



Saving Nidderdale's Priority Ponds



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POND



Freshwater Habitats Trust

Our aim: To protect freshwater life.

- We are an evidence-based conservation charity, with a strong science grounding.
- We are highly strategic – we target our work where evidence suggests it will be most effective.
- We are concerned with all freshwaters including those that are small and undervalued like headwater streams, ponds, flushes and ditches.
- We work in partnership with people, communities and organisations to get the best results for freshwater wildlife.

STREAM



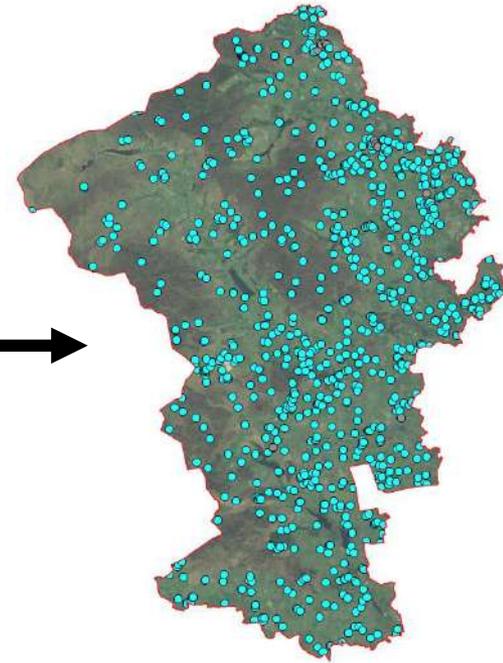
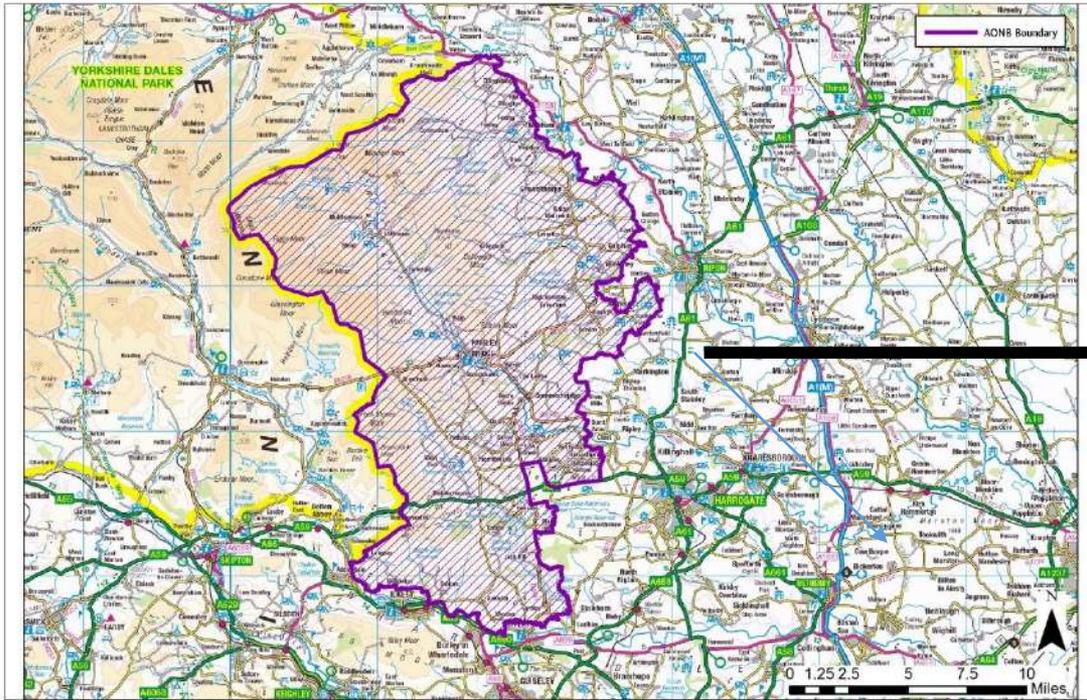
RIVER



DITCH



Nidderdale AONB



233 square miles

South-east of the
Yorkshire Dales

Around 1400 ponds

Saving Nidderdale's Priority Ponds

Important Freshwater Landscapes

24 IFLs identified in England & Wales

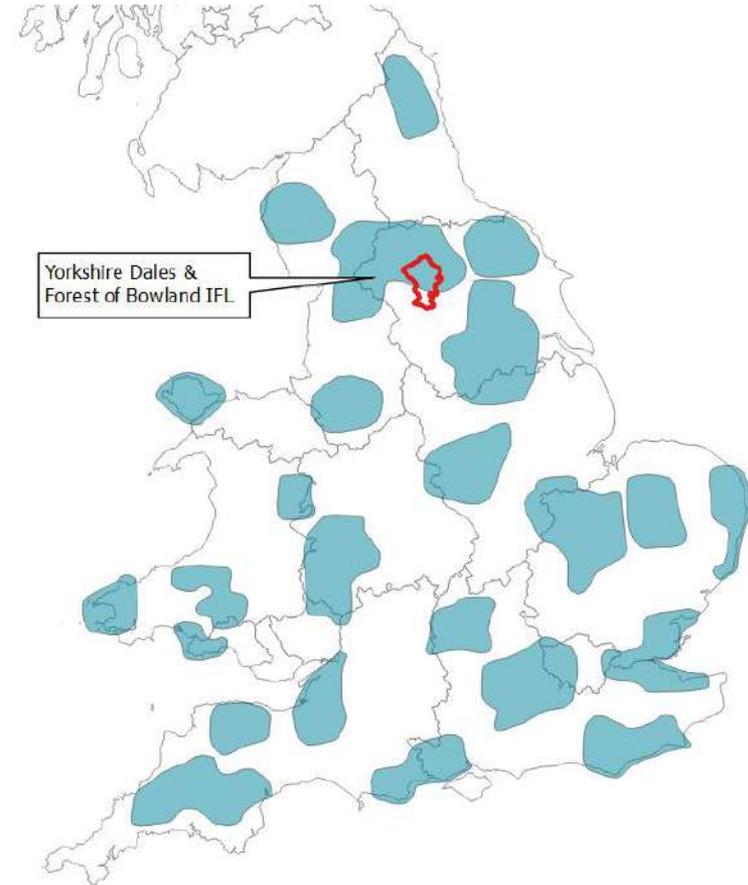
Planning projects at a landscape scale allows us to:

- protect existing hotspots, which may be declining in quality, and/or
- expand out from these areas to extend quality habitat and link IFLs together.

Nidderdale AONB partly falls within an IFL

Has the potential to be important for ponds and freshwater life

Due to low population density/lack of recording, may simply be deficient in data to support this.



Project Aims

1. Engage local people to involve them in the project
2. Delivering educational sessions to local schools and events
3. Amphibian surveys on 50 ponds to gather data on toads
4. Clean water testing of 100 ponds to assess extent of nutrients in the water
5. Increase understanding of the distribution and status of ponds and the priority species in them

