How to build a mini wildlife pond
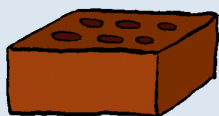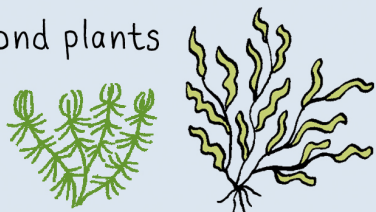
Wildlife Watch

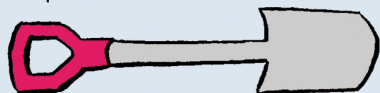## You will need:

- a watertight container *
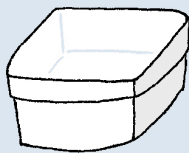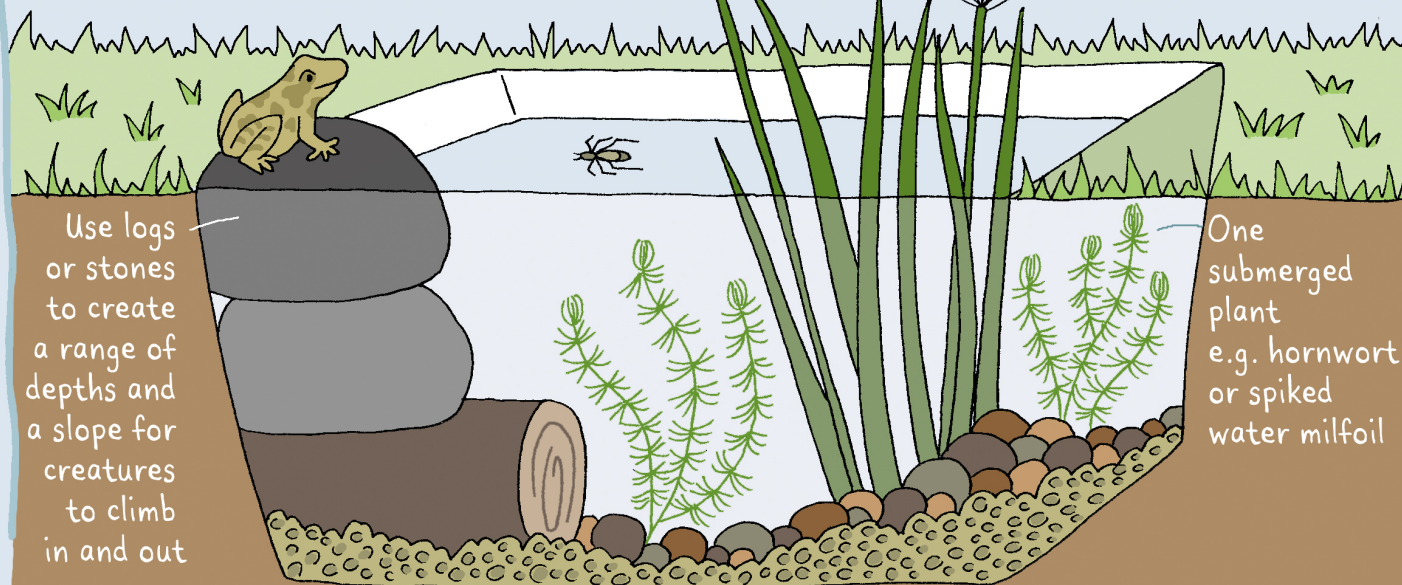
- old bricks, rocks and pebbles

- pond plants

- spade

* Is there anything that you can upcycle? It could be an old washing-up bowl, sink or even a plant pot. Aim for 20-30cm deep.

1. Choose a spot. Your pond will need light, but not full sunlight all day. You can dig a hole and sink your container, or just have it sitting on top.

