

A composite image showing a pond with lily pads on the left and two children, a boy and a girl, lying on the grass on the right, using long-handled nets to catch pond life. The title 'Great British Pond Life Survey' is written in a white, hand-drawn style across the middle.

Great British Pond Life Survey

Ponds are among Britain's most important ecosystems. They are magnets for wildlife. Some animals will spend their whole lives within the one pond, while others may just spend part of their life cycle there.

Does your school have a pond or is there one nearby in your area? If not, you can easily set one up, even if only a micro-pond (e.g. a pond in a bucket), see instructions on **pages 146-147** in the *Local Safari - Wildlife Adventures at Home* book in your 2020 Hanson Box!

Hundreds of species of organisms live in the British ponds, lakes and rivers. High numbers and diversity of freshwater life generally indicates good water quality and a healthy ecosystem. How many species does your pond hold? Use the reserve side of this document and **pages 83-85** in your *Local Safari - Wildlife Adventures at Home* book!

Take part in the Great British Pond Life Survey to see how the diversity of species in your pond compares nationally. The data generated will be given to conservation organisations which is important for monitoring the current state of many endangered native pond-dwelling animals (e.g. the great crested newt)!

You'll need:

- The pond dipping net enclosed in your Great British Water Project box.
- One of the 11-in-1 strip tests enclosed in your Great British Water Project box.
- An observation tray (ask your teacher for one). White ones are best (as you can easily see what's in them). A washed-out plastic food tray will work!
- A clean empty jam jar (optional) is also useful for close-up observations.

Complete the following steps:

Step 1: Test your pond's water using one of the enclosed 11-in-1 test strips and record on the Great British Pond Life Results form.

Step 2: Use the enclosed pond dipping net to make 15 sweeps (each sweep being approx 1 metre long) at differing depths in your pond (see tips on the Great British Pond Life Results form).

Step 3: After each sweep of your pond dipping net, place the creatures you have caught into your observation tray or jam jar and record the species observed on the Great British Pond Life Results form.

Step 4: After your 15 sweeps are complete, tally up the total number of each species on the Great British Pond Life Results form and then release all wildlife back to the pond!

Step 5: Scan your completed results form and email it to water@hansonbox.org before July 31st, 2021. We will collate all results we receive, upload the data and launch an interactive map via a live streamed event at 10 am on August 11th!

Join our live event at 10 am on August 11th via www.hansonbox.org/water

Our partner, the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, has generously offered **free teacher visits** to WWT sites so you can discover more of the UK's native wetlands wildlife! **Please see enclosed document for details of this free offer!**

Also see *Local Safari - Wildlife Adventures at Home* book in your 2020 Hanson Box!

TADPOLES AND FROGLETS

Frogs and toads hatch from eggs into tadpoles. Tadpoles start life with external gills but gradually internal lungs form, along with back legs and then front legs. As froglets, they crawl onto land to grow into frogs or toads.



FRESHWATER SNAILS

Many species of freshwater snails are found across the UK differing in size, colour and the spiral shape of their shell. The largest species can be few centimeters long (such as the great pond snail, shown here). Look out for ramshorn snails with spiral shells!



CADDISFLY LARVAE

construct a protective tube of silk covered with gravel, sand and leaves in which they pupate to become a moth-like insect. They retreat into the tube if alarmed! Handle gently to avoid crushing!



NEWTS

The British isles are home to three species of newts. Smooth and palmate newts grow up approx 10 cm, whereas the rare great crested newt can grow to 17 cm. Watch for them rising to the surface to take a nip of air before darting back down again.



STICKLEBACKS

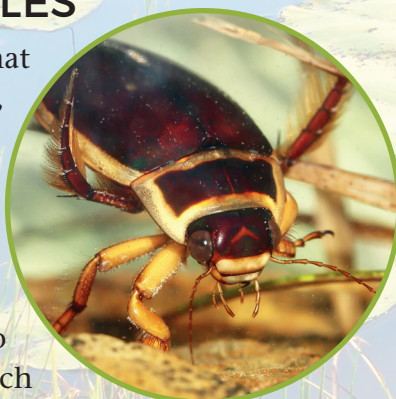
There are several species of stickleback in Britain. The most common is the 3-spined (shown here). This fish grows to 7 cm long and feeds on insect larvae, tadpoles and fish larvae.

It has two larger spines and one smaller spine on its back.



DIVING BEETLES

Voracious predator that hunt invertebrates, tadpoles and even small fish. Adults poke their abdomens out of the water to replenish air trapped under their wing cases. You are very likely to find whirligig beetles which swim on the surface and rapidly move in circles or underwater if disturbed.



DRAGONFLY LARVAE

have extendable jaws that shoot out from under their chins to capture prey. It may take two years before the larva metamorphoses into an adult dragonfly.



DAMSELFLY LARVAE

Similar to dragonfly larvae, but often a lighter build. Like dragonfly larvae, they are ferocious predators of insect larvae and even of tadpoles. Often paler in colour and more slender.

