



the green energy uk guide to making a pond and attracting wildlife

Ponds are a great way to attract wildlife. They provide a place for frogs and newts to lay their eggs, and give birds, hedgehogs and all manner of creatures a place to drink from. Making your own pond isn't that difficult.

How to make your pond

- **Where?** To help pond life grow, you should pick a spot that gets plenty of sunlight. Make sure it's on level ground and at least five metres away from any trees.
- **What shape?** Whatever shape you like. Mark out the shape of your pond area with a piece of rope until you come up with a shape that you like best.
- **How deep?** The pond's deepest part should be at the centre with a depth of at least 60cm. Make sure that the edges of the pond are no deeper than 5cm so thirsty hedgehogs will be able to safely climb out of your pond should they fall in.
- **Digging** - Remove stones from the soil in the hole as you are digging. When you have finished digging, cover the hole with a 5cm layer of sand, then place an old layer of carpet or cardboard over the sand.
- **Pond lining** - Heavy duty butyl pond liners fit to mould any pond shape. Carefully place the liner over the carpet and cardboard and remember to weigh down the edges of the liner with stones.
- **Water** - If you've filled the pond with tap water let it settle for 24 hours before you put any plants in.

Now that your pond is ready, there are plenty of things you can do to make the pond the kind of place that lots of different creatures will want to live in and visit.

How to attract frogs and newts

- Put plants in the pond, because amphibians such as toads, newts and frogs like to hide under the leaves.
- Add a rockery that leads up to the edge of the pond for them to hide in when they venture outside the water.





- If you want amphibians to visit, it's best not to have fish in the pond. Fish will eat all the eggs and spawn, not to mention get eaten by passing herons who are looking for something for their dinner. Remember that newts are a protected species, so if your pond is lucky enough to have them, leave them in peace.

What sort of plants are good for the pond?

It's good to have a mix of different plants in the pond. These include marsh plants such as bog bean, floating leaved plants like water soldier, ledge plants like spearwort and deeper water plants like hornwater.

How do you attract dragonflies to the pond?

Plant flowers near and around the pond because they will attract insects that are perfect for dragonflies to eat.

How do you maintain a pond?

Clear dead leaves from the pond. Float a tennis ball on the surface of the pond in winter. It will prevent it from icing over and will allow air to wildlife.

Ponds attract plenty of other wildlife looking for somewhere to have a quick drink. Here are some tips to help you look after your friends.

- **Hedgehogs** - Having tiny, short legs doesn't stop hedgehogs getting around. They love to wander through gardens. You can help them to do this by making a small hole at the bottom of a fence or garden about 4 inches square. Hedgehogs like eating insects, but don't leave saucers of milk out for them to drink because it can make them sick.
- **Bats** - The only similarity bats have with vampires is that they both come out at night. They don't like light, but they need warmth. Bat boxes give somewhere for bats to live. If you build one, make sure to put in on the side of a house higher than fifteen feet, so they're away from predators, and under any overhanging part of the house to protect them from bad weather.
- **Slow worms** – They are cold blooded creatures and love nothing more than basking in the hot sun. You can encourage them to come out of hiding by laying down strips of corrugated metal they can use as radiators to lie in. Think carefully if you really want to invite slow worms to your garden; they've been known to live up to 50 years of age, so once you have them living your garden they are there to stay for a while.
- **Birds** – They can find everything they need to survive in a garden. They live on a diet of insects, and some birds will gobble as many as 1000 in a single day. Hang bird feeders filled with sunflower seeds for birds to eat. Make sure they're fairly high up so cats can't attack the birds while they're pecking away their dinner.

Good luck!