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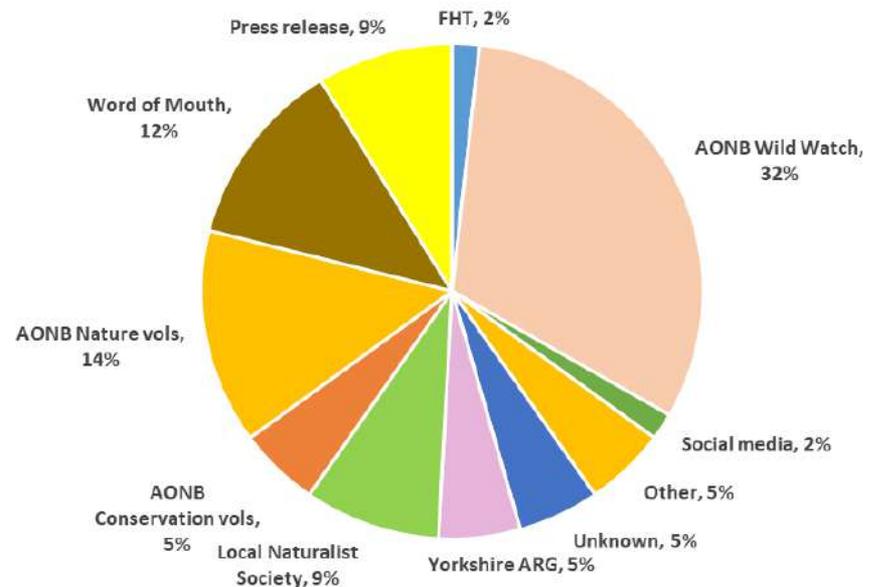
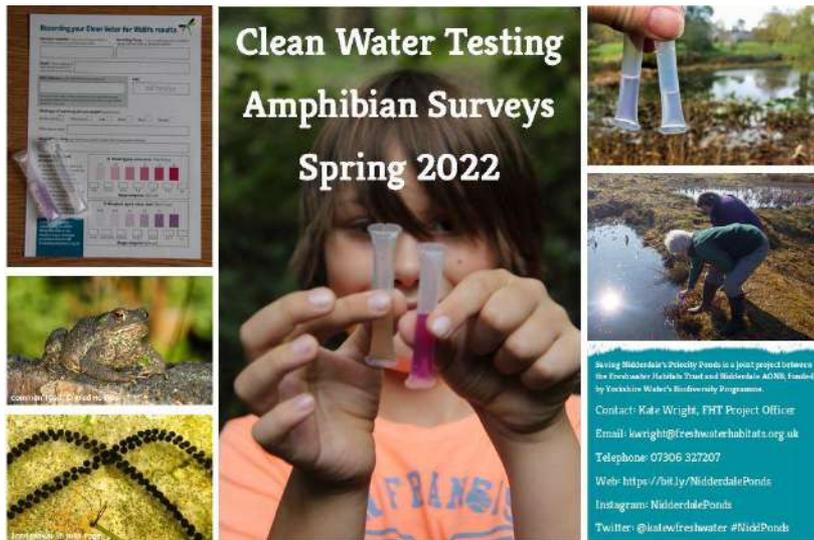
Volunteer Surveyors

68 volunteers



43 survey teams

- Volunteers from a range of sources
- 56% from existing AONB resources: nature/conservation volunteers, Wild Watch surveyors
- Remainder are new to the AONB, from local naturalist societies and via publicity (press release, social media)



Volunteer Surveyors

Category	Event	Surveyor Units	Time Per Event (Hours)	Volunteer Hours	Volunteer Days
Training	Amphibian Survey (20/01/2022)	34	1.5	51	7
Training	Amphibian Survey (17/02/2022)	29	1.5	43.5	6
Training	Clean Water Phase 1 (17/03/2022)	26	1.5	39	6
Training	Clean Water Phase 2 (14/09/2022)	19	1	19	3
Survey	Amphibian/Spawn	454	2	908	130
Survey	Clean Water Testing - Spring	117	0.5	58.5	8
Survey	Clean Water Testing - Autumn	79	1.5	118.5	17
Education	Countryside Days	1	14	14	2
Education	Let's Learn Moor	1	7	7	1
Totals		652		1106	158



Saving Nidderdale's Priority Ponds



Postcard Campaign

Do you have a pond in Nidderdale AONB?

Tell us about it!

- We're building a picture of the network of ponds across Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- Gathering this information gives us a more complete map of ponds, helping us protect these important freshwater areas and carry out future conservation work.
- You can help by telling us about ponds in your garden/on your land.
- We're interested in hearing about all types of pond! Garden ponds, seasonal ponds and ponds under tree cover are largely unmapped.

How you can help...
Let us know about your pond and its wildlife

Types of ponds

Container pond

Very small in size, e.g. a sunken bucket or sink.

Ornamental garden pond

Small to medium size.

'Artificial' often plastic lined or brick built with steep sides. Surroundings often neat/tidy gardens. May contain small numbers of fish.



Wildlife garden pond

Any size. Can be lined, but more naturalistic with gently sloping sides and vegetated banks. Surroundings include taller plants and shrubs.



Other Ponds

Such as: fishing lake, woodland pond, field pond, seasonal pond, pond in rough grassland.

Please fill in the form below and post it back to us for free!
Thank you for helping us find out more about ponds in Nidderdale AONB.

Your email address (so we can get in touch in case we have any queries):

Grid reference* to centre of pond (What3Words if no grid ref.)	Postcode	Pond type See above	Species seen (if any) e.g. Toad, newt	Date species seen

Alternatively, please email details to kate.wright@harrogate.gov.uk with **Ponds Postcard** as the subject.

*Find grid references online at gridreferencefinder.com



We'd love to see a photo of your pond!
These can be emailed as above, or via twitter [@katewfreshwater](https://twitter.com/katewfreshwater) #NiddPonds

Please tick here if you'd like to receive updates about the Savings Nidderdale's Priority Ponds project.

Your personal data will be held by Freshwater Habitats Trust and Nidderdale AONB. This will only be used to contact you about this project and its evaluation, and other related projects that may be of interest. Your data will not be used for marketing purposes or given to outside organisations.

Nidderdale AONB and the Freshwater Habitats Trust have joined forces to help save ponds from being degraded and lost across the AONB.

Did you know?

- Clean water ponds can store carbon, helping to combat climate change.
- Ponds support **two thirds of freshwater species** and more endangered species than lakes, rivers or streams.
- **50% of UK ponds were lost** in the 20th century.
- **9 out of 10 ponds are damaged by pollution**, threatening freshwater habitats and species.
- Garden ponds can be valuable havens for wildlife and may provide **c. 2 million breeding sites for frogs!**
- Ponds in **semi-natural habitats** such as rough pasture can also be invaluable for wildlife.

We want to raise the profile of ponds and help create more clean freshwater habitats to benefit wildlife.

Find out more:

<https://bit.ly/NidderdalePonds>

#NiddPonds
NidderdalePonds

Freshwater species



All images © Nils Langran / iStock.com

Working in partnership to save Nidderdale's priority ponds



This project is funded through Yorkshire Water's Sustainability Programme



Freepost RTYJ-TSRX-BZXZ
Nidderdale AONB
King Street
Pateley Bridge
HARROGATE
HG3 5LE



Saving Nidderdale's Priority Ponds



Public Engagement – Nidderdale Show



Saving Nidderdale's Priority Ponds

Press and Social Media



Kate Wright @katewfreshwater · May 9, 2022
Great crested newts were present in both of the surveyed #NiddPonds, with breeding also confirmed in both. We were privileged to see a female laying eggs during the survey.



1 1 4



Kate Wright @katewfreshwater · May 9, 2022
Numerous palmate newts were also found on the survey. The males have black webbed rear feet and a tail filament; females are pink under the chin.
Photos (c) Ros Evans & Kate Wright.



Project launched to protect Nidderdale's ponds

by Thomas Barrett

Last updated Nov 22, 2021



The Stray Ferret Feed
The Stray Ferret
Cases have risen due to the more contagious BA.2 (evolution of Omicron).

<https://bit.ly/3uClC1G>

Twitter

Load More...



The ADHB's new Priority Ponds project officer, Kate Wright.

Can you help save and protect Nidderdale's ponds?

Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is looking for volunteers for a project to survey Priority Ponds, which are ponds with high ecological value and that may support species of high conservation importance such as toads and newts.