2. If the container isn't watertight, e.g. an old plant pot, then add a piece of pond liner.

3. Add a layer of gravel and rocks.

4. Fill your pond with rainwater (tap water contains chemicals).

5. Start planting... you only need two or three plants.

6. Now watch and wait! Wildlife will come to your pond of its own accord.

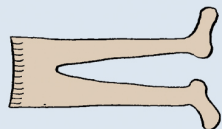One vertical growing plant that reaches out of the water e.g. flowering rush

Use logs or stones to create a range of depths and a slope for creatures to climb in and out

One submerged plant e.g. hornwort or spiked water milfoil

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

Don't introduce frogs, fish or even water from another pond as this can spread disease.

How to make a pond dipping net
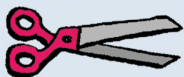
Wildlife watch
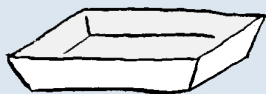
You will need:

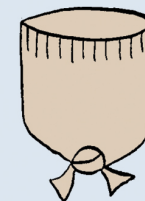- wire coat hanger
- pair of tights
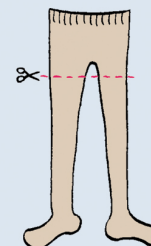- scissors
- needle and thread
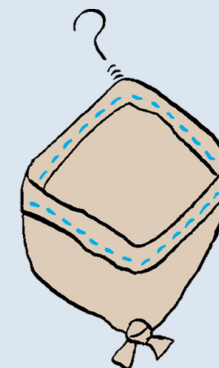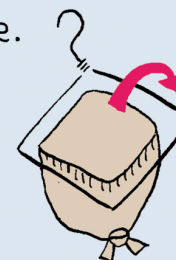- strong duct tape
- garden cane
- white plastic tray

1. Cut the legs off a pair of tights where the tops of the thighs would be. Tie the loose ends together in a tight knot to form the net.

2. Bend a wire coat hanger into a diamond shape. Place your net in the middle of the diamond and fold the waistband over. Sew the hem.
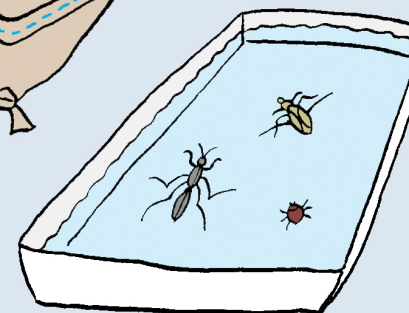
3. Stretch out the hook of the hanger and secure to the garden cane and secure in place with duct tape.
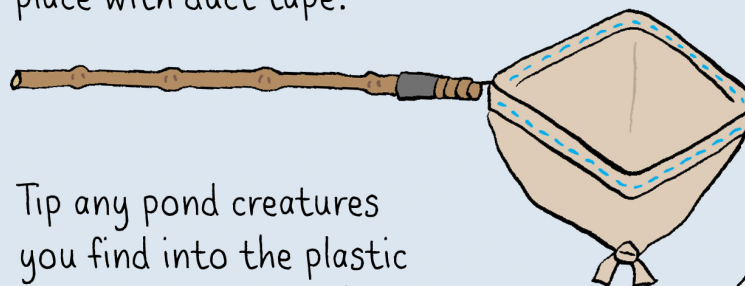
4. Tip any pond creatures you find into the plastic tray for a closer look.
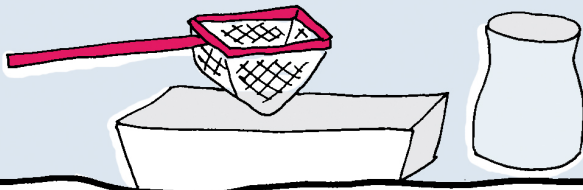
Remember to return creatures to their homes.

