

Love Where You Live Annual Event 2015

We are working in conjunction with the New Forest Rangers from the New Forest National Park Authority

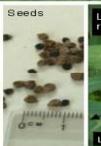


The plan is to pull out a plant called Himalayan Balsam from an area of river bank in the National Park.

What is Himalayan Balsam? It is a non-native invasive plant. Simply put it's a plant that is native to the West & Central Himalayas which was brought over to the UK in the early 19th century as a garden plant and was first recorded here in 1855. It was and still is popular with the general public. You may also hear it called Indian Balsam. It is a tall, attractive annual plant with explosive seed heads. It is easy to identify as a mature plant as it has a fleshy stem, pink-purple flowers and characteristic leaves. It can grow up to 2.5m tall in one season.



Key ID Features



Where is it found?

It is widespread in the UK especially along river banks and in damp woodland but it can also grow in any other damp habitat.

Below is an example of how invasive it can be.



So why are we going to be clearing it? As it grows so fast in just one season, it outgrows most of our native plants and flowers meaning that it reduces their growth by two thirds. This means that when it completely dies back in winter it leaves the river banks bare which can lead to erosion. When it grows in such dense amounts it can stop the river flow increasing the likelihood of flooding during high rain fall.



When are we doing this event? We are doing this event on Wednesday 10th June. We will meet Angela Peters, the New Forest Ranger at 10am at the arranged site. We will then be instructed about how to clear the plant and be told safety information. We will work for half a day finishing at around 1pm and will stop for a tea break as well.

What should we wear? Dress appropriately for the weather, so if the forecast is for

rain, bring a rain coat and waterproof trousers (if you have them.)



If sun is forecast bring a hat  and sun cream. Whatever the weather it is essential that you wear:

long trousers/jeans, long sleeved top  and wellies  or walking boots 

Where the Balsam is located there are also brambles and stinging nettles so the long trousers/shirt will stop you getting stung and/or pricked!

We also suggest that you bring a pair of gardening gloves  (these can be bought cheaply from In Excess). They will provide gloves but they will have been worn by lots of other people.....

What else should we know? There will be limited parking at the site so car share as much as possible. There will not be a public toilet nearby so be prepared to use the natural "facilities".

Who do we ask if we want more information? Leading up to the event you can contact your LWYL coordinator Sarah-Jane Finch on sarah-jane.finch@outlook.com On the day, James Staddon, from Leisure Park(1267) will be the coordinator in Sarah's absence.

Press Cuttings from the Daily Express last summer

Himalayan Balsam flower causes havoc to Britain's countryside

AN alien weed, which grows up to 10ft tall and has invaded large areas of Britain's countryside, could be wiped out by a fungus.

Each of its pretty pink flowers produces 800 seeds, which can be fired 20ft from its stem, allowing it to spread quicker than native plants.

The weed is now eroding riverbanks - it covers 13 per cent of them in England and Wales - because it leaves bare soil after it dies back in the winter.

The Environment Agency had estimated it would cost more than £300million to wipe out the balsam, which first arrived in Britain from Kashmir in the early 19th century.