

PONDS AND AMPHIBIANS SURVEY GUIDANCE NOTES

LINCOLNSHIRE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP



WHY ARE PONDS IMPORTANT?

All life requires water to survive but wetland habitats throughout the UK are in decline. Small ponds make up the majority of waterbodies in the UK and are of great value to wildlife so it is important that existing ponds are maintained and managed as well as other wetland habitats. In the past ponds were often considered to be poor habitats of little value, and many have been lost through drainage, infilling and neglect. More recently, however, it has been suggested that ponds are in fact the most important freshwater habitat; at a regional level ponds support considerably more species, more unique species and more scarce species than other waterbody types (eg. rivers and streams). Up until now many ponds have not had the protection they perhaps deserve but in 2007 the UK Biodiversity Action Plan gave ponds "Priority Habitat" status, and the new Pond Habitat Action Plan is to be launched in 2008.

PONDS IN LINCOLNSHIRE

Ponds contribute significantly to regional biodiversity and as part of our commitment to the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan we need to gain an understanding of the distribution of all small ponds in Lincolnshire and their biodiversity value so that priorities for conservation management can be identified. This survey represents the first step.

DEFINITION OF A POND

For the purposes of this survey, a pond is:

A body of water with an area between 1 square metre and 2 hectares, which holds water for more than four months of the year.

WHERE TO START

1. Choose a pond or an area with several ponds to survey (a separate recording sheet should be used for each pond surveyed).
2. Identify the pond's location on a 1:25000 Ordnance Survey map (available online at www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/getamap).
3. If the pond is on private land you should always ask for permission before visiting.
4. For safety reasons you are advised not to wade into ponds.
5. Fill in as much of the survey form as you can, using the notes below to help you. Any separate sheets should have your name, the pond's name and the grid reference.
6. Tear off and return the completed survey to **Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership, Banovallum House, Manor House Street, Horncastle, Lincs, LN9 5HF.**

FILLING IN THE SURVEY FORM

Section 1 – Surveyor details:

- We may need to contact you regarding your survey form or to get more information – please indicate whether you are happy for us to do so.
- Information from this survey will be entered into the database of Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre for nature conservation purposes.
- It is hoped that all the information from this survey can also be entered into the National Pond Monitoring Network's national database, which is publicly available. Please indicate whether you are happy for your survey results to be shared.

PONDS AND AMPHIBIANS SURVEY GUIDANCE NOTES

LINCOLNSHIRE
BIODIVERSITY
PARTNERSHIP



Section 2 – Landowner details:

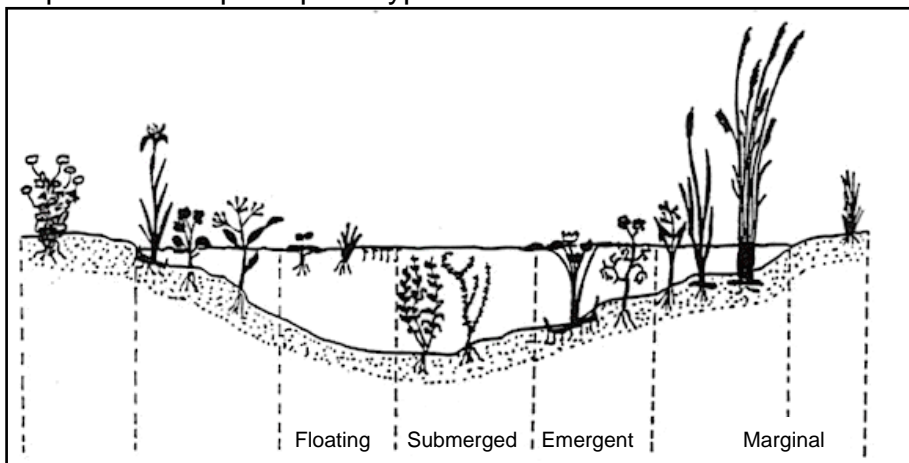
- Please tick the box if you are the landowner.
- Don't worry if you can't fill in all of this section.
- Remember you should not enter private land or leave a public right of way without the landowner's permission; otherwise you will be trespassing and could be prosecuted.

Section 3 – Pond details:

- Grid references should be six figures or more, with two letters at the start. For example, Banovallum House in Horncastle can be found at grid reference TF257695. For more information on using the national grid visit:
www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/gi/nationalgrid/nghelp1.html
- You can also check online whether the pond can be found on a 1:25000 Ordnance Survey map at www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/getamap
- You can estimate the pond's area by pacing out or estimating its length and width in metres.

Section 4 – Pond survey:

- Please indicate north on the sketch map and give an idea of scale. You could also include details such as the winter maximum and current water level, information on pond management, and surrounding features like fences, footpaths, vegetation types, and other ponds.
- Explanation of pond plant types:



Marginal plants and **emergent plants** grow in the shallow water at the edge of the pond or in the damp soil on the banks eg. yellow flag iris and marsh marigold.

Floating plants such as water lilies and duck weed float on the surface of the water.

Submerged plants grow under the water from the base of the pond. These include various pond weeds, which play an important role in oxygenating the water.

Some **algae** are easily visible and form mats like the hair-like blanket weed, which clings to submerged plants and grows from the bank. Others like blue-green algae are microscopic, but can be detected when large numbers colour the water green.

- Additional information – you may record here any other information that hasn't been entered elsewhere on the form, such as plant species present, detailed animal records, the presence/absence of newt eggs and/or frog/toad spawn, or details of any pond management.
- Help with amphibian identification can be found at:
www.narrs.org.uk/Documents/nasdocuments/Amphibian_identification_guide.pdf

4. POND SURVEY:

DATE:

**LINCOLNSHIRE
BIODIVERSITY
PARTNERSHIP**

Sketch map:

What percentage of the pond surface is covered by vegetation?

What percentage of the pond is shaded? (overhung at any height)

 What types of plant are present? (circle all that apply) MARGINAL PLANTS EMERGENT PLANTS ALGAE
 (there is space for more-detailed information below) FREE-FLOATING PLANTS SUBMERGED PLANTS

 Species known to use the pond:
 (you may add more-detailed records in the "additional information" box, below or on a separate sheet)

| | Year(s) seen | | Year(s) seen | | Year(s) seen |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Duck | | Unidentified newt | | Common toad | |
| Coot/moorhen | | Smooth newt | | Common frog | |
| Goose | | Great crested newt | | | |
| Water vole | | Palmate newt | | | |
| Dragonfly/damselfly | | Fish | | | |

Is there rubbish/pollution in the pond? (please circle one) NONE SOME LOTS

Is the pond used by livestock at any time in the year? (please circle)

NO CATTLE SHEEP HORSES OTHER DON'T KNOW

Can you see the bottom of the pond?

Y / N

 CLAY SILT CONCRETE BEDROCK
 DECOMPOSING VEGETATION BLACK OOZE
 GRAVEL/SAND BUTYL/SYNTHETIC
 DON'T KNOW OTHER _____

If yes, which of the following best describes the bottom of the pond? (please circle one)

Additional information:

THANK YOU!! Please send completed forms to:

Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership, Banovallum House, Manor House Street, Horncastle, Lincs, LN9 5HFIf you would like to receive a copy of the results of the survey, please tick here If you **do not** wish to receive further information from the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership, please tick here