@katewfreshwater



NidderdalePonds

Saving Nidderdale's Priority Ponds



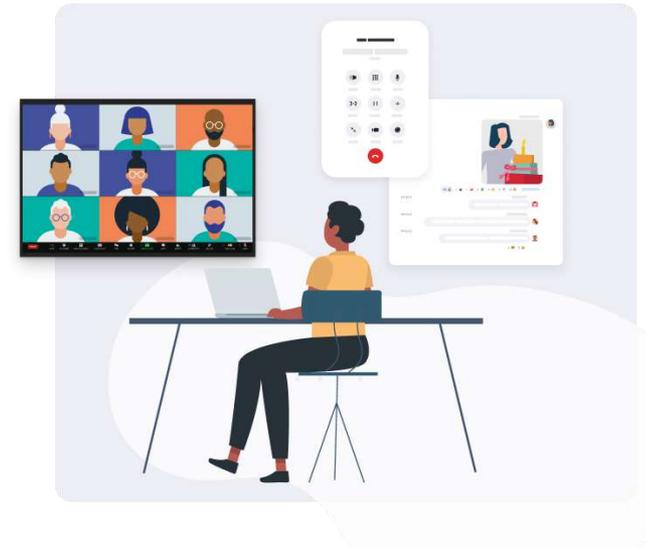
Survey Volunteers

- Amphibian Survey Methods
- Clean Water Testing

Professional Development & General Public

- Dragonfly ID & Survey
- Assessing Freshwater Diversity
- Pond Management for Biodiversity
- Garden Pond Management
- Wildlife Pond Creation
- Garden Pond Creation

Training sessions were FREE and open to all, held online.



Project Aims

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- 2. Delivering educational sessions to local schools and events**
3. Amphibian surveys on 50 ponds to gather data on toads
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Outreach Work: SCHOOLS & YOUTH GROUPS

- Delivering sessions to schools/youth groups.
- Demonstrate how to create a mini pond for their garden or yard – providing all the kit they need for this (container, rocks, plants)
- Leaflet to support this – for anyone in FHT
- Infographic available which can be used in social media, on email footers, etc.

Learn how to create a container pond

1 Find a container for your pond.

2 Pick a good location for your pond.

3 Dig a hole for the container.

4 Place your container into the ground. Put some stones or gravel into the bottom of it - these will help hold plants in place.

5 Pile rocks and logs around the edges to create shallow areas and provide a way for animals such as birds and hedgehogs to get in and out and drink from the pond.

6 Allow the pond to fill naturally with rainwater, or fill it with rainwater collected in a bucket or water butt.

7 Add some plants to the pond. You only need to add a couple of plants to the pond, but try for a mix of species.

8 Piles of old logs or rocks provide a quiet, dark space where amphibians can hide away and stay safe.

Make a home for freshwater wildlife!

Find out more at: freshwaterhabitats.org.uk

Let's go!

1 Find a suitable container for your pond. It should be a bucket or a tub, but you can use anything that will hold water. It should be clean and empty.

2 Pick a good location for your pond. It should be a sunny spot, but not too hot. It should be a quiet spot, but not too dark. It should be a safe spot, but not too far from the house.

3 Dig a hole for the container. It should be deep enough to hold the container, but not too deep. It should be wide enough to hold the container, but not too wide. It should be long enough to hold the container, but not too long.

4 Place your container into the ground. Put some stones or gravel into the bottom of it - these will help hold plants in place.

5 Pile rocks and logs around the edges to create shallow areas and provide a way for animals such as birds and hedgehogs to get in and out and drink from the pond.

6 Allow the pond to fill naturally with rainwater, or fill it with rainwater collected in a bucket or water butt.

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8 Piles of old logs or rocks provide a quiet, dark space where amphibians can hide away and stay safe.

Finally, sit back and enjoy your new pond!

Thank you!

About Freshwater Habitats Trust

Freshwater Habitats Trust is a charity that works to protect and improve the health of our freshwater habitats. We do this by providing advice and support to people who are interested in creating and maintaining ponds in their gardens and yards. We also work to raise awareness of the importance of freshwater habitats and the wildlife that live in them.

For more information, visit our website at www.freshwaterhabitats.org.uk



Outreach Work: COUNTRYSIDE DAYS



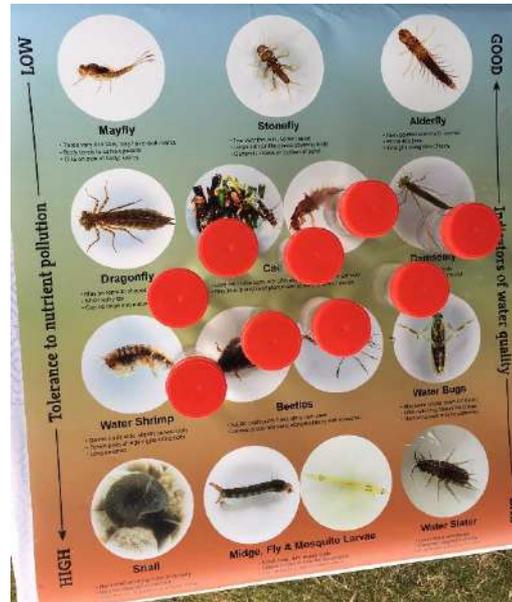
- Pond education session held for 12 groups of children over 2 days = 241 pupils!
- Exercises to think about ponds and what animals are found in/around them (hoop game)
- Explored water quality using test kits
- Looked at some live creatures
- Learned how to build their own mini pond



Outreach Work: MOORLAND EDUCATION



- Pond education session held for 12 groups of children over 2 days = 298 pupils!
- Explored water quality
- Using clean water tests to show that discoloured water can be clean for wildlife
- Matching potted invertebrates to giant poster to see which species indicate clean water