How to go pond dipping

Be prepared:

- wear old clothes and wellies

- cover all cuts and scratches with waterproof plasters

- go with a friend, and take a responsible adult too

- take a field guide if you have one

- take a net, shallow tray or washing up bowl and a jam jar

1. Put a small amount of pond water into your tray/bowl

2. Dip your net in the pond and pull it through the water - try a figure of 8

3. Empty your net into the tray/bowl and look carefully (some creatures are very small)

4. Use a camera, sketchbook and notes to record what you find

5. When you've finished, gently empty the tray/bowl, wash your hands and disinfect the net

return animals to the pond using the jar

BE SAFE don't fall in!

Pond minibeast spotter

Wildlife watch

Dragonfly nymph

Damselfly nymph

Great diving beetle (larva)

Great diving beetle

Mayfly nymph

Water scorpion

Water stick insect
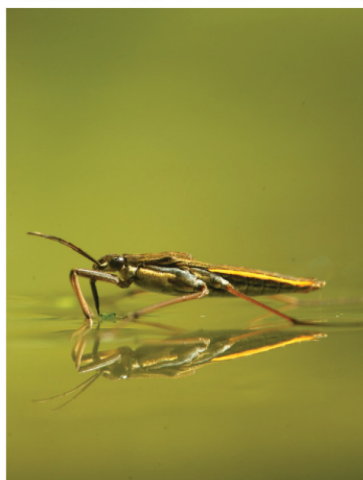
Pond skater

Lesser water boatman

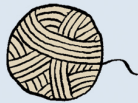Common backswimmer

How to build a miniature raft

Wildlife watch

You will need:

- large, straight sticks

- string or twine
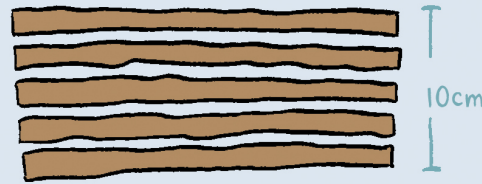
- large leaf (or newspaper)
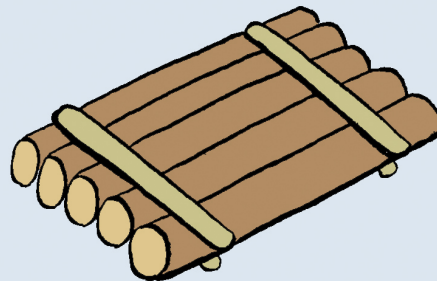
- glue

glue

- wooden lolly sticks

1 Break sticks to roughly the same length, and lay them side by side.
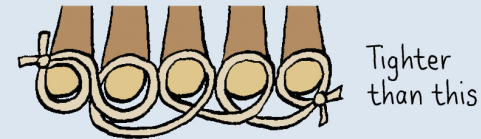
10cm

Watch out for knobbly bits – avoid too many gaps.

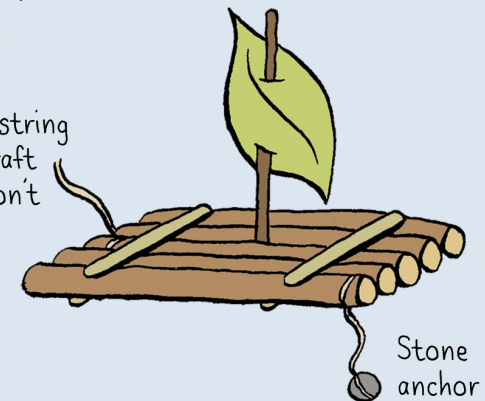**3** Glue wooden lolly sticks over the top of the string lines and leave to dry.

2 Tie string around the end of the first stick and tie a tight knot. Thread the string under and around the end of each stick in turn, and tie off on last stick.

Tighter than this

Repeat on the other side.

4 Add a thinner stick for a mast – push between middle sticks and glue or drill a hole for it. Use a large leaf or square of newspaper for a sail.

Tie some string to your raft so you don't lose it!

Stone anchor

Kingfisher

Wildlife Watch

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