

Age range:



Time needed:



Resources:



**Explore your local pond and take a closer look at the weird and wonderful creatures that make it their home!**

**You will need:**

- Strainers or dip nets
- White trays or containers
- Ice cube tray or spoons
- Hand lenses or magnifying glasses
- Notebook and pencil
- ID guides

## INSTRUCTIONS

**1.** Find a suitable pond to investigate - depending on the terrain and the season, you might need to ask your group to wear waterproof boots, or old trainers/plimsolls.

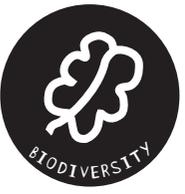
**2.** Approach the pond slowly so you don't scare away the creatures near the water. Ask young people to look closely and record what creatures they can see. What are they doing? Are any creatures flying over the water? Swimming in the water or moving along the bottom?

**3.** Search plant stems and look under rocks and logs near the water's edge and record any new finds.

**4.** Half-fill each tray/container with water from the pond and put them on a flat surface out of the sun.

**5.** Dip the nets or strainers in the water to try and catch small fish, insects, and other tiny creatures. You will find different creatures by making a figure-of-eight motion just below the surface, or by dipping towards the mud at the bottom.

**6.** Empty whatever you find into the pan or containers - take a closer look with a lens or carefully transfer creatures (with water) into an



ice cube tray or lift them in a spoon. Use ID guides to find out what you have caught before recording it, or trying to draw it.

**7.** When you are ready to let everything go, gently lower the containers to the water and let all the creatures swim out.

#### TAKE IT FURTHER...

You can discuss with the group why wildflowers are important to support the population of insects, and why this is important for the ecosystem as a whole. If you have the chance to revisit the site where you plant your seedbombs, you could look at what has grown successfully, and see if there is any difference between the species that thrive in drier/damper places, sunny/shady spots or different soil types.

What steps can we take to secure food supplies, either in the UK or elsewhere in the world?

As well as providing a location for your pond dipping, your local Wildlife Trust, RSPB or other nature reserve may have equipment you can borrow for this activity. There are downloadable ID guides, as well as instructions to make your own pond dipping nets, available online at [www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/activities/pond-dipping/](http://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/activities/pond-dipping/)