

WATER WORLD

CREATING A
**WILD
LIFE
POND**



Creating a Wildlife Pond

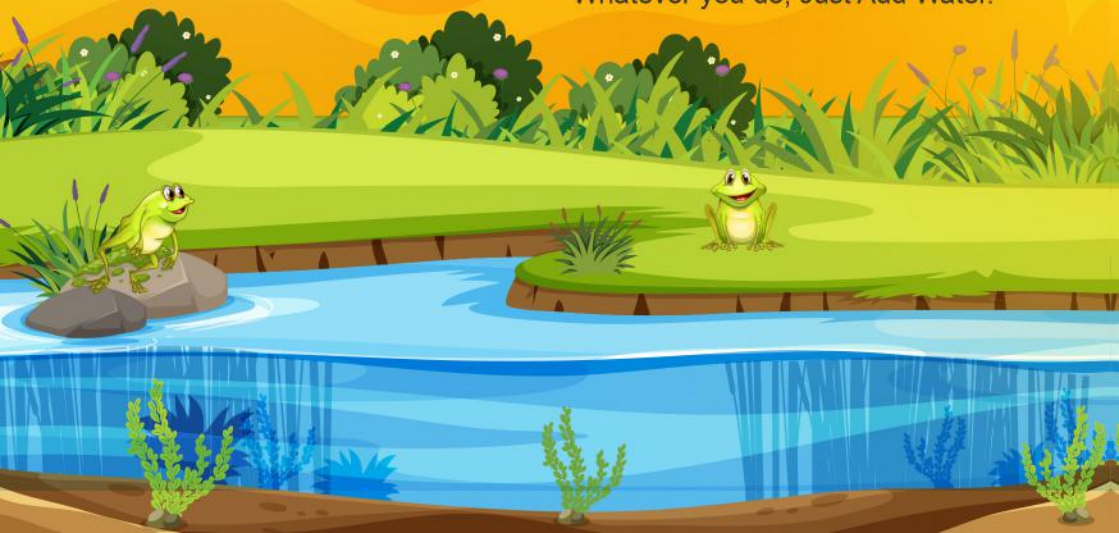
In the wider countryside ponds are disappearing. One third of ponds are thought to have disappeared in the last fifty years or so. This has had an enormous effect on wildlife, particularly amphibians. Frogs, toads and newts are dependent on ponds to breed; if ponds disappear, so do they. Yet, there is a solution.

Creating a wildlife pond helps wildlife locally. Big or small, adding water to your garden or backyard is a really good way to do your bit for the neighborhood's wildlife. In addition, ponds can be fantastic places to spend time, relax and de-stress.

Wildlife ponds for everyone!

Not sure if you have space for a wildlife pond? Think again. Any pond size is good for some form of wildlife: from a buried water-filled bucket, to a textbook wildlife pond (complete with pond-dipping platform and bird-hide). The point is, wildlife ponds can be for everyone, whether you have a backyard allotment or garden.

Don't be put off by price either. Creating a pond can be as cheap or expensive as you want it to be. You can spend £5 or £500. Similarly, you can spend two hours, two days or two weeks. Whatever you do, Just Add Water.



Pre-formed ponds:

We sell pre-formed ponds, usually made of plastic or fibreglass, largely designed for housing ornamental fish.



These need to be carefully dug beforehand but can last a long time (many over twenty years).

The downside is that there is no room for creativity, and

many pre-formed liner designs are exclusively fish-friendly, lacking slopes for other wildlife to get in and out. Some people choose to make raised up garden ponds with troughs or raised pre-formed liners. Remember that many animals will find this much harder to get in and out of, so include some rocks or stones to help them.

Liner Ponds:

Lining a pond with a flexible material that can be cut to fit allows you to be more creative with shape and size. Many websites have special calculators to help you find out how much liner you need, or you can ask your supplier for advice.

UNDERLAY:

This should be added no matter which type of pond liner you use; it will create a barrier to protect the liner from stones and punctures.

Liner types:

Rubber:

Rubber liners are flexible, strong and durable. There are different sizes available and cut to size off the roll. This can be ordered in store or online.

PVC:

This is a lot cheaper than rubber but is not as flexible or durable. It too can be purchased in stores or online.



Finishing Touches

Planting up your pond:



There are a number of options for putting plants into your pond. Many garden centres sell plastic planting baskets or bags to be filled with aquatic compost and pebbles. The bags tend to balance better on uneven surfaces or shelves. Another environmentally friendly option is to wrap roots and soil in a square of hessian sack and tie with natural string. Ensure soil has not been contaminated with pesticides or fertilisers. This can lead to algal blooms further down the line.

Plants for amphibians:

Tadpoles will often be seen feeding on algae and decaying matter in the pond. On warm spring days you might see them congregate in shallower areas of the pond, particularly if there is an algae-covered rock on which to graze. For tadpoles and adult frogs, it's a good idea to have an area of tightly arranged plants at one end of the pond at least, to provide cover from predators.

