



## The importance of Wildlife Ponds in our environment

### Presented by Pete the Pond

Fri 13<sup>th</sup> October 2017

PETE THE POND was introduced to us as our speaker and with his infectious and enthusiastic passion for his subject we were transported into the mysterious world of ponds. Ponds, he said, have been around for millions of years and have supported many prehistoric organisms like stromatolite that produced oxygen and so began life on earth. Among the earliest of creatures to inhabit ponds were frogs and dragonflies and they are still with us. Dragonflies with a wingspan of over a metre and immersing, in an ugly form from and dark and dank pond only to dry their wings and fly away, may have given rise to the myth of flying dragons. There are several types of ponds all over the planet and all giving supporting life in various forms. All wildlife drink from them including bees and bats and ponds also support a great diversity of flora and are home to some of our rarest creatures. Some plants in ponds are so rare that you even need permission to photograph them, and the full weight of the law protects the rarest of creatures and their habitats. Our common toad, not so common now, lives for many years but may take some time for the urge to breed to arrive, but when it does the male will make its way to the pond in which it was spawned. On arrival, the poor toad often find a housing estate has sprung up and its precious pond is no more. Having lost its environment it rarely goes on to find a replacement, more often than not it strays no further and just dies.

Ponds have still secrets for us to find including natural substances excreted from the smaller forms of pond life that are proving an exciting find for those scientists looking to help our health professionals who in turn look after us. Pete concluded his talk with a display of pond weed, most are edible he said and proceeded to tuck into some and invited others to do the same.....not many obliged. Pete the pond is a unique professional, his qualifications and experience are outstanding and his enthusiasm shone through his two hour talk. His lasting message was “look after ponds and all wild life, for everything has a place on this planet and we need to act so that our grandchildren can see and experience them and in turn wildlife will look after our human future”.

Linda Alsop, 16 Oct 2017