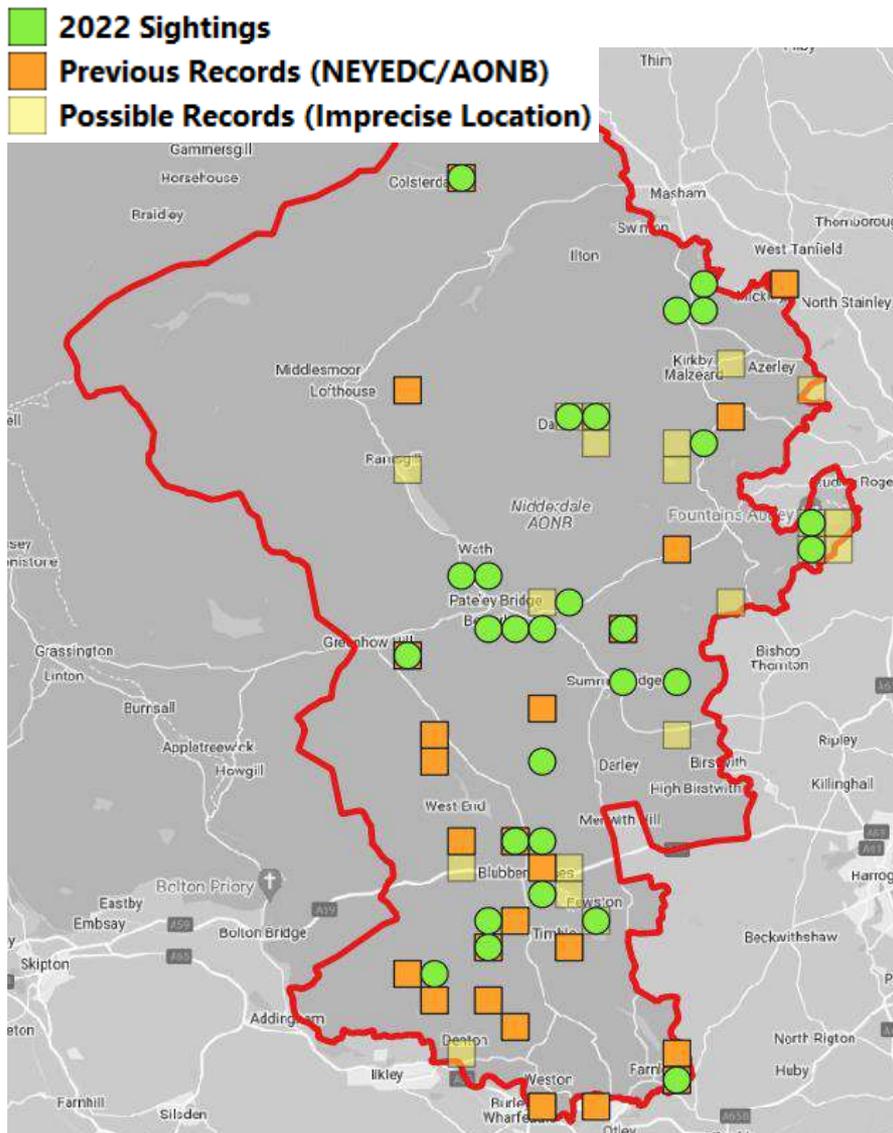


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Toad Surveys

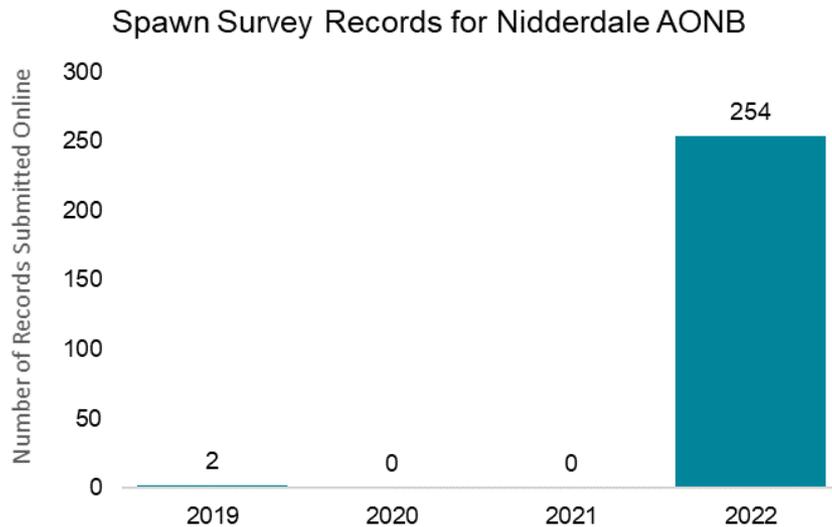


- Survey sites chosen to confirm previously recorded sightings, expand into unrecorded ponds around these areas, as well as take in completely new sites
- Training session on identification and survey skills

Results

- 55 new records for toads in 28 monads. New records shown as green circles on map.
- Toads have been recorded in:
 - 6 existing locations, updating records
 - 5 locations where previously suspected
 - 17 new locations for the first time.
- 115 ponds surveyed across 55 different sites
- 30% increase in identified toad sites

Spawn Survey Success!



- Volunteers & public encouraged to use FHT's Spawn Survey 2022 data portal
- Promoted on social media along with amphibian identification hints and guides
- Nidderdale AONB has seen a massive uplift in the number of frog and toad records being submitted
- In 2022, 254 records submitted



Other Species



- New records for other species
 - Great crested newt
 - White clawed crayfish



- Some volunteers have assisted with other surveys
 - Gaining new experiences
 - Helping with ID skills
 - Logging hours towards their license

© North Yorkshire Crayfish Forum

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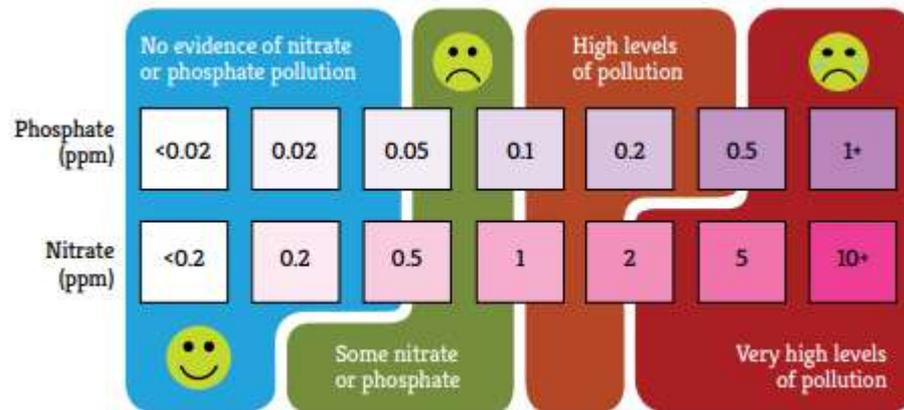
© Freshwater Habitats Trust



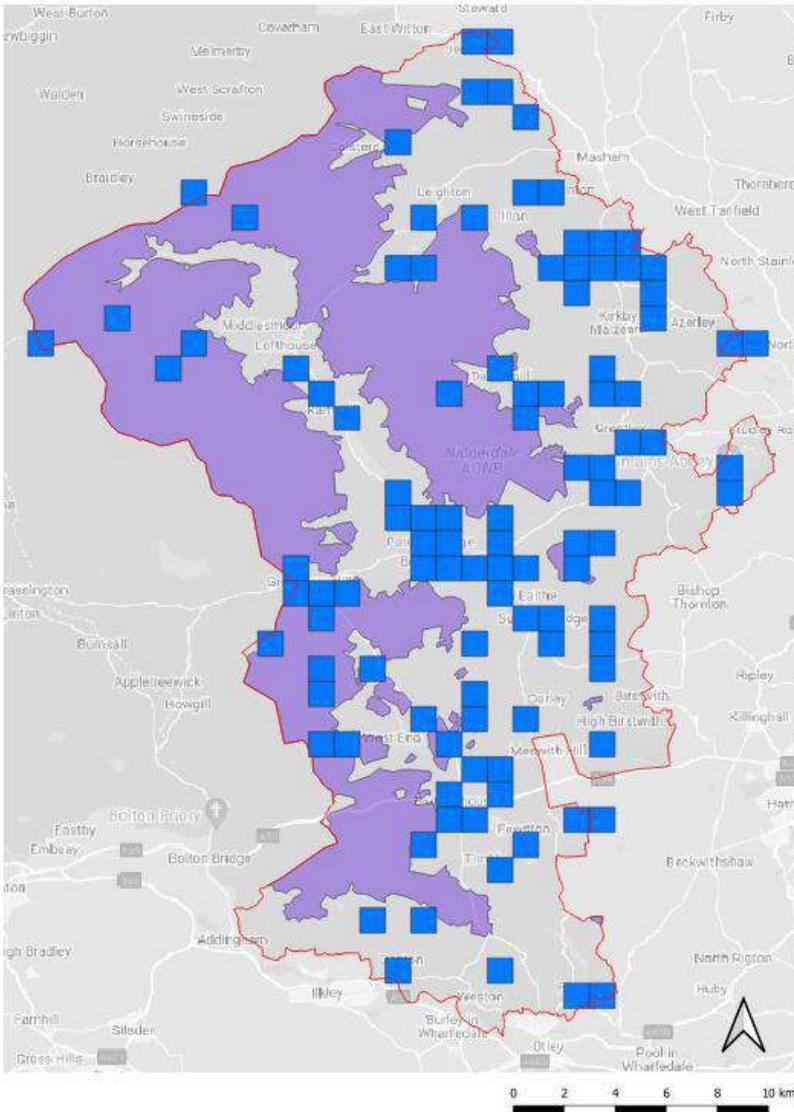
Clean Water Testing



- Volunteers and staff visiting ponds across the AONB area
- Training session for AONB held last winter
- Working with FIPL team to learn about more ponds that might be included as part of their farm visits
- Training for volunteers held in Spring
- Follow-up session in September as a refresher and to provide results to date

