

Air ainmeachadh air a' bhad gheal air na h-inean aige a tha coltach ris na brataichean-sanais a chleachdadh luchd stèiseanan rathaidean nan gàd bho shean, tha an giomach-uisge Ameireaganach na dhragh cho mòr mar ghnè sgaoilteach 's gu bheilear ag iarraidh air iasgairean is seòladairean toirt an aire gus stad a chur air a bhith a' sgaoileadh gu àiteachan eile.

A' tighinn à Ameireagaidh a Tuath bho thùs, chaidh a thoirt a-steach don Roinn Eòrpa, do Iapan agus do cheàrnaidhean eile de na Stàitean Aonaichte an taobh a-muigh an raoin as dual dha. San Roinn Eòrpa, chaidh a thoirt a-steach a dh'aon ghnòthach a dh'àiteachan-iasgaich nan giomach-uisge air an deach sgrios a dhèanamh le "plàigh nan giomach-uisge". B' ann dìreach an dèidh làimhe a fhuair a-mach gun robh an stoc a bhathar a' toirt a-steach a' giùlan a' ghalair iad fhèin – ged a b' urrainn dhaibh seasamh ri gabhail a' ghalair agus nach b' urrainn do na gnèithean dùthchasach. Tha seo, agus a' mheudachd nas motha a th' air, air adhbharachadh gu bheil e air tighinn gu tur an àite ghnèithean eile den ghiomach-uisge ann an àiteachan sa bheil e air tuineachadh agus a' dèanamh sgrios air eag-shiostaman far a bheil e ag ithe àireamhan mòra de dh'ùighean èisg agus a' cladhach a-steach ann an leapannan-siolachaidh nam bradan is nam breac.

# American Signal Crayfish

## Giomach-uisge Ameireaganach

### *Pacifastacus leniusculus*

Chaidh a thoirt a-steach dhan Roinn Eòrpa sna 1960an agus dhan RA ann an 1976. Chaidh a' chiad fhear a chlàradh ann an Gall-Ghàidhealaibh ann an 1995 agus tha e a' còmhnaidh a-nis ann am barrachd is 58km de shlighean-uisge na h-Alba ann an co-dhiù 8 àiteachan. Thèid aca air fàs suas ri 20cm agus thèid iad thairis air talamh an tòir air biadh agus àrainnean ùra agus tuineachadh. Thèid aca air mairsinn suas ri 20 bliadhna agus gabhaidh an fheadhainn òga agus uighean giùlan gu soirbh le tuiteamas ann an lìontan no druaid an uisge ann am bàtaichean is ann an curaichean.

Is i a' ghnè dhùthchasach san RA an giomach-uisge Spàinnteach (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) ach cha bhì e a' nochdadh gu nàdarach an seo ann an Alba. Tha àite iomallach no dhà ann, ge-tà, far a bheilear air a thoirt a-steach agus na h-àireamhan seo gam meas nan tèarmannan cudromach don ghnè far am faodar a cumail suas air falbh bhon ghiomach-uisge sgaoilteach agus bhon phlàigh a bhios e a' giùlan.

*a' sgaoileadh is a' stèidheachadh,  
stoc nan giomach-uisge nan coigrich  
bho Ghall-Ghàidhealaibh gu Gallaibh*

10

Named after the white patch on its claws that looks like the signal flags used by railway stationmasters of old, the American signal crayfish is of such concern as an invasive species that anglers, boatmen and canoeists are urged to take precautions to prevent its spread to other areas.

Originating in North America, it was introduced into Europe, Japan, and other parts of the USA outside its natural range. In Europe, it was specifically brought in to replace crayfish fisheries that had been depleted by "crayfish plague". Only later was it discovered that the imported stock were carriers of the disease itself – although they could survive infection while native species could not. Together with its larger size, this has led to it completely replacing other crayfish species in places it has colonised, causing damage to ecosystems where it eats large numbers of fish eggs and digs into spawning beds of salmon and trout.

It was introduced into Europe in the 1960s and the UK in 1976. The first one was recorded in Galloway in 1995 and it now inhabits more than 58km of Scottish waterways in at least 8 locations. They can grow up to 20cm and will cross land to search for food and new habitats to colonise. They can live for 20 years and small juveniles or eggs are easily transported accidentally in nets or the dregs of water in boats and canoes.

The native species in the UK is the white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) but it does not occur naturally here in Scotland. However, there are a couple of isolated locations where it has been introduced and these populations are now considered important refuges for the species where it can be maintained away from the invasive crayfish and the plague it carries.

## NOTES

Sweden and other Nordic countries hold a traditional kräftskiva – a crayfish party, where crayfish are boiled in salt water and eaten cold seasoned with fresh dill, alongside schnaps and beer. Perhaps this tradition could be adapted into a celebratory method of American signal crayfish control in Scotland!

Translation note

White-clawed crayfish = giomach-uisge Spàinnteach

*a' sgaoileadh is a' stèidheachadh,  
stoc nan giomach-uisge nan coigrich  
bho Ghall-Ghàidhealaibh gu Gallaibh*

spreading and colonising, alien crayfish from Galloway to John O' Groats