



**London Borough  
of Hounslow**

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Further information on ponds  
and their management can be found  
from the Pond Conservation Trust  
[www.pondconservation.org.uk](http://www.pondconservation.org.uk) or  
Froglife [www.froglife.org](http://www.froglife.org)



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# Nature Leaflet

**Ponds  
and their  
wildlife**



**Mallards**

## Ponds and their wildlife

Ponds are home to some of our nature's most interesting animals. Apart from fish, frogs, newts and toads, all spend at least part of their life cycle there and provided there is sufficient water, will breed there.

Larger ponds may attract a number of birds including Mallards, Moorhens and Coots, as well as Swallows and Housemartins that feed on insects above the water. Large ponds are also vital habitats for bats; they hunt over the water and along the waterside trees feeding on the emerging insects. Ideally a good feeding area for bats will have multiple ponds, each a reservoir of life.

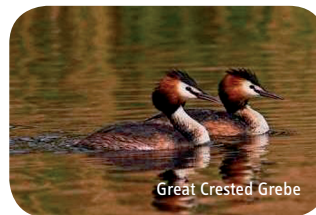
Ponds are also home to a variety of smaller inhabitants including pond skaters, water beetles, snails, mayflies, flies and dragonflies.

### Pond type

Wildlife makes no distinction between natural and man-made ponds. However the best ponds for wildlife have plenty of vegetation in and around them, only a quarter of the pond need be open water. Ideally the pond bottom should be undulating, with both deep and shallow areas. The pond sides should have gently shallow sloping sides to allow froglets and toadlets to escape.

A shingle, sandy or stony bank above the waterline will provide shelter for small invertebrates and homes for solitary wasps and bees. A gradual slope up from the pond known as a drawdown zone (an area periodically covered by water) provides a habitat for hardy specialist invertebrates.

A pond need not even be permanent and hold water all year round, a few pond animals prefer it as they can mature quickly and avoid many predators.



Great Crested Grebe



Common Frog

### Pond vegetation

Pond vegetation is important as it provides food and shelter for all types of pond life. Submerged plants such as the finely branching Water-milfoils provide shelter for many tiny creatures. Broad-leafed Pondweed has floating leaves and are ideal drinking points for hoverflies.

Common Reed, an aquatic grass with long leaf blades, becomes one of the last stopping points for Dragonfly larvae, which climb out of the water to split their skins and reveal the flying jewel beneath.

Ponds should be sunny places at least in part, only a few insects like dark, shady ponds. Some trees around large ponds are a good thing as they provide perching points for flies and shade for fish.

A well oxygenated pond with good water circulation will rot the leaves down. Dead wood in ponds is home to a few specialist insects and so it is good to leave some in the water.

### Build your own pond

When developing your own pond the most important things to consider are:

- Building in shallow, sloping sides
- Locating the pond in an area where there is plenty of sun
- Incorporating lots of plants both in the water and around the pond edge
- Using native species from a trusted supplier to avoid introducing foreign and invasive species
- Planting lots of flowering plants nearby, providing a good nectar resource for birds and insects
- Allowing grass close to the pond to grow long and introducing plenty of logs and stones for newly emerged froglets to hide under



Common Blue Damselfly