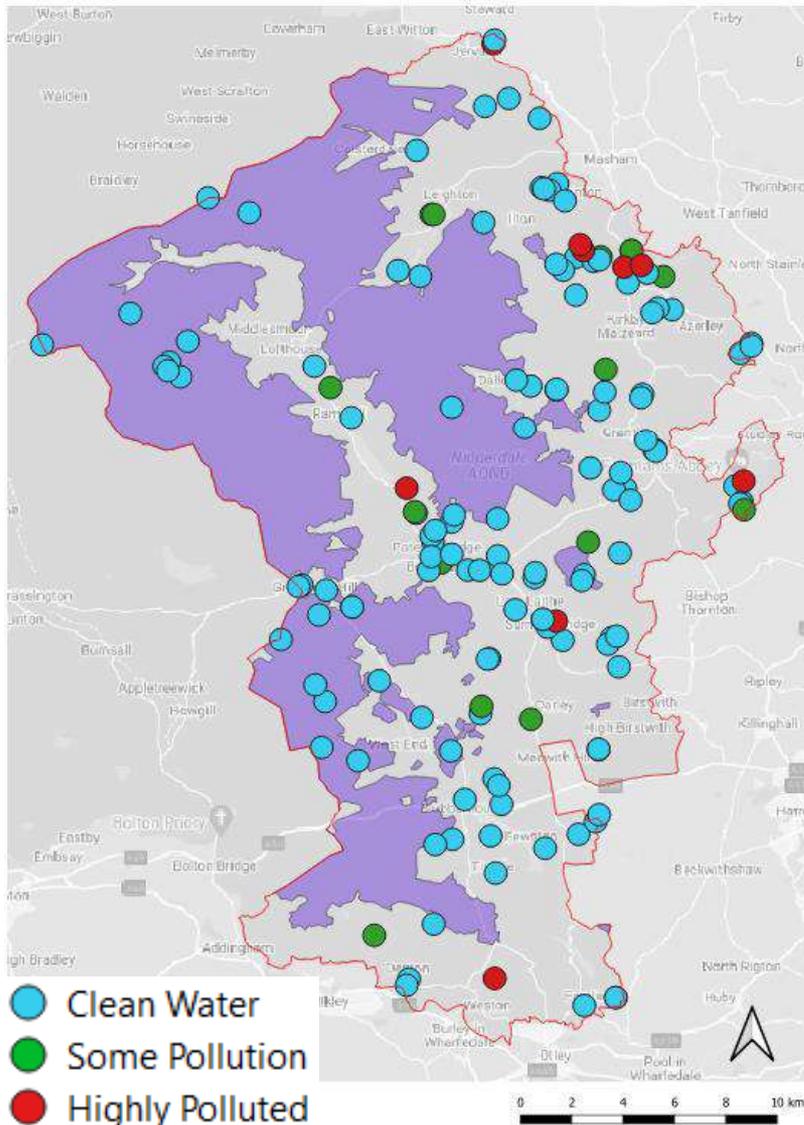


Clean Water Testing - Result



- Exceeded target by 50%
- 150 ponds tested
- Varied habitats from moorland in west to lowland valleys in east
- Different types of pond
- Subject to landowner permission

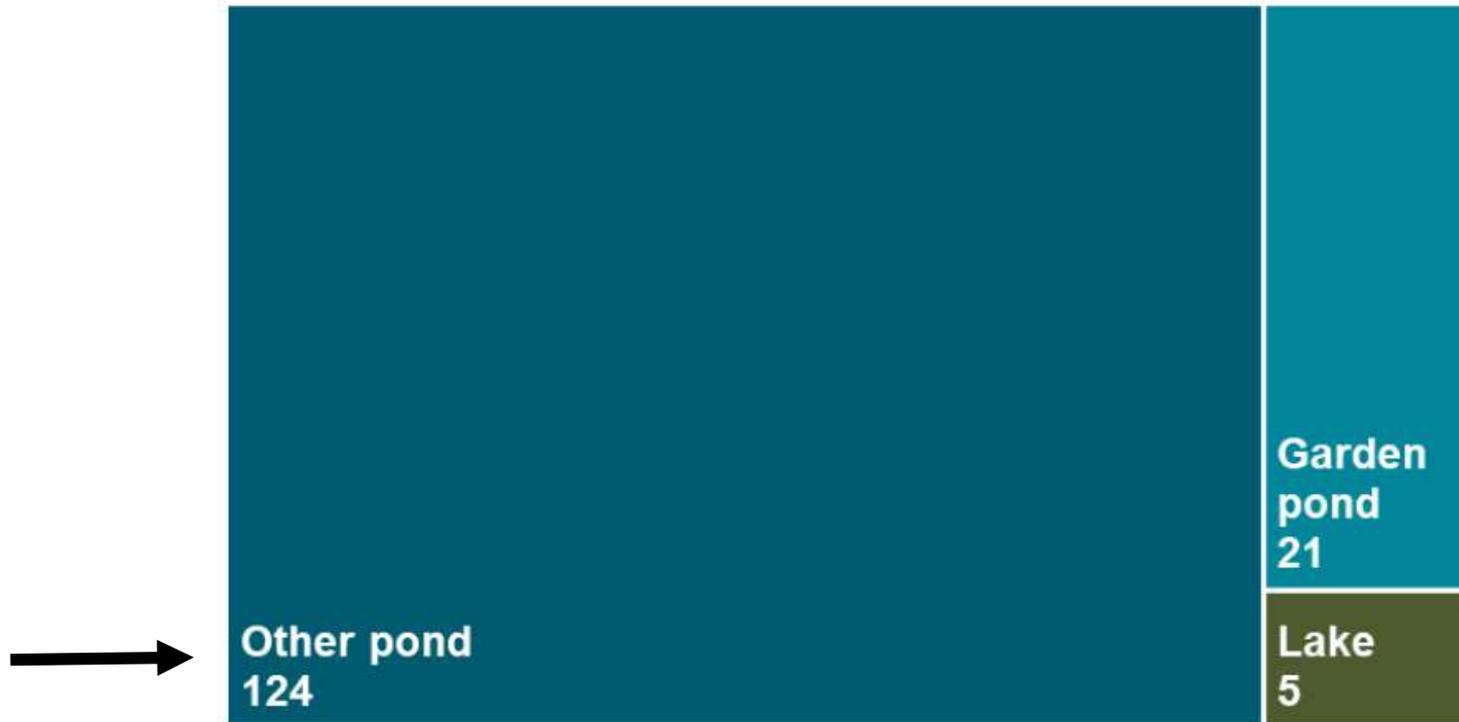
Clean Water Testing - Results



Clean Water Results

- Shared with project partners
- Provide an overview at a landscape scale of levels of nutrients
- No repercussions or enforcement if the results are 'bad'
- Aim is to identify areas of clean water with low nutrient levels, ie. those that are likely to be of most value for wildlife
- Provide advice on siting + creating new ponds
- Provide advice on improving ponds

