

## Wetland spotter sheet

# Pond life

Even a small pond offers a rich variety of different habitats and you'll soon find it teeming with wildlife.

Some live in the water, some above and others live in the area surrounding the pond. Here's a quick guide to some of the more common wetland species you might find.



### Backswimmer

*Notonectidae*



- It rows under the surface with like legs on its back
- A predator and scavenger, it can eat tadpoles and even small fish
- Can give a painful nip if caught
- They can also fly well to new habitat but this raises the likelihood of predation

Size: 5-15mm



### Whirligig beetle

*Cyrinidae*



- One of several small black beetles
- Swims underwater when threatened with a bubble of air to breathe
- It eats smaller invertebrates
- Two pairs of eyes that can look above and below the water at the same time

Size: 5-7mm



### Pond skater

*Gerridae*



- Skates across the surface on long legs with water-repellent hairs on the bottom of its feet
- Emerges from hibernation from April
- Flies well and will colonise new ponds
- A predator and a scavenger, has a sharp beak to grab prey

Size: 10-20mm



### Water scorpion

*Nepidae*



- Lurks in weedy margins
- Note its huge pincers and long 'sting'
- A predator and scavenger

Size: 25-52mm



### Lesser water boatman

*Corixa punctata*



- Swims near the bottom on its front with two paddle-like arms
- Lays eggs attached to plant stems
- Eats pond matter and algae
- Grazes on algae and rotting matter

Size: 5-15mm



### Caddisfly

*Trichoptera*



- Needs good water quality with surrounding plants
- Larvae glue together bits from the pond to make a case
- Feeds on algae and decaying matter
- The adults are nocturnal and look like moths at night

Size: up to 30mm

# Pond life



## Damselfly nymph

*Zygoptera*



- Slender body
- Three long flattened 'tails' at the end of the abdomen
- Predator of invertebrates
- Has two distinct eyes on either side of the head

Size: 20mm



## Leech

*Hirudinea*



- Likes to feed on water snails
- When extended its body can be 30mm long
- Pale grey or fawn in colour with yellow spots
- The medicinal leech is the only species in the UK that bites humans

Size: 30mm



## Water snail



- Feeds on algae and rotting matter
- Can grow from 2-3mm to 50mm dependent on species
- The glutinous snail is one of the rarest because it requires very clean water

Size: 2-50mm



## Dragonfly nymph

*Anisoptera*



- Voracious predator
- Eats tadpoles and small fish
- Has a fat, stocky body
- Easily distinguished from damselfly nymph as it has no 'tails'

Size: 40mm



## Diving beetle

*Coleoptera*



- Predator, eats other invertebrates, tadpoles and small fish
- Larvae have two tails
- It has red antennae and front legs

Size: 30mm

