

# Clean Water for Wildlife Activity Pack

Our freshwater  
wildlife depends on  
clean unpolluted  
water to thrive.  
Take action now!



**Find out how you can help promote and create clean water habitats and take part in wildlife friendly activities to help save freshwater wildlife**

[freshwaterhabitats/projects/clean-water](https://freshwaterhabitats/projects/clean-water)

# Take action for freshwater wildlife at home

## 1. Dig your own clean water garden pond

Creating clean water ponds is a fantastic way of supporting clean water in the wider landscape. Large or small, garden ponds can be incredible freshwater havens for a variety of wildlife. You can find hints and tips on how to create a garden pond at:

[freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/habitats/pond/create-pond](http://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/habitats/pond/create-pond)



## 4. Create a hoverfly lagoon

If you are short on space and have a small garden, a Hoverfly Lagoon would be the perfect way to encourage a natural pest predator into your garden. The Buzz Club can show you how to look out for hoverfly:

[thebuzzclub.uk/citizen-science-projects/hoverfly-lagoons](http://thebuzzclub.uk/citizen-science-projects/hoverfly-lagoons)

## 5. Build a home for amphibians

Amphibians need good terrestrial habitats to find food once they have left their breeding ponds and as a place to hibernate during the winter. Log piles are a great refuge for toads, frogs and newts. You can find out how to build a good home for amphibians here:

<https://www.arc-trust.org/help-amphibians>



## 2. Save water

Reducing the amount of water we use in the home can reduce over-exploitation of freshwater from the surrounding landscape. Install a water butt and use this to feed your garden and your garden pond – rainwater is best for wildlife. Waterwise provides free advice on other ways to save water in your home:

[www.waterwise.org.uk/pages/save-water.html](http://www.waterwise.org.uk/pages/save-water.html)

## 3. Find out what's in your garden pond

Have you ever wondered what creatures live in your garden pond? The Big Pond Dip is a great way for you and your family to discover the fascinating animals that live there. Find out how to take part here:

[freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/get-involved-2/big-pond-dip](http://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/get-involved-2/big-pond-dip)



## 6. Create an animal highway

Amphibians and other animals like hedgehogs can cover large distances in search of food. Make your garden wildlife friendly by creating gaps in fences for animals to travel through:

<http://www.hedgehogstreet.org/pages/link-your-garden.html>

## 7. Check your plumbing!

In old houses, a misconnection in your pipes can mean that dirty dish water enters the road drains which flow directly into our rivers; bypassing sewage treatment works. You can assess the risk here:

[www.connectright.org.uk](http://www.connectright.org.uk)

If you're off the main drainage network, make sure your septic tank is properly maintained to reduce the risk of accidental pollution:

[www.catchmentbasedapproach.org/images/PDFS/SmallSewageLeaflet.pdf](http://www.catchmentbasedapproach.org/images/PDFS/SmallSewageLeaflet.pdf)

# Take action for freshwater wildlife in your community

## 1. Join a Flagship Pond group

Flagship Ponds are the most important pond sites in the UK, the top 0.2% of ponds. They support some of our rarest freshwater plants and animals. We've selected 70 Flagship Sites as part of the People, Ponds and Water project, where we're working with community groups, to undertake surveys and practical work to help protect these special places. To find out more about Flagship Pond sites near you visit:

[freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/flagship](https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/flagship)



## 4. Join a local conservation group

By volunteering with your local community conservation or wildlife group, you can actively make a difference in your local area. It's a fun, free way to meet new people and get fit at the same time.

[freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/clean-water/](https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/clean-water/)



## 2. Feed the results of the Clean Water for Wildlife survey into your local wildlife plans

Community wildlife project plans, neighbourhood plans, catchment based management plans and the like, all benefit from real up-to-date data. The Clean Water for Wildlife survey has provided inexpensive, reliable information on water quality and nutrient pollution, especially on habitats like ponds and small streams which are not routinely monitored by the national agencies.

You can use these results to feed into local plans and protect key clean water habitats in your local area. The results from the Clean Water for Wildlife survey are free to access and download at

[freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/waternet](https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/waternet)

## 3. Yellow Fish Project

Only rainwater in drains please! You can help educate your local community about the importance of not tipping oil and detergent down drains. Find out how to get involved in the Environment Agency's Yellow Fish Project here: [Yellow Fish Guidance Manual PDF](#)

## 5. Build a wildlife pond in your local park

Creating a clean water pond in your local green space, park or woodland is a great way to attract new wildlife and ensure clean water still exists in your local area. You can find detailed advice about creating wildlife ponds in the Pond Creation Toolkit:

[freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/million-ponds/pond-creation-toolkit/](https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/million-ponds/pond-creation-toolkit/)

## 6. Saving amphibians in drains

Each year hundreds of amphibians become trapped in drains. Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the UK designed a project to install drain ladders to help stranded amphibians. You can find out how your community group could install 'escape ladders' in local drains here: [www.arguk.org/get-involved/projects-surveys/saving-amphibians-in-drains](http://www.arguk.org/get-involved/projects-surveys/saving-amphibians-in-drains)

# Take action to save freshwater wildlife for everyone

## 1. Help monitor freshwater habitats

We need evidence if we want to engage people and change environmental policies for the better. Join like-minded people, learn about freshwater wildlife and help to gather vital information by joining a species recording group.

PondNet is Freshwater Habitats Trust's national volunteer survey to collect pond quality and pond species information. You could survey for anything from toads to wetland plants. To find out more please visit: [freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/pondnet](https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/pondnet)

If a particular animal or plant takes your fancy, consider joining a local species group like the Dragonfly Society or a local Amphibian and Reptile Group. We've put a full list of all the groups we work with links to their websites here:

[freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/clean-water/](https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/clean-water/)



## 3. Help us to enthuse the next generation

Do you know of any schools who would be interested in our Clean Water for Wildlife Schools Packs? We have 40 FREE Schools Packs to give away and we need schools to sign up to get involved. Schools can use quick and easy nutrient testing kits as a class activity to teach students more about their local freshwater habitats while contributing to vital research. To find out more please visit:

[freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/thameswaterforwildlife/schools](https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/thameswaterforwildlife/schools)

## 2. Join, contribute and support freshwater organisations and charities

We base our policies and actions on evidence that we and others have gathered about how freshwater habitats work and where we can put our resources to best use. We do this to advise landowners, land managers, statutory agencies, and local and national government on how to protect freshwater wildlife now and in the future. Find out how a donation from you can make a difference [freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/get-involved-2/support-us/make-a-donation/](https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/get-involved-2/support-us/make-a-donation/)



## 4. Talk to your local MP or write an open letter to the Environment Secretary

Small unpolluted freshwater habitats, like ponds and headwater streams, support a larger proportion of freshwater biodiversity than lakes or rivers, and are especially important for uncommon plants and animals. However, they are one of the least protected habitats and are now under serious threat.

Join forces to raise your concerns about the decline in clean freshwater with your local MP or write a letter from your local community to the Environment Secretary highlighting the plight of freshwater habitats in the UK. Together we can make a difference.