

The 3 Rivers Clean-up

30 May - 7 June 2009

A week-long volunteer effort to clean-up and remove Himalayan Balsam from the Ravensbourne River system, flowing through Lewisham, Greenwich and Bromley.



The **3 Rivers Clean-up** is a collaboration between a number of key organisations to deliver an exciting programme of volunteering opportunities throughout the Ravensbourne river system; the rivers Ravensbourne, Pool and Quaggy which flow through the South East London boroughs of Lewisham, Greenwich and Bromley *into Deptford Creek ([link to Ravensbourne catchment map](#))* The volunteering opportunities will be taking place during the first week in June.

The project aims to remove as much Himalayan Balsam as possible in this area as well as carrying out litter picks along the river banks. Himalayan Balsam is an invasive plant species that was introduced into Britain in 1839 as an ornamental garden plant due to its attractive pink flowers! However it escaped from gardens and quickly started to grow along our riverbanks – where it thrives on the damp ground. As Himalayan Balsam is not a native plant it changes the natural characteristics of the riverside vegetation, which has further impacts on the wildlife in the area. By focusing on removing this invasive species we aim to help restore the rivers in the Ravensbourne system to a more natural state.

Event activities will include learning how to identify Himalayan Balsam and then getting stuck in and removing the plants! Whilst doing this activity we will also be removing any litter that we come across – so that the result will be a much cleaner Ravensbourne catchment. Volunteers might even get to wear waders!

Each organisation will lead different events during the week.

For more information about how to get involved check out the Thames 21 website at www.thames21.org.uk/3riverscleanup

Creekside Education Trust is running a series of clean up sessions for local secondary schools as part of the project (link to our education page) and will also be hosting a grand finale party to celebrate the project.