



## Nature Trail 2

# The Pond Fjords

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# The Pond Fjords

Ponds in Ireland are in serious decline. Here at HoneyPark we are trying to protect our freshwater wildlife. The reed bed and pond fjords provide a habitat for a wide range of plant and animal species.

## Plants



### 1. Yellow Iris

*Iris Pseudacorus / Feileastram*

This handsome plant shows its large, bright yellow flowers from June to August. The large blooms (8-10cm) are unmistakable and are found in clusters of twos and threes. The lower petals are beautifully marked with purple veins leading into the mouth.



### 2. Field Forget-me-not

*Myosotis Arvensis / Lus Míonla Goirt*

This plant has slightly cup-shaped pale blue 5-petaled flowers (3-4mm across), with a yellow centre, which flower from April to September. The leaves are oblong and pointed and both these and the stems are extremely hairy. An annual plant, it grows to 25cm high.



### 3. Bullrush

*Typha Latifolia / Coigéal Na Mban Sí*

This tall, upright reed-like plant has long, narrow, grey-green leaves up to 2cm wide. The minute flowers are borne in a dense spike which resembles a straight sausage. They appear from July to August. The fruits are borne on cottony down and disperse in the wind.



### 4. Yellow Water-Lily

*Nuphar Lutea / Cabhán Abhann*

The large heart-shaped/oval leaves (up to 40cm across) make a carpet on the water's surface. The rich yellow flowers (6cm across) bloom from June to September. The fruit is shaped like a brandy-bottle and stands out of the water and there is a smell of alcohol from the whole plant which attracts pollinating insects. This perennial plant is rooted in mud, tolerates food-rich water and shade.



*The Pond Fjords* **Plants** *continued*



**5. Purple-Loosestrife**

*Lythrum Salicaria* / Créachtach

A mature Purple-Loosestrife plant stands on average 2m high. Flowers have 5-6 reddish-purple petals. Blooming season is July through August. The fruit is a small capsule.



**6. Greater Pond Sedge**

*Carex Riparia* / Cíb Locháin Mhór

Greater Pond Sedge has tall, triangular stems and bright green, blade-like leaves. Tight clusters of dark brown spikelets (containing the flowers) appear on the ends of the stems in a cylindrical form. It flowers from May to June and grows up to 1.2m.

**Wildlife**



**1. Mayfly**

*Ephemeroptera* / Cuil Bhealtaine

The Mayfly is one of the oldest living insects from many thousands of years ago, and is part of the same family as the Dragonfly. There are thousands of Mayfly species around the world, and they are known by different names including the; Dune Bug, Lake Fly, Day Fly, Green Bay Fly and Fish Fly. This small and interesting insect was called a one-day fly due to its short life span. The Mayfly is classed as an insect because of its insect features, like the six legs and three segmented body.



**2. Stonefly**

*Plecoptera* / Cuil Chloch

Many species are gray, black, or brown and blend into their surroundings. They have long antennae and two pairs of membranous wings that, at rest, fold like a fan. Despite their well developed wings, Stoneflies are poor fliers. Fishermen often copy the shape of Stonefly to use as lures when fishing.

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*The Pond Fjords Wildlife* *continued*



**3. Water Boatman**

*Notonecta Glauca / Fleascóra*

This insect swims upside-down, propelled by two long legs which paddle like oars, making it look like a rowing boat. Water Boatmen rest on the surface of the water sensing vibrations. If there is something disturbing the water they will immediately dive to investigate. Water Boatmen are very effective predators and can catch and eat tadpoles, small fish and will also eat airborne insects that have accidentally fallen onto the surface of the water.



**4. Emerald Dragonfly**

*Somatochlora Hineana / Snáthaid Mhór*

Dragonflies have a very short lifespan, they usually only live for about a month or less. Their huge eyes are curve shaped so that they can see in several different directions at a time and spot prey at a distance. They can breathe water through gills in their abdomen, and then squirt this water out fast to give themselves a quick jet-propelled movement along the surface of a pond.



**5. Damselfly**

*Zygoptera / Béchuil*

The Damselfly belongs to the same subgroup of insects as Dragonflies and share many features. However, the wings of the Damselfly are different in shape and when resting are folded, unlike the dragon fly. Another difference is that the body of the Damselfly is long and slender compared to the stocky dragonfly. Also, the eyes of the Damselfly are found on both sides of the head rather than on top like the Dragonfly.



**6. Stickleback Fish**

*Gasterosteus Aculeatus / Garmachán*

The Stickleback is a well-known fish with a streamlined, torpedo shaped body and broad tail fin. Most individuals tend to measure between 4cm and 6 cm in length. The common name derives from the most unique feature of these fish, the presence of two to four, but typically three, sharp spines on the back.



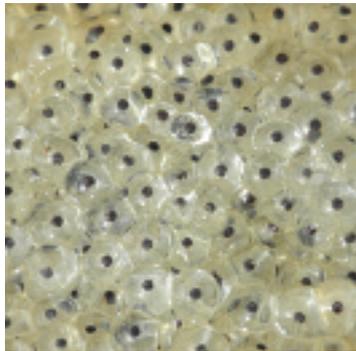
**7. Newt**

*Lissotriton Vulgaris / Earc*

There's only one species of Newt in Ireland, it's sometimes called the Smooth Newt or the Common Newt and is Ireland's only tailed amphibian. Although a native member of our fauna, it is rarely seen and relatively under recorded. This is probably partly due to its elusive nature and also because it is regularly mistaken for a lizard. They are about 10cm long, brown or dark olive coloured with a long paddle like tail to help them swim rapidly to catch prey.

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*The Pond Fjords Wildlife* continued



**8. Frog**

**Rana Temporaria / Frog**

Of the three species of amphibian found in Ireland the common frog is by far the most familiar.

In early spring the female will lay 1000 to 4000 eggs. This frog's spawn floats in clumps protected by a jelly-like coating until the tadpoles emerge after 30-40 days.

Tadpoles generally take up to sixteen weeks to grow back legs, then front legs before they metamorphose into tiny froglets, ready to leave the water in early summer.

Most people think of frogs as aquatic creatures, but in fact they spend most of their lives on land, only returning to the water in order to breed.