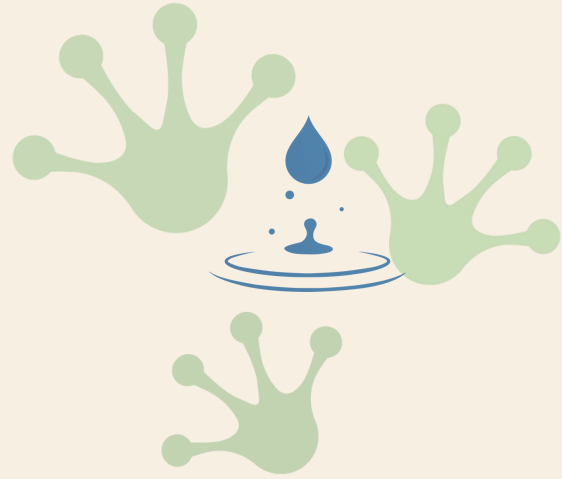


# All Things Ponds

By creating mini wetland habitats, we can boost the biodiversity in our streets overnight. These increasingly rare habitats are a vital refuge for many different species including frogs, toads, and newts. Not only do they provide resources for nature, but they can also fight flooding and drought, clean our water, make us feel better, and combat climate change.

If we all had some sort of wetland habitat on our patios, balconies, or gardens, our streets could once more be teeming with wildlife. Why not try to encourage your street to become a frog freeway?



## Aquatic plants

When choosing aquatic plants we recommend selecting UK native species, these will provide the greatest wildlife value and will not be potentially invasive.

Some suitable options include:

**Marginal pond plants;** Water forget-me-not, water mint, creeping jenny, marsh marigold



*Water Forget Me Not*

**Oxygenators;** spiked milfoil, water violet, hornwort, mares tail



*Spiked Milfoil*

**Floating plants;** frogbit, yellow/ white water lily



# Container ponds

Container ponds are one of the best ways to encourage wildlife into a smaller space. These magical little habitats will be teeming with life in no time, providing an essential home for frogs, newts, and insects.

## What you'll need:

- *A water-tight container, such as a wooden barrel (use a liner if there are holes), large plastic tub, or old sink*
- *Bricks or rocks*
- *Small stones or gravel*
- *Pebbles, rocks, or sticks to create an exit route*
- *Aquatic plants*
- *Aquatic compost*
- *Rain water*



## Step 1:

Place your tub in a position where it will get plenty of light but isn't in direct sun all day. Add a layer of small stones or gravel to the bottom.



## Step 2:

Add bricks, stones, and wood to create different levels in the pond. Animals will want places to hide and entry and exit routes. Plants like to be at different levels as well, some prefer being submerged and others like to be above the surface.

## Step 3:

Add your plants. Aquatic plants will oxygenate the water and provide habitat for wildlife. Plant them in aquatic compost (available from any aquatics store), using a specialist pond container or a heavily perforated pot. Sprinkle some stones or gravel on top of the soil to stop it floating away and muddying the water.



## Step 4:

Fill up your pond. Ideally use rainwater, however you can use tap water if you need to. Tap water contains chemicals and nutrients that will temporarily disrupt your pond but they will evaporated over time. Place some wood, bricks or rocks around the outside of your pond to allow animals to get in and out.



# Tiny ponds

A tiny pond is suitable for any size of garden that you can dig in. At ground level you'll attract all kinds of water-loving creatures to your outdoor space, such as frogs and newts, or thirsty hedgehogs.

## What you'll need:

- *A washing up bowl or wide garden dish, or any other similar sized watertight container*
- *Small stones or clean gravel, pebbles, rocks or twigs to act as stepping stones and drinking platforms*
- *Aquatic plants*

