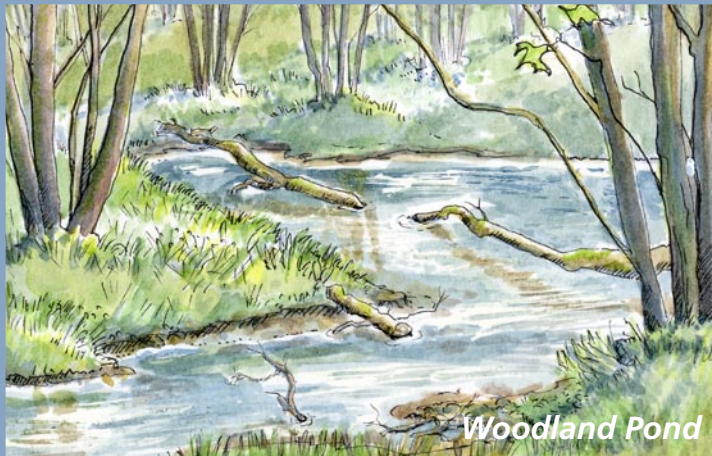


## Ponds of High Wildlife Value

*This guidance has been developed specifically to support Environmental Stewardship agreements. It does not replace your Agreement and you must continue to follow the prescriptions and specifications. The outcomes shown may not be appropriate or suitable for all sites. Please consult scheme handbooks or your RDS adviser for further information.*

Ponds of high wildlife value come in many different forms. Often they are in sunny positions, support lots of different plants and hold water all year round. However, woodland ponds with few, if any, plants may be very important for invertebrates. Some ponds dry up in mid-summer, but these may be home to rare plants and animals that are specifically adapted to this event.



### Notes ...

- From open water to choked hollows, no one stage of a pond's cycle is any more important than any other.
- It is not necessary to manage for a particular stage, unless there is an important plant or animal that requires special conditions.
- Light cattle grazing can diversify the pond margins, but it may be necessary to fence off at least part of the pond to protect it from intensive grazing and damage.
- Any plant material removed from the pond should be cleared from the bank within a couple of days so that, as it rots, the nutrients do not leach into the water.
- Many ponds are significant historic features. Do not change the shape or depth of an old pond without consultation.
- You may need permission from English Nature to work on a pond, for example if you have Great Crested Newts.

# Ponds of High Wildlife Value

## Ideal ...

- Establish or manage a 10-20m wide buffer zone to protect the pond from agricultural inputs.
- Establish or extensively manage semi-natural habitat around the pond.
- Any management should be little and often and generally it should be undertaken in the autumn or winter.
- If it is necessary to control plants, clear a wedge or strip across the range of water depths so that some of each vegetation zone is retained.
- Always retain a proportion of leaf litter, logs and woody debris.



## Watch out for ...

This depends on the type of pond, for example -

- Water Voles (don't mistake them for Brown Rats).
- Dragonflies and damselflies.
- Newts, frogs and toads.

**Broad-bodied Chaser**



**Smooth Newt**



## Do not ...

- Manage the pond unnecessarily.
- Alter the water level, either directly, by removing or adding water, or indirectly by changing the drainage of the adjacent land.
- Introduce or encourage fish or wildfowl.
- Introduce plants.
- Change the profile or depth of the pond.
- Allow one plant species to dominate.
- Allow pollution from spray drift, fertilisers and other agricultural inputs.
- Make sudden or drastic changes to the surrounding habitat.
- Clear trees around shaded woodland ponds.