birds. They appear in August and are rather like a pale orange blackberry. The seeds are apparently able to lie dormant in the soil for many years.



## Growth and Effects

Salmonberry spreads vigorously by underground rhizomes and it appears that it may also be spreading by seed in Orkney. Certainly, it is producing fruit and these are being eaten by birds, so it is very likely that it is also being distributed in this way.

The plant seems tolerant of a wide range of soils and it will grow in shade. It is often found amongst trees, particularly deciduous species. Its dense growth smothers out all other woodland understorey or groundflora plants and it prevents the natural regeneration and spread of trees and other plant species. Eventually it can smother young trees themselves.

It can also spread into open grassland, bracken and heathland habitats and even onto sand-dunes (although this has not yet been observed in Orkney).

Clearly, its effect is to form a monoculture and thus to reduce the biodiversity of any area.

## Control

In its native habitat, salmonberry is eaten by moose and deer. However, here in Orkney, it is generally left ungrazed. It is said not to be favoured by cattle, but the young shoots are apparently enjoyed by sheep.

The control regime for each site needs to be individually tailored to suit the specific conditions. In very small areas, the stems can be pulled up and the roots dug out thoroughly. Plants may well re-grow and need further work. Larger areas are more challenging and the use of herbicide may be required. Specialist advice should be taken on the best chemicals and methods of application for any given area. Obviously, great care must be taken to avoid the herbicide killing nearby desirable plants.

It is possible that putting sheep, or perhaps pigs, into the area, may eventually keep Salmonberry at bay. However, once the animals are removed, the plants may well return and a herbicide treatment may still be needed at this point.