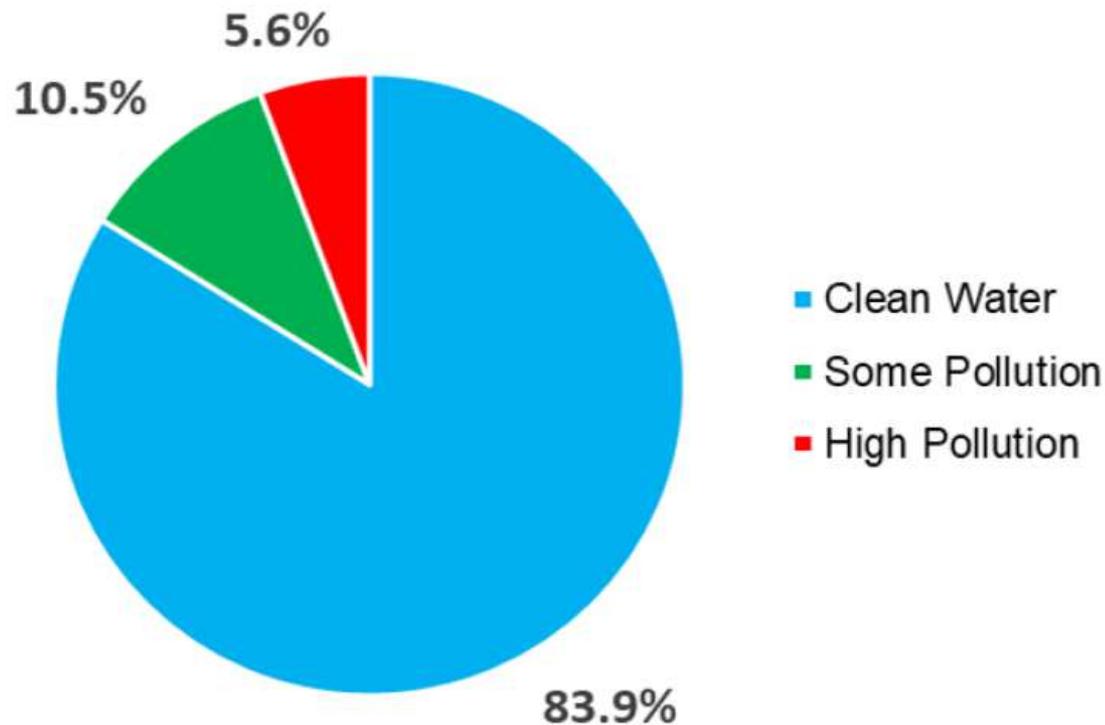
Clean Water Testing - Result



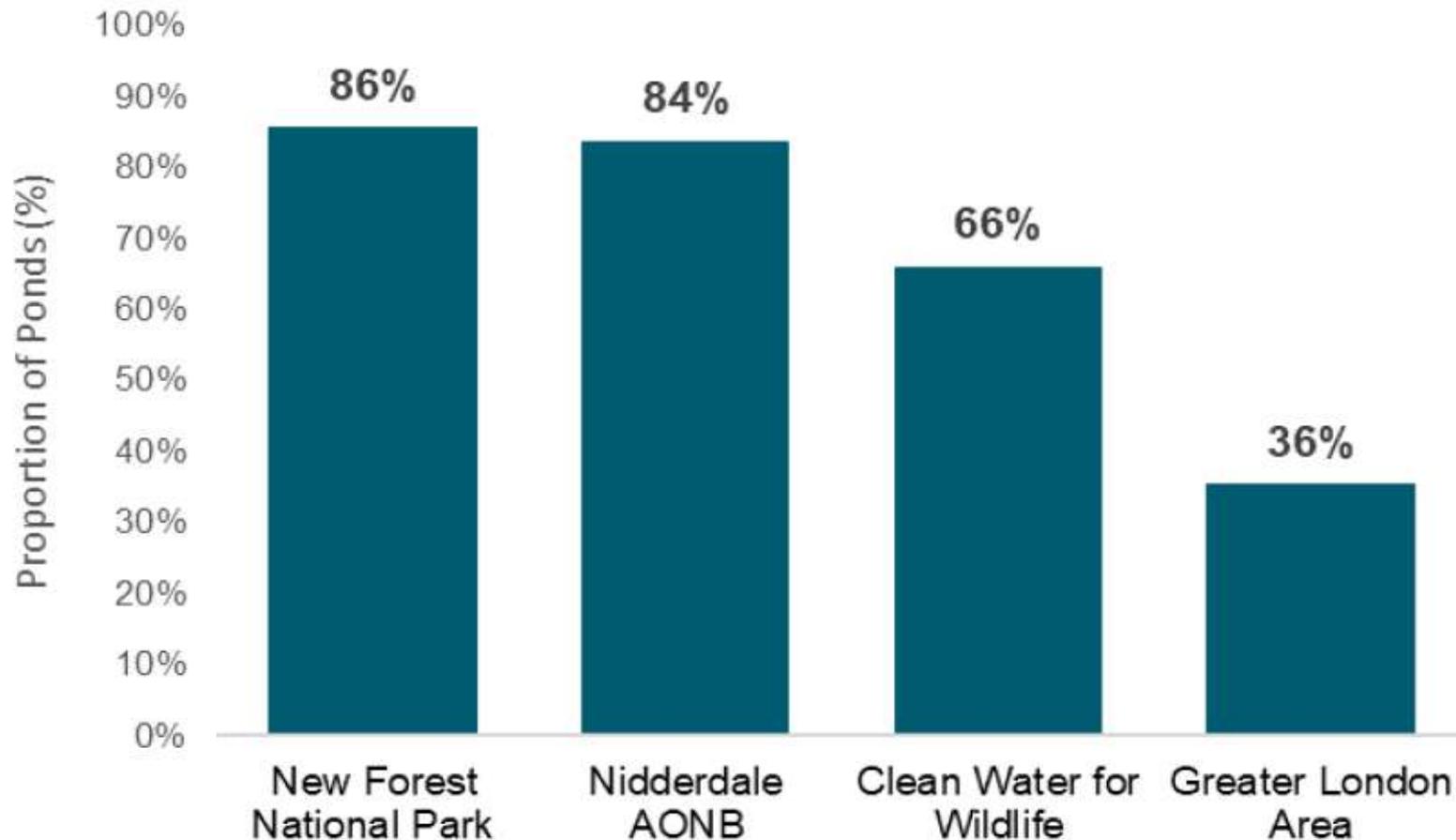
- Different types of 'pond' – garden, woodland, field, moorland, small lakes and reservoirs
- 124 'countryside' ponds

Of the 124 ponds:

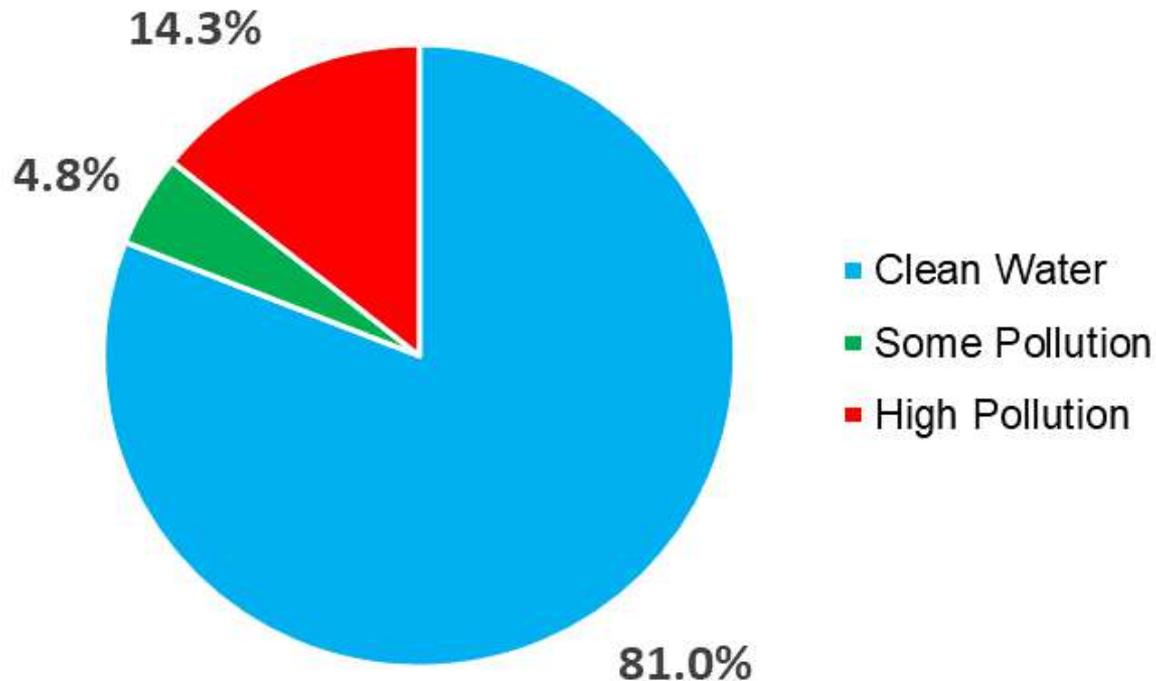
**84% of ponds had clean water
= Potential Priority Pond**



