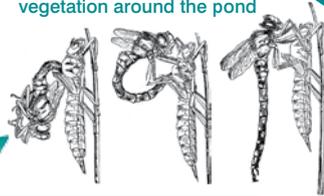


# THE WILDLIFE ROAD SHOW

## IN THE POND

Look out for empty nymph cases stuck to vegetation around the pond

An adult dragonfly emerging from its nymph case



Does it have legs?

stay on this page

Please turn over

### Damselfly nymph

*Zygoptera sp.*



actual size

Up to 3cm long with 3 leaf-like tails. No gill flaps on body. Crawls through pond vegetation feeding on small creatures. Lives several weeks or years before emerging as an adult.

### Dragonfly nymph

*Anisoptera sp.*



A 'sit and wait' predator. If suitable prey comes near, it shoots forward a hooked 'mask' to grab it. Can eat animals as large as tadpoles and small fish. May spend 2 years in the pond before emerging as a beautiful dragonfly.

### Mayfly nymph

*Ephemeroptera sp.*



actual size

Example shown:  
**Pond Olive** (*Cloeon dipterum*)

3 thin tails. 1.4cm. Look for the gill flaps along the body. Feeds on small pond creatures and algae. Uses its tail to swim in a wriggling motion. The adult mayflies have 2 or 3 long tails and only live for a short time. Around 50 species.

### Great Diving Beetle larva

*Dytiscus sp.*



actual size

Up to 6cm. Often seen hanging from the surface of the water. The larva has massive fangs and can eat tadpoles, small fish and other pond creatures. Pupates in mud at the side of the pond. 6 species.

### Cherry Stone Water beetle

*Hyphidrus ovatus*



actual size

Small in size (5mm), globular and very active. This diving beetle is predatory. The larvae also live in the water and feed on pond creatures. At least 250 species of beetle spend at least part of their life cycle in the water.

### Lesser Water Boatman

*Corixa punctata*



actual size

3-15mm. Oval slightly flattened body. Strong swimmers with 2 hind legs that function as oars. Collect air from the surface which is stored in a bubble around their bodies. Feed on algae and plant material. More than 30 species.

### Water 'Shrimp'

*Crangonyx pseudogracilis*

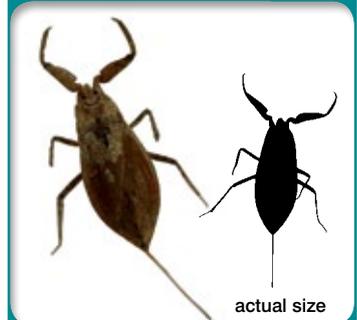


actual size

Up to 8mm. Sometimes bluish in colour. Its numerous legs are used for walking, swimming and holding food. Feeds on decaying plant material. Introduced from N. America and first noticed in this country in 1936, it is now widespread.

### Water Scorpion

*Nepa cinerea*



actual size

Up to 3.5cm. Dark brown and flat, it looks like a dead leaf. Its long tail is a breathing tube. It feeds on other creatures by seizing them with the front pair of legs and sucking out their body fluids.

Not to be confused with...

### Backswimmer

*Noctonecta sp.*

16mm long, swims upside down using long hind legs as paddles.



Also look out for...

### Water Hoglouse

*Asellus sp.*

15mm. Found in most ponds. Looks like a woodlouse with long legs and feeds on dead plant material.



# THE WILDLIFE ROAD SHOW

## IN THE POND



### Mosquito pupa

Unusually for pupae, this one is very active. Hangs like a comma from the water surface but swims rapidly if disturbed.

After a few days the larva changes into...

It takes about two days for the pupae to transform into an adult Mosquito.

Also look out for...



### Flatworm

*Polycelis nigra/tenuis*

Small dark flattened worms up to 3mm long that glide slowly on the underside of leaves and stones.

### Mosquito larva

*Culex pipiens*



Up to 1cm. Hangs from the water surface by its tail which is a breathing tube. Bristles on the head create a feeding current, bringing detritus and algae to the larva. Mosquito larvae are prey for many carnivorous pond creatures e.g. newts.

### Rat-tailed Maggot

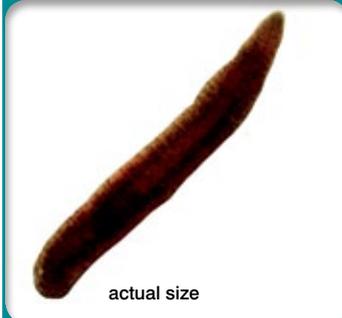
*Eristalis sp.*



Up to 2cm. Can live in water with little oxygen by breathing through a long tube which is telescopic and can be extended or retracted depending on the depth of the water. Feeds on dead leaves and mud. The adult is a hoverfly.

### Leech

*Erpobdella octoculata*



Brown flattened worm with black markings and a sucker at each end. Can grow to 6cm. Feeds on small pond creatures and cannot pierce human skin. Moves by looping or can swim by undulating a bit like a water snake.

### Three-spined Stickleback

*Gasterosteus aculeatus*



Grows to 5cm. The male builds a nest in his territory and entices several females to lay eggs in it. He then cares for the young. The three spines give some protection against being eaten by larger fish.

### Great Ramshorn

*Planorbis corneus*



The largest ramshorn snail, it can grow up to 3cm and the body can be black or red. The shell is very thick. Likes ponds with lots of vegetation.

### Margined Ramshorn

*Planorbis planorbis*



Grows up to 17mm and looks like a little spiral button. Found in well vegetated ponds and is often found in shallow ponds that are liable to dry up in the summer.

### Wandering Snail

*Radix balthica*



Shell has a spire but does not grow more than 2cm. The Wandering Snail is the commonest pond snail. Found in all conditions and can even tolerate pollution.

### Great Pond Snail

*Lymnaea stagnalis*



This large snail has a long spire and can grow to 5cm. Has two tentacles with an eye at the base of each. Lives in ponds with lots of vegetation and, like other pond snails, feeds by scraping algae from surfaces.



### Snail eggs

Jelly blobs stuck to vegetation which are circular or elongated are snail eggs. If you look carefully you may see the tiny snails inside.

Also look out for...



### Orb Mussel

*Sphaerium* and *Pisidium* species

Orb Mussels from 2 - 25mm across. They can live in the substrate or climb through vegetation on a ladder of mucous using a muscular foot.

Text by Ellen Pisolkar

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