You can help attract newts to ponds by growing pond plants on which they can lay their eggs. A wide range of plants with thin and easily folded leaves are used for egg-laying. These include Water forget-me-not, Water-mint and Marsh-marigold

Plants for a wildlife pond

- Choose aquatic compost or use a mix of sand and gravel.
- To stabilise taller plants place large rocks and stones in the base of containers.
- Plants should be planted to the same soil-depth as in the original container.
- Firm plants in well and then apply a thin layer of grit or fine gravel.
- Floating plants can be placed gently on the water's surface. Separate large clumps and aim for one plant per square metre.



Submerged oxygenating plants

- Spiked Water-milfoil - *Myriophyllum spicatum*
- Hornwort - *Ceratophyllum demersum* (pollution intolerant)
- Shining Pondweed - *Potamogeton lucens*
- Horned Pondweed - *Zannichellia palustris*
- Fennel Pondweed - *Potamogeton pectinatus* (pollution tolerant)
- Water Starwort - *Callitriche stagnalis* (pollution intolerant)



Marginal plants

- Flowering Rush - *Butomus umbellatus*
- Lady's Smock - *Cardamine pratensis*
- Marsh Marigold - *Caltha palustris*
- Purple Loosestrife - *Lythrum salicaria* (tall, good for bees)
- Gipsywort - *Lycopus europaeus*
- Meadowsweet - *Filipendula ulmaria* (tall, good for birds in autumn)
- Brooklime - *Veronica beccabunga*
- Ragged-Robin - *Lychnis flos-cuculi*
- Soft Rush - *Juncus effusus*
- Water Forget-me-not - *Myosotis scorpioides*
- Bungle - *Ajuga reptans*
- Water Avenas - *Geum rivale* (spreading)
- Hemp Agrimony - *Eupatorium cannabinum* (tall)
- Fleabane - *Pulicaria dysenterica*
- Creeping Bent - *Agrostis stolonifera*
- Marsh Foxtail - *Alopecurus geniculatus*
- Fool's Watercress - *Apium nodiflorum*
- Common Spike-rush - *Eleocharis palustris*
- Water Pepper - *Persicaria hydropiper*
- Silverweed - *Potentilla anserina*
- Creeping Jenny - *Lysimachia nummularia* (low-growing ground cover)
- Water Dock - *Rumex hydrolapathum* (can be invasive)

Deep water marginal plants

- Water Crowfoot/Buttercup - *Ranunculus aquatilis* (pollution intolerant)
- Bladderwort - *Utricularia* spp
- Frogbit - *Hydrocharisma morsus-ranae*



Looking after your wildlife pond all year round

Spring

Put in barley straw pads to help reduce problems with algae. Try not to disturb your pond too much at this time, there is a lot of activity below the surface.

Introduce any new plants where needed from mid-spring. You can divide plants and compost any excess.

Summer

Evaporation is normal, but if water levels drop low, top it up with rain water. Keep grass around the pond long to shelter young frogs.

Cut back vigorous plants and remove duckweed. Blanketweed can also be pulled out in small amounts at a time, but be careful to check for trapped newts, water boatmen, or other creatures. If you notice this, swirl the weeds in a bucket with pond water before adding the wildlife back to the pond.

Autumn

If you need to carry out any maintenance work, such as removing silt, do it now while the pond is less active. Plants will also die back at this time. Allow the pond enough light by removing excess fallen leaves and cutting back overhanging branches.



Winter

Freezing over is normal and unlikely to reduce oxygen levels too much in a healthy pond. A mini pond could be insulated with bubble wrap, kept close to the house, or sunk into the ground to help prevent it freezing. Avoid smashing the ice as shards could cause damage. If your pond is the only drinking source for wildlife then leave a ball in the water to keep an ice free section near the edge. Alternatively melt a hole by holding a pan of hot water on the surface. Brush off any fallen snow from the surface of your pond to allow light to reach the water.



Did You KNOW?

When resting, dragonflies hold their wings out flat from their body, like a plane, while damselflies fold their wings up behind them.



Frogs have the ability to breathe through their skin giving them the ability to stay underwater without drowning.



The background of the entire page is a stylized illustration. At the top, there are two white, fluffy clouds against a light blue sky. In the center, a large, faint, light blue mountain range is visible. Below the mountains, the text 'WATER WORLD' is written in a blue, sans-serif font. The letter 'O' in 'WORLD' is replaced by a large, blue, 3D sphere with a white highlight. Below this sphere are three smaller blue spheres of decreasing size, arranged in a descending line. At the bottom of the page, there is a landscape featuring a river flowing from the left towards the right. The river is light blue with white highlights indicating movement. Several dark grey rocks are scattered in the river. On the left bank, there is a dark brown rock formation with a small green tree growing on it. The right bank is a green hill. The overall style is clean and modern, with a focus on water and nature.

WATER WORLD

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