Clean Water Testing - Results



Of the 21 garden ponds tested:
81% of ponds had clean water



© Judy Wallace

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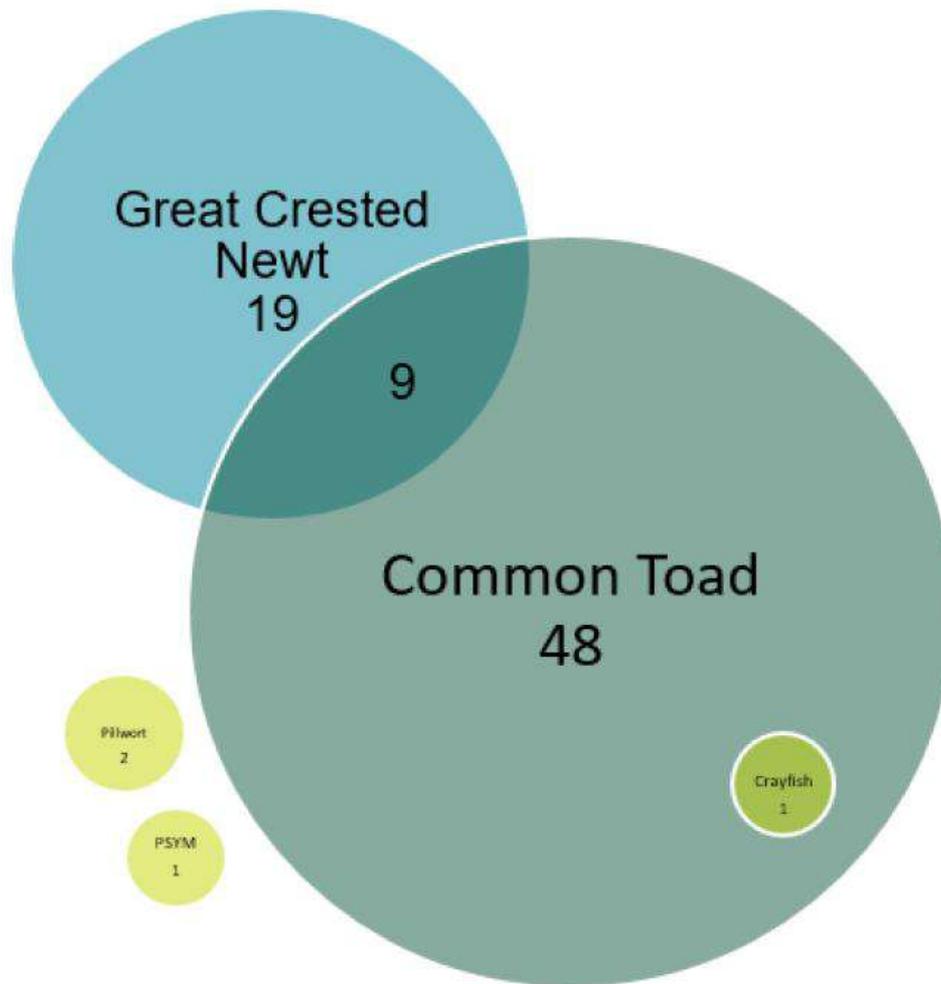
Priority Ponds

Priority Pond: “a permanent or seasonal standing water body up to 2ha in area which is important for the freshwater wildlife it supports. Usually near natural in the composition of its plant and animal communities, supports endangered or protected species or has unusually diverse communities.”



- An estimated 20% of the UK’s ponds (excluding garden ponds) will meet one or more of the criteria.
- These waterbodies are sites which should be given priority for protection for their wildlife interest.

Priority Ponds - Results



77 out of 115 surveyed ponds identified as a Priority Pond.

Potentially 2/3rds of ponds in Nidderdale AONB are Priority Ponds.

(National estimate 20%)

Summary

1. Engaging local people to involve them in the project
1106 volunteer hours supported the project
2. Delivering educational sessions to local schools and events
21 schools = 539 children across two large events
Further 116 children at local school/scout sessions
3. Amphibian surveys on 50 ponds to gather data on toads
115 ponds surveyed across 55 sites
4. Clean water testing of 100 ponds
150 ponds tested, 50% above target
5. Increase understanding of the distribution and status of ponds and the priority species in them
More than doubled number of known Priority Ponds!



