



Ponds are natural or artificial waterbodies typically less than 2ha in size. They are important wildlife features often supporting a diversity of aquatic vegetation, invertebrates and amphibians.

Herefordshire ranks just above the national average for pond density in lowland England with 2.1 ponds per km². Significantly, about a quarter of the ponds within Herefordshire are kettle hole ponds, natural features with high biological and geological interest. These include the Lawn Pool at Moccas Park NNR, the Kenchester Pools, and ponds on the Letton Lakes. Several of the pond sites have been designated as Local Geodiversity Sites. These are some of the country's most important ponds supporting national rarities such as medicinal leech *Hirudo medicinalis*, tubular water dropwort *Oenanthe fistulosa* and mud snail *Lymnaea glabra*. Other important ponds include those on Cefn Hill, Vaga Hill and Little Mountain Common all of which are clean water ponds. Those on the latter two sites support the nationally rare pillwort *Pilularia globulifera*. Herefordshire's ponds are particularly important for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*; present in 46% of all ponds surveyed in a recent study.

Threats

- Loss by drainage and infilling or development (conversion to other land use)
- Point and diffuse pollution
- Excessive ground water abstraction
- Lack of, or inappropriate, management
- Invasive non-native plants and animals, including introduction of fish into ponds
- Lack of designation and protection

Current Action & Legislation

- Consents for abstraction and land drainage are required (EA)
- Restoration of ponds in north-east Herefordshire (2015/6)
- The ongoing monitoring of restricted species (2015-2018) through FHT's PondNet project: tubular water-dropwort, pond mud snail, pillwort, medicinal leech and fairy shrimp
- EA responsible for investigating and prosecuting in instances of pollution
- Understanding the underlying geology of each site

Lead Partner	HWT & HART
Key Partners	NE, EA, WUF, AONBs, FHT

	Objective	Action
A	Locate and map all ponds in the county	1
B	Identify pond sites of high quality and maintain their number	2,8,9
C	Create or restore ponds to high quality status to protect species of national importance/priority species	3,4
D	Expand the extent of pond habitats to link with existing quality wetlands	5
E	To understand the causes of sites' decline and plan recovery	8
F	Provide and promote guidelines for pond management, targeted support for farmers	6,7
G	Ensure that important ponds/pond landscapes are designated and protected	9

	Actions	Target
1	Create and maintain a digitised inventory of all water bodies up to 2 Ha	2018
2	Maintain favourable condition for high priority ponds and networks	Annual
3	Achieve good condition for at least 2 networks in the kettle hole moraine region	2020
4	Achieve good condition for 2 networks and 25 ponds in the rest of the county	2020
5	Identify sites to create high quality pond habitat, to link with existing wetlands	2020
6	Provide pond guidelines to landowners, including advice on control of invasive species	2018
7	Promote pond conservation through education in schools and agri-environment schemes	Annual
8	Monitor condition of priority ponds, evaluate causes of declines in quality	2020
9	Work with partners to seek pond designations and liaise with Planning on pond issues	Annual