

River Wandle Pollution Monitoring

Action against River Pollution

Pollution of different kinds affects the river in different ways. Fly tipping and dumping of rubbish can cause blockages in the channel which can lead to localised flooding. Pollution such as run-off from roads and chemical spills can kill many of the creatures that form a crucial part of the food chain within the river. River flies in particular are very sensitive to this kind of pollution and their presence or absence can indicate if the river is beginning to be affected. This is important as it allows us to identify problems early and limit the damage. We welcome the volunteer activity that takes place to monitor river flies along the Wandle as it can show us how healthy our river is.



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Design: Jonathan Spearman-Ox
Text and pictures: Valerie Selby
with additional material by William Tall

Pollution survey target groups

These invertebrates all use the river for a key part of their life cycle. Each group can tolerate a different amount of pollution. The **Gammarus** can tolerate pollution. The **Mayfly** and **Stonefly** nymphs cannot.



Gammarus



Mayfly



Stonefly

Cased Caddis

(Cases of various materials)



Caddis are a key species to be found in the Wandle. Some use material in the river to make a mobile home to carry around with them. They are moderately tolerant of pollution, but can tell us if the water quality is steadily improving.



It is important to assess how many of these indicators we find. One nymph or larvae may not tell us much, but if we see lots, we can be confident that our results are accurate.

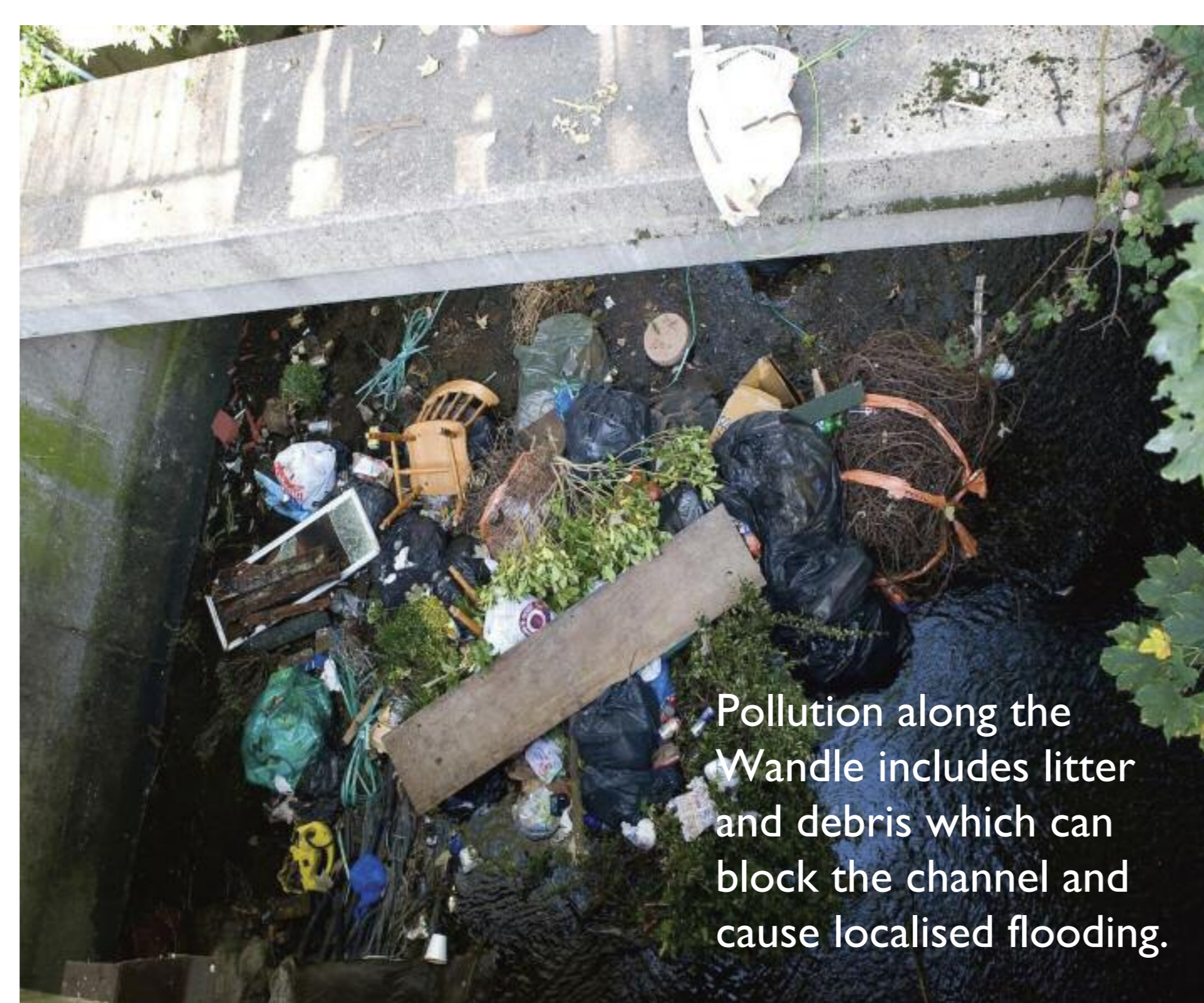


To get a sample of the key indicator species, volunteers take a 'kick sample' for 3 minutes at regular survey points along the wandle. Landowners must give permission for this as the results tell them more about their stretch of the river and how much pollution is affecting it.

Fly tipping removed from Wandle by volunteer groups



Fly tipped rubbish can cause pollution, especially when oil leaks into the river. This kills wildlife locally and can travel along the river and have a damaging effect across a wide area.



Pollution along the Wandle includes litter and debris which can block the channel and cause localised flooding.



Fly tipping removed from Wandle by volunteer groups.

The Riverfly Partnership



Volunteers analyse the samples of invertebrates from the surveys. They are checked under a microscope to determine the exact species so that we can be sure what the results are telling us.