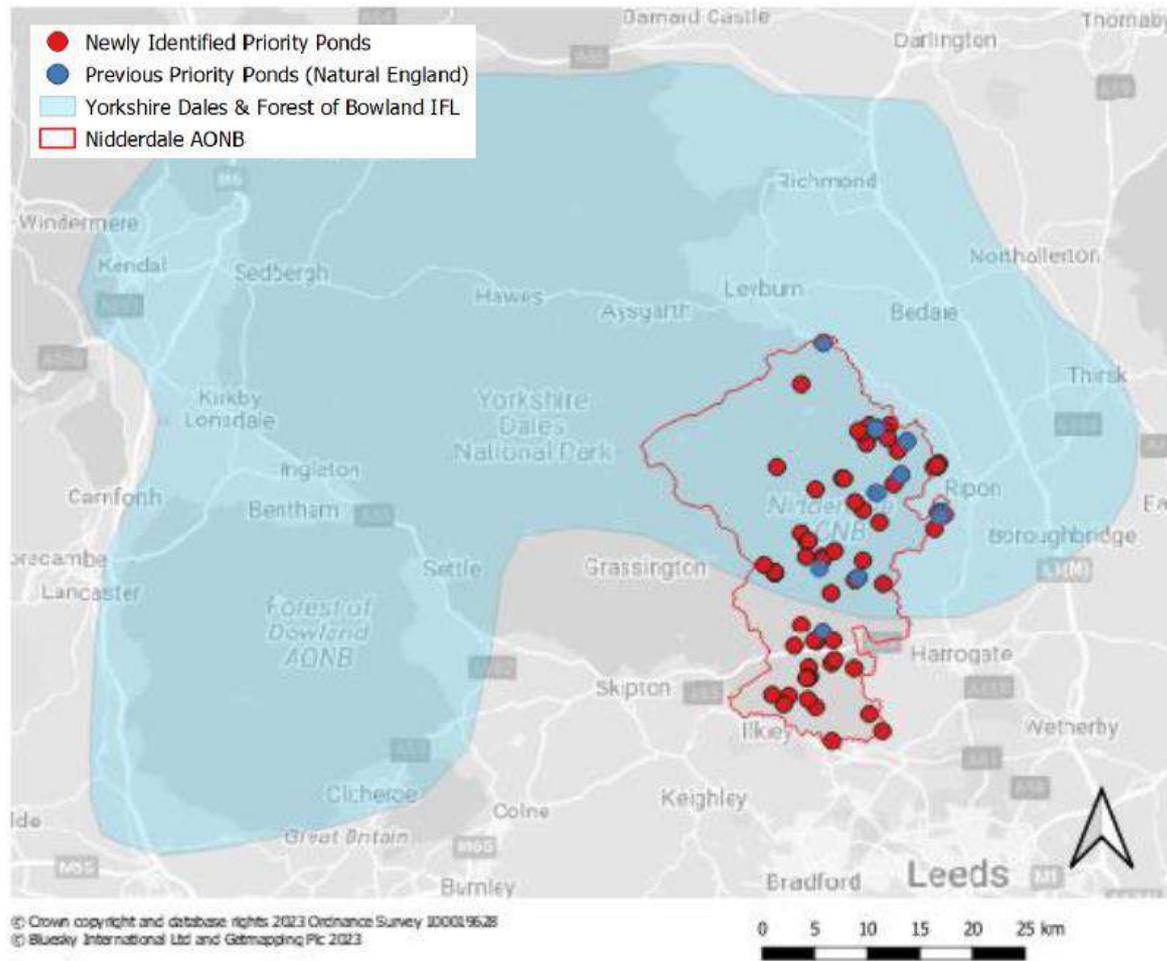


Nidderdale's Ponds

Outcomes

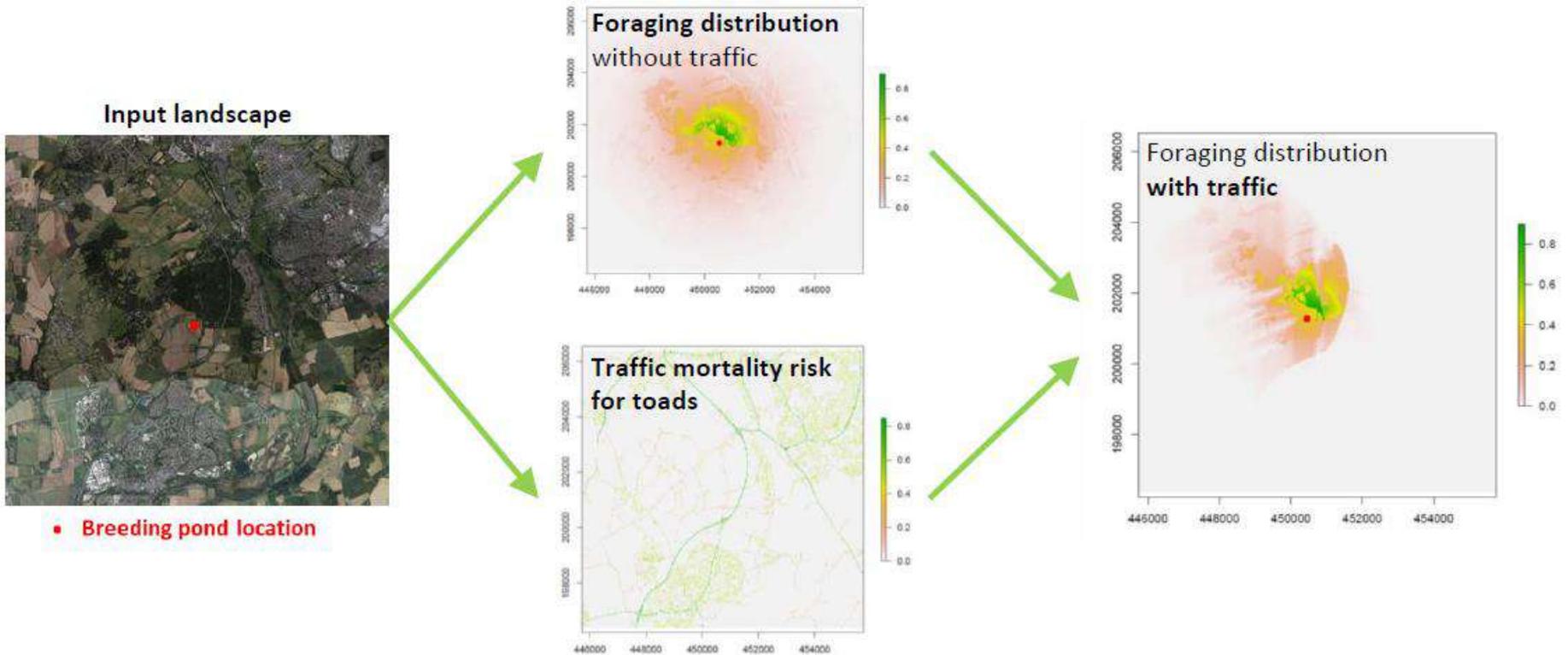
Important Freshwater Landscapes

Extend IFL boundary to include ALL of Nidderdale AONB



Saving Nidderdale's Priority Ponds

Toad Modelling



- CEH model applied to Nidderdale AONB
- Provides a 'species eye view' of the landscape
- Combines breeding resources (ponds) + foraging resources (habitat) to predict/ show highest value areas for toads
- Shows where new ponds would be most valuable; existing pond habitat improved etc
- Model is being refined as we confirm pond presence and existing toad records
- Also helps CEH validate their model by checking actual vs predicted toad records

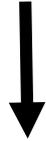


Nidderdale's Ponds

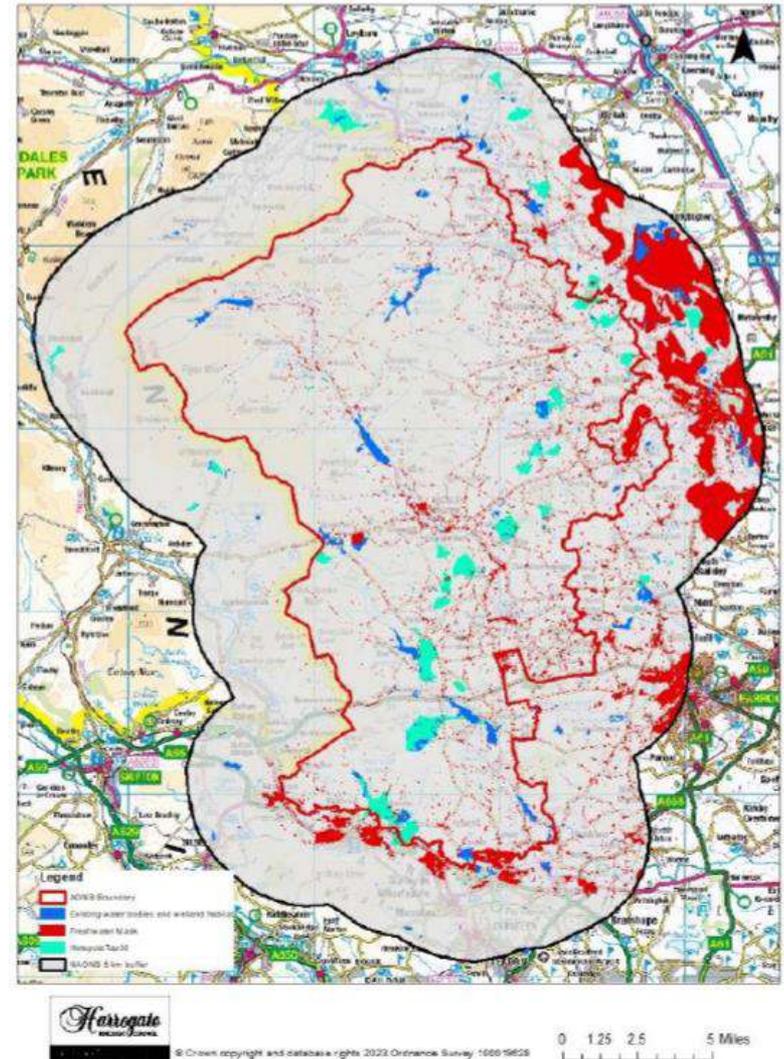
What's Next?

Landscape Scale Recovery

- Development of Nidderdale AONB Habitat Opportunity Mapping for Nature Recovery 2023 - 2030



- Applying for funding for new project aimed at improving wetland habitat
- Using strategic opportunity areas resulting from Nature Recovery modelling
- Focuses on landscape scale connectivity
- Terrestrial habitat improvement in addition to pond creation



Spring 2023 Surveys

- Additional toad surveys carried out
- Contributes to future project work

FHT's Spawn Survey

- Jo Wright 1000th record

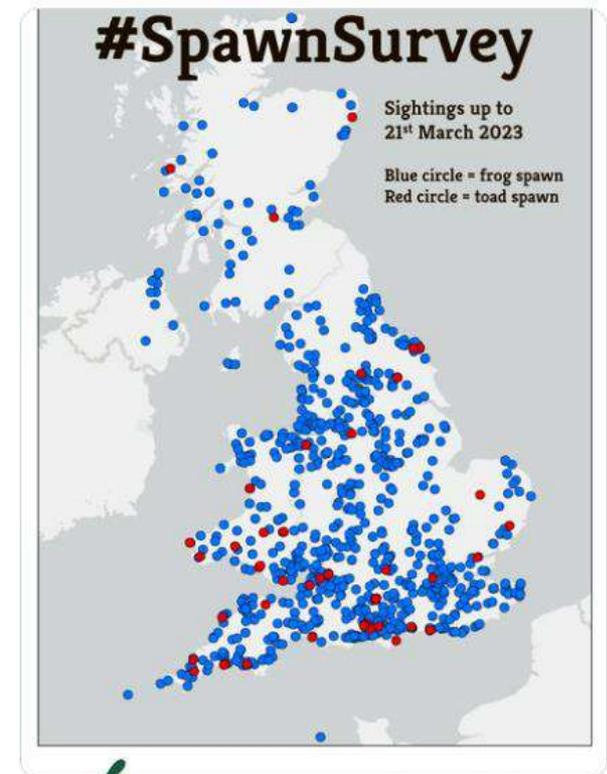


Freshwater Habitats Trust @Freshwaterhabs · Mar 22
We've now had 1,000 records added to the 2023 PondNet
#SpawnSurvey 🟡🟢🟠

Can you see your dot on the map?

A big thank you to everyone who's added their sightings - please keep them coming.

View our maps: bit.ly/SpawnSurveyMaps
Add your sighting: bit.ly/SpawnSurvey2023



Saving Nidderdale's Priority Ponds

Thank you for listening!

Please get in touch with any questions.

Kate Wright - Project Officer
Nidderdale AONB / Freshwater Habitats Trust

Email kate.wright1@northyorks.gov.uk

Mobile 07306 327207

