

# Warwickshire

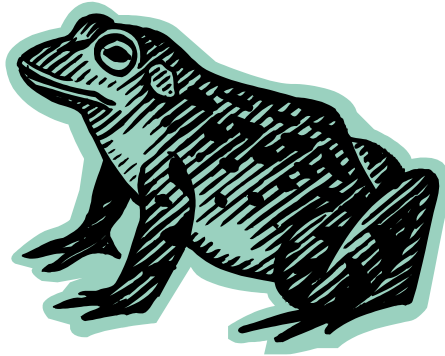
*Wildlife Trust*



## **Pond School Pack**

### **2011**

# Contents



Page 3

Introduction to Ponds

Page 4 to 5

Planning your Pond

Page 6 to 7

Building your Pond

Page 8

Managing your Pond

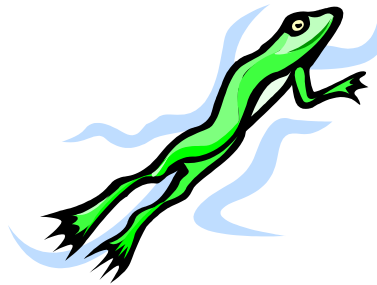
Page 9

Pond Health & Safety

Page 10

Further Information & Contact Us

# Introduction to Ponds



Ponds are one of the best ways to attract wildlife into your school grounds.

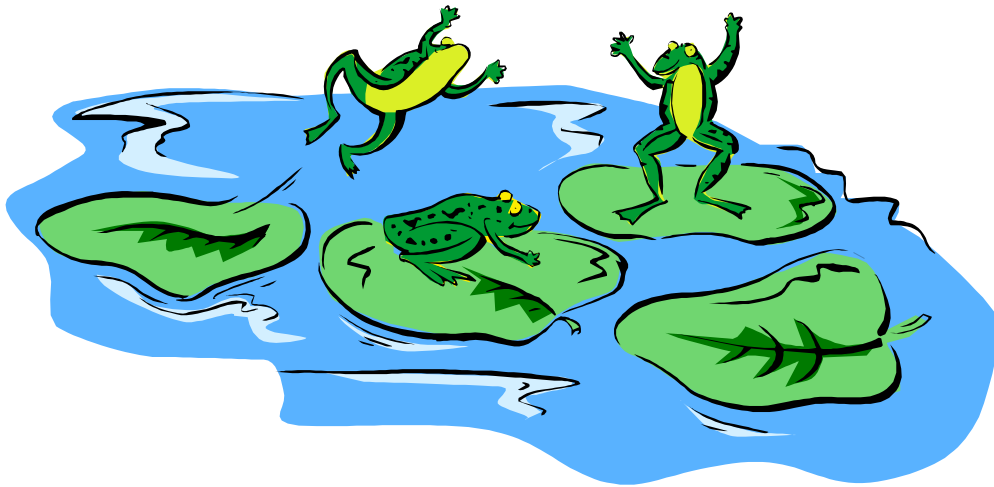
No matter how large or small, a pond will guarantee the arrival of a whole range of wildlife including frogs, newts, insects and plants.

It will provide an excellent educational resource, right on your doorstep and is an exciting way to get children inspired and exploring wildlife.

Activities such as pond dipping will provide an opportunity for children to view habitats, food chains and adaptations with their own eyes.

By creating your own pond you will also be helping to support the declining population of wildlife.

# Planning your Pond



You will need to decide the best location for your pond, so that it is healthy and provides a good habitat for wildlife.

Find a sunny spot where the pond is likely to get sunlight for at least half the day. This is to keep the water warm and in good condition for growth.

A pond is best positioned away from trees and shrubs likely to drop their leaves as this can swamp the water.

However, frogs and newts do like to shelter in long grass or shrubs, so let an area grown long near the pond. You could even build a log pile or rockery nearby where they can hibernate.

Think about pond accessibility. You might consider paving around the edge or creating a platform, this will be ideal for pond dipping.

You need to decide whether you would like an above ground pond or a below ground pond.

If above ground, you can use a ceramic pot or plastic containers.

A below ground pond with flexible lining is best suited for a wildlife pond as it allows for a variety of depths, including the very shallow edges. This saucer shaped profile will encourage a variety of habitats.

Gradually sloping or shelved edges are a good idea to allow any creatures to crawl out easily. A gently sloping shallow area will warm up quickly and provide a great area for insects and even birds bathing. A shelved level of 20cm to 30cm deep can provide a place to sit emergent plants. Make sure one area of the pond is at least 75cm deep to ensure hibernating creatures don't freeze during the winter months.

Now you can get started with building your pond.

# Building your Pond



Once you have decided what pond size will work well within your school grounds, you can start digging!

What you'll need:

- Digging Equipment
- Spirit Level
- Liner\*
- Sand
- Underlay/protective matting/old carpet/newspaper (with staples removed)

\*For calculating liner:  $(\text{Width} + \text{twice max depth}) \times (\text{length} + \text{twice max depth})$  with 1m for edging

Mark out the size of the hole (you could use twine or sticks). Start by removing the turf and remember to keep it for tidying up the edges of your pond at the end.

Dig the hole approximately 20cm deeper to make room for the sand, matting and liner. Use a spirit level to make sure the edges are level.

Fill the pond with sand to the depth of 5cm and cover with underlay.

The next step is to line your pond. Remove any sharp stones protruding from the hole that may damage the lining. Lay the liner over the hole and then weight down the edges (you can use a brick or stone). Fill the pond with water. The weight of the water will fill all the contours of the pond. Wait until the pond is completely full and then either bury the edges of the liner in a trench of soil or trim the excess, making sure you leave at least 20cm.

A bucket full of water from an established pond is the finishing touch to help kick start your pond's development.

Now you can enjoy the arrival of a whole range of creatures, it should only take a couple of weeks!

# Maintaining your Pond



If any vegetation starts to overwhelm the pond, it will need clearing. When you do remove plants from the pond, remember to leave them at the side of the pond to allow any creatures to crawl back out into the water.

Water levels will naturally fluctuate during the seasons, this can be essential for various creatures. You won't need to add further water to the pond unless it falls very low.

# Pond Health & Safety

The location of your pond must be visible from school buildings. This is to ensure that in the case of an accident it is more likely that someone will be seen or heard. It must be away from regularly used paths and public access to reduce risks of vandalism and trespassers.

The pond must be fenced off and must be a minimum of a metre high with a lockable gate. The edges of the pond must be clearly visible. There must be appropriate warning signs visible to clearly indicate the presence of a pond.

It is essential that the school carries out risk assessments of the pond.

An emergency action plan must be in place in the event of an accident prior to use of your pond. Groups using the pond must be supervised at all times with an appropriate ratio of staff to children. A safety talk must be given to children to ensure they understand how to stay safe when using the pond.

# Further Information



If you would like further advice or information or are interested in other educational services we can provide please contact:

Senior Education Ranger  
Vicky Worthington  
024 7630 8977  
[victoria.worthington@wkwt.org.uk](mailto:victoria.worthington@wkwt.org.uk)

Education Ranger  
Elinor Bishopp  
024 7630 8997  
[elinor.bishopp@wkwt.org.uk](mailto:elinor.bishopp@wkwt.org.uk)

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust  
Brandon Marsh Nature Centre  
Brandon Lane  
Coventry  
CV3 3GW