

NATURE SOCIETY NEWSLETTE



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NATURE SOCIETY
Making a real difference

WHAT'S NEW?

Baby frogs, called froglets, have been seen in abundance. But, how much do we know about them?



In the beginning of a frog's life cycle, females lay many eggs. This increases an individual's chances of survival, since there are many predators that feed on the eggs. Usually, about 6-21 days (average!) after being fertilized, the egg will hatch taking the creature into the tadpole stage. At this point, the frog is little more than underdeveloped gills, a mouth and tail. In the early stomach, but after around seven to 10 days, it begins to move around and feed on algae.

Next, the tadpole begins to develop legs after about six to nine weeks in the tadpole stage. The head becomes more defined, and later on, arms begin to sprout, elbows first. Towards the end of this stage, the frog appears to look more like what people consider a frog to look like but with a longer tail. This leads into the froglet stage, during which the creature continues to develop at this stage they are ready to leave the water and now feed on insects, slugs and small worms!

In winter frogs hibernate, some, mainly males, will bury themselves in the mud at the bottom of your pond, and the rest including most of the females will go off to find a cosy, muddy ditch. Their metabolism slows in order to conserve energy, although the ones in your pond may pop up for a look around and a practice croak in milder weather! Then the cycle starts again with everyone returning to the pond. They are ready to breed round about their fifth spring!

Although called the common frog, sadly, because of changes to our environment and loss of habitat (ponds have been filled in and hedges and ditches removed) the frog is becoming more and more rare. Another factor which has caused a decline, is the increasing use of insecticides, not only on farms but also in gardens, so their foodstuff is also becoming more scarce.

We are lucky at the Marina to have so many of these fascinating creatures, long may they survive.

DRAGONFLIES

Brown Hawkers are now getting numerous. While flying, it may look quite dull but if you are lucky enough to get a close look, WOW what a beauty.



Very large at 75mm and flies from July - September close to standing or slow moving water but may be seen feeding in woodland areas in the evening.

BUTTERFLY TALK

A talk on our butterflies here at the marina was promised so here it is. On August 18th at 19.00 in the Willow Tree we will be having an illustrated talk on



Butterflies at Mercia

Lots of fascinating facts including when we can see them, what are the caterpillars like and what do they feed on.

This talk is based entirely on the butterflies commonly seen here and will not only help us to identify them but also understand their needs.



Come along and find out more such as which butterfly actually feeds on carrion! Yes, you did read that right and you thought they only ate nectar!

AUGUST EVENT

Sadly, the Wildlife Weekend planned for Aug 12/13th has had to be reduced to just one day. This will be the Sunday 13th. There will not be a photographic competition or storytelling. However, Mr Buzz will be here (so bring you little ones). Also, hopefully Burton Wildlife Rescue will be back as well. Of course, there will a raffle and Kiddies Lucky Dip along with wildlife information. Please come and support the event with all proceeds going to our wildlife charities.