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Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

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Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is a registered charity with more than 10,000 members supporting its work to protect the county's wildlife.

To find out how to join, visit our website or phone 01773 881188.

Ponds Conservation Trust

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www.pondstrust.org.uk

Froglife

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London Road
Peterborough PE7 0LG

01733 558844

www.froglife.org

Further Information

Williams et al (1999). *The Pond Book: a guide to management and creation of ponds*. Ponds Conservation Trust, Oxford.

The Ponds Conservation Trust also has the following factsheets available to download from its website:

Good Wildlife Ponds: A short guide to creating your own wildlife pond

Planting up Ponds: Dos and Don'ts of planting for a wildlife pond

Problem Pond Plants: How to manage algae and other invasive plants

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Derbyshire Wildlife Trust



During the 20th century, more than three quarters of the ponds in Britain were lost through changes in land use. Agricultural intensification and increased development both contributed to the loss of ponds through drainage and infilling.

Our remaining ponds are important refuges for a bewildering variety of plants and animals, including many scarce and endangered species. Even small ponds provide a home for amphibians, places for dragonflies to lay their eggs and nest sites for wetland birds.

the importance of ponds



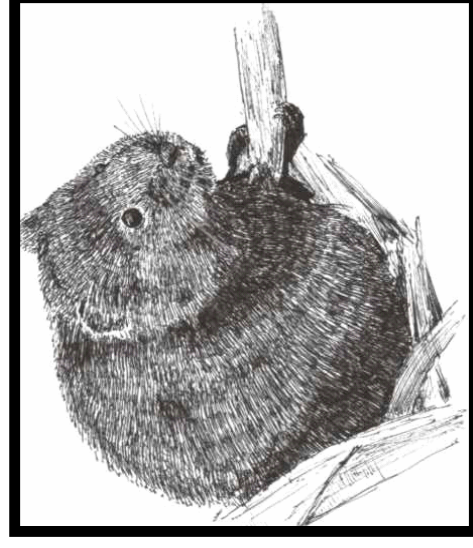
the importance of ponds

Why are ponds important?

Although the decline in the number of ponds has slowed in recent years, there are now fewer old, established ponds in the landscape. Those that remain are of vital importance as the last refuges for many freshwater species.

Nationally, about two thirds of all freshwater plants and animals can be found in ponds. This includes almost three thousand species of invertebrate as well as rare and endangered species such as the great crested newt and the water vole.

Ponds are an important part of our history and culture, a visual focus in our farmland landscapes and a community amenity.



Do ponds need managing?

Not in every case. It is a myth that the best wildlife ponds have large areas of open water. Clearing out the vegetation and silt from a pond that has not been managed for many years is likely to result in the loss of specialist plants and animals that have developed established populations, rather than improving its value for wildlife.

Some ponds, particularly those in the floodplain or temporary ponds on sandy soils, are managed by natural processes. Regular flooding or drying out removes decaying vegetation and maintains a healthy, balanced habitat. Additional management of such ponds is likely to be unnecessary and undesirable.

Ponds that have not been dredged or significantly modified in the last 50 years often contain important archaeological remains which could be lost or damaged by management work.

How do I decide what to do?

The Ponds Conservation Trust has developed four guiding principles to help with the decision making process.

- Make the most of existing habitats. It is very easy to destroy valuable habitats, simply because they are not attractive or because their value is not appreciated.
- Avoid making all ponds look the same. A variety of wetland habitats benefits a greater range of species.
- Do not suddenly change the management of a pond or its surroundings. Existing species can be damaged or lost, with little conservation gain. If management is carried out, it should be little and often rather than large scale drastic work.
- The intensity of land use surrounding a pond can affect its conservation value. Protect ponds by creating buffer strips.

Is there an alternative to management?

If your pond already has an established wildlife or archaeological interest that could be adversely affected by management, but you still want to improve the variety of pond habitats, you should consider creating a new pond. This will ensure that important species are conserved and the diversity of wetland habitat is increased.

Can I get help, advice or a grant?

The decision whether or not to manage a pond is a difficult one to make. It is essential that specialist advice is sought prior to undertaking any work. Derbyshire Wildlife Trust should be your first point of contact.

The County Council can provide archaeological advice. If management is considered to be appropriate, grants may be available from your local authority and also through DEFRA's agri-environment schemes, which provide grants as part of whole farm conservation agreements. BTCV, a voluntary conservation organisation that undertakes practical conservation work, may be able to help with management work.