



1. GENERAL ADVICE FOR TEACHERS ON POND-DIPPING

Ponds are superb places for learning about wildlife, and you are guaranteed to find animals for studying, whatever time of year you look. This document gives some general advice for teachers using educational ponds.

1. Equipment required

- White trays (for temporarily housing your insect finds).
- Pond nets.
- Magnifiers.
- Insect pots (for possible microscope study in the classroom).
- Identification guides (provided by Wildlife-man).

2. Concept ideas for pond-dipping (and timings)

Concept	Explanation	Time of year
Life cycles	Frogspawn (late March), tadpoles (April, May, June) and froglets (June and July). Dragonfly larvae and adult emergence (June-August).	March to July.
Foodchains	Identification of pond animals, looking at adaptations for feeding (big eyes and jaws = carnivore / small eyes and small sucking or chewing jaws = herbivore).	April to July. September.
Minibeasts	Emerging adult insects from water (dragonflies, damselflies, caddisflies, bloodworms). Adults laying eggs in the pond (dragonflies and damselflies).	May to July.
Habitats	Identification of pond animals. Looking at their swimming adaptations for life in their underwater habitat.	April to July September.

3. Managing risks

Here are some general tips for doing pond-dipping with pupils.

- No unsupervised use of the pond area.
- Supervision of pond-dipping. Limiting the number of people pond-dipping at any given time to three pupils maximum.
- Ensure that pupils keep hands out of the water, and keep hands from mouth. Wash hands after session.
- Ensuring that children do not poke or try and handle animals in the pond-dip trays. Use bug pots or magnifiers for close study.
- Limits numbers pond-dipping at the same time, to reduce likelihood of pupils getting nets tangled.
- In larger groups, there is a risk of pupils tripping over pond-dipping trays when they are placed on the floor. Consider using a picnic bench or similar – even if you have to walk a slightly longer distance.