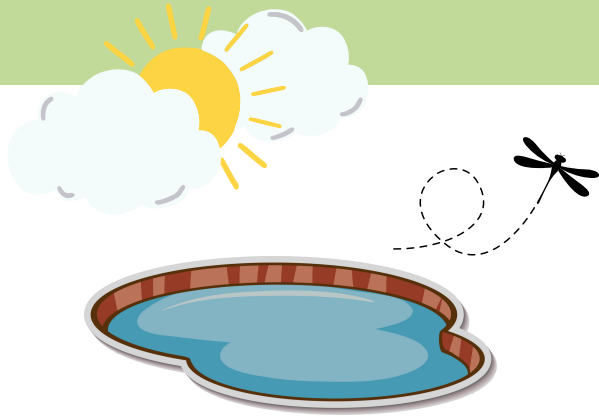
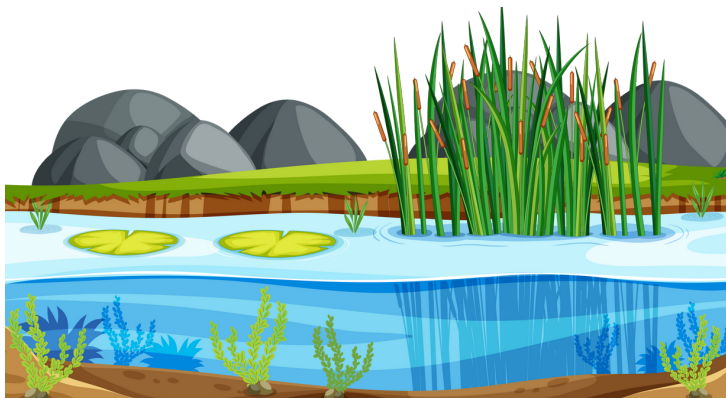
### Step 1

Your tiny pond should get plenty of light, but not be in direct sunlight all day. Avoid placing the pond under a tree as it will fill up with leaves. Dig a hole just bigger than the container and lower it in, filling in any gaps around the edges.



### Step 3

Water collected from a water butt is ideal to fill your pond, or you could let it fill up naturally from direct rainfall. You can use tap water but remember this will contain certain chemicals and nutrients that will take time to evaporate.



### Step 2

Put a layer of clean gravel or small stones in the bottom of the container. Then think about how animals can safely get in and out of the pond. Create ramps and steps, and place logs and stones so they are above the surface of the water.



### Step 4

Add a few aquatic plants to your pond to oxygenate the water and provide shelter for wildlife. You could choose frogbit (similar to a lily) to float on top, and spiked milfoil as a submerged plant that will provide oxygen in your pond.

# Wildlife Ponds



If you have enough space in your garden, a pond is the best way to attract an abundance of wildlife. These low maintenance habitats will be teeming with life in no time. Overnight, pond skaters and water boatmen will colonise your pond and before long frogs, toads, and newts will find it and settle in.

During the summer months your pond will attract breeding dragonflies and damselflies, and, if you're lucky, a hungry grass snake may visit to hunt. To help ensure your pond is full of life, avoid introducing fish. They will feed on the larvae of all sorts of insects and amphibians and generally reduce the biodiversity of the habitat.

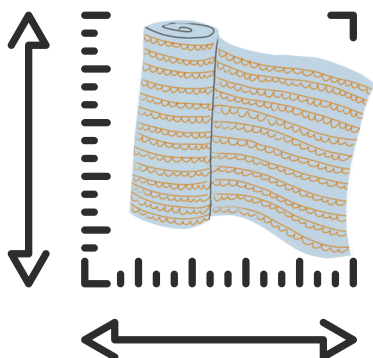
## What you'll need:

- **A spade**
- **Builders' sand (or old carpet/underlay)**
- **A pond liner**
- **Aquatic plants**
- **Peat-free aquatic soil**
- **Larger containers for plants**
- **Large stones, rocks, or bricks**



### Step 1

Choose a suitable location. Some shade through the day will keep the pond cooler but a few hours of sunlight a day is essential for the vegetation and wildlife to flourish. Avoid overhanging trees that will drop leaves and build up excessive organic matter. You could site it near a drainpipe for a continuous source of rainwater.



### Step 2

Mark out the pond and work out how much liner you will need. You can work this out by inputting your dimensions into an online liner calculator. You will need approximately twice the size of your pond to allow for depth.



### Step 3

Get digging! It's time to call in some favours and get your friends and family round. As you dig, create some shallower ledges and make the edges slightly curved. Make sure you include a shallow beach area as an access route for frogs, toads, or any other creatures that may want to visit. Once you have dug out the earth, remove any sharp stones or glass that may cut through the liner. Finally, add old carpet underlay or builders' sand to create a soft, smooth base for your liner.



### Step 4

Place the liner in your pond hole (don't trim the edges yet), before adding water slowly, pressing the liner into the base, removing folds if you can. Add stones around the edge to weigh the liner down, leaving gaps between them for plants and amphibians. Trim the liner and use the excess soil to merge the liner into the surroundings for a natural look.

### Step 5

Add your plants by placing them on the different levels you have created according to species. Some plants will prefer to be on the edge in marshy conditions while others thrive in the deeper parts of the pond. At this point you could spread a native wetland seed mix around the edge of your pond whilst there is still plenty of disturbed soil for the seeds to sit in.

