



**ESSEX
EXPLORERS**

Wetland Wonder TRAIL



**Learn about what
makes our ponds,
lakes and streams
special**



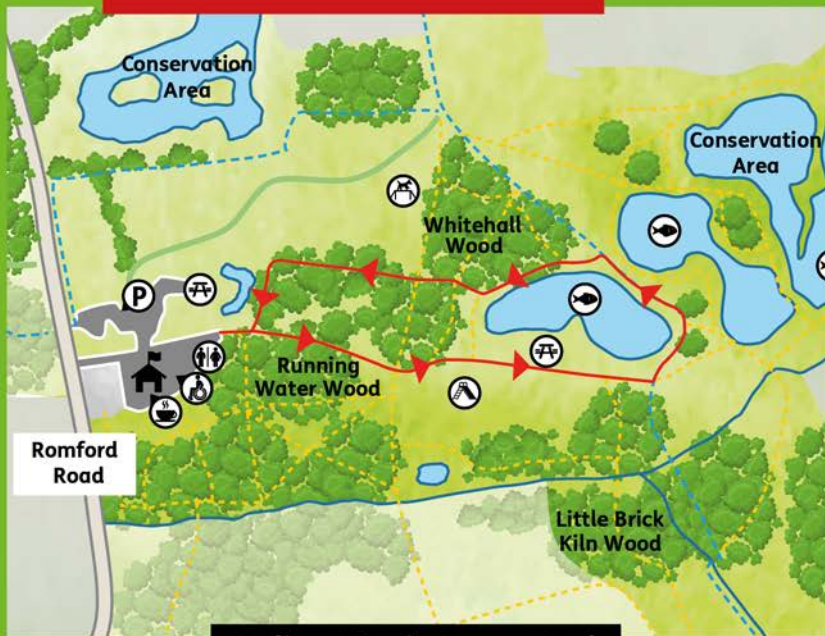
www.explore-essex.com

**ESSEX
COUNTRY
PARKS**

 **Explore
Essex**
Part of Essex County Council


Essex County Council

Follow the RED route



Belhus Woods Country Park

- 1 Start at the visitor centre.
- 2 Head through Running Water Wood towards the lake.
- 3 Loop around the lake and back towards the visitor centre.

Letter Hunt

Discover the letters along the trail, there are five to find.

Unscramble them to make the mystery word.

What is a wetland?

Wetlands are an eco-system where the land is covered by water either seasonally or permanently.

Wetlands provide a place for rain water to be stored and help to reduce flooding. They offer an important home for all kinds of animals.

In the Essex Country Parks you can find streams, ponds and lakes, as well as marshes and estuaries.



Share your trail selfies
WIN a minibeast explorer kit

Share your trail selfie to enter our prize draw. Tag us:
#wetlandwonder
@Explore Essex
And email: **floods@essex.gov.uk**

View full T&Cs here: <https://flood.essex.gov.uk/wetland-trail/>



Amphibian

SHADOW GAME

Match the shadows to the five common native amphibians

1



Common frog



2

Common toad



4

Great crested newt



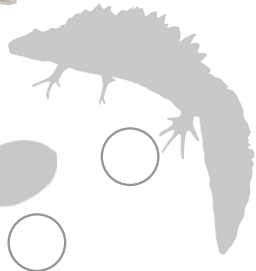
3

Tadpole



5

Smooth newt



Amphibians are incredibly important wetland animals. They act as both predators and prey, eating pest insects, as well as providing vital food for birds and other animals.

Scavenger



HUNT:

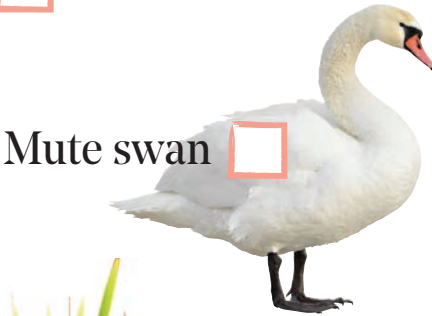
See how many of the following you can find:



Mallard duck



Nest



Mute swan



Frog



Common reeds



Moorhen

Predator

FOOD WEB



Food webs show the chains of what-eats-what in one habitat.

See how many food chains you can make.

Wetland animal

MIX UP

There are some incredible facts about wetland creatures, but they are placed next to the wrong one. **Can you match the fact with the creature?**

I detect and eat flying insects by making high-pitch squeaks and following the echo.

Newt



Reed warbler



Eel



I only live a few weeks, but as a colony we travel 9,000 miles to migrate.

I migrate nearly 3000 miles to the west Atlantic Ocean to breed.

Painted lady butterfly

I weave my nest using reeds and grasses between reed stems



Bat



I breathe through my skin so I'm extra sensitive to pollution, making me an indicator species

Water cycle

Did you know that all the water on Earth is recycled over and over again?

CONDENSATION

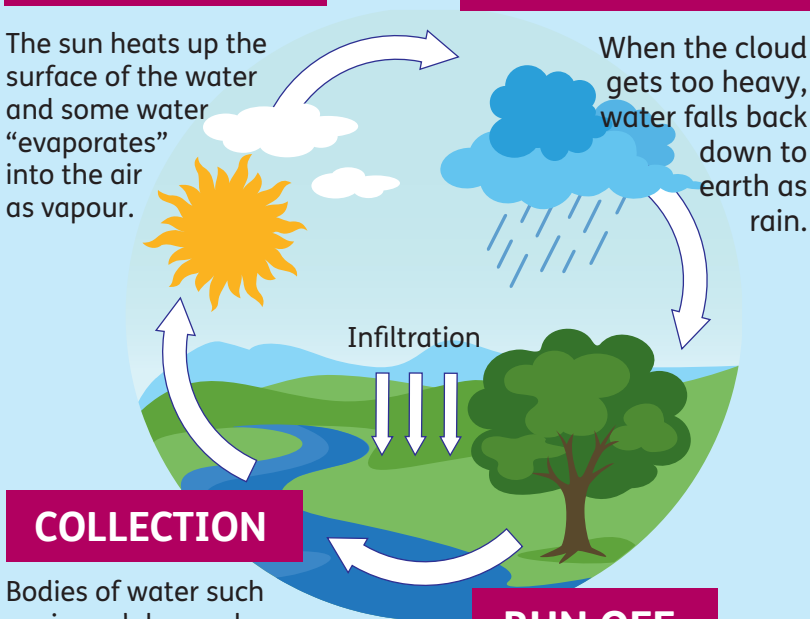
Water vapour turns into clouds.

EVAPORATION

The sun heats up the surface of the water and some water “evaporates” into the air as vapour.

PRECIPITATION

When the cloud gets too heavy, water falls back down to earth as rain.



COLLECTION

Bodies of water such as rivers, lakes and oceans collect and store fallen rain.

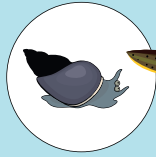
Wetlands can expand and contract depending on the amount of rainfall, so help protect us from flooding and drought.

RUN OFF

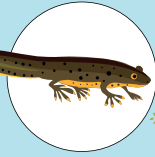
Rain falls on the land and either soaks into the soil or flows across the ground. If surface water can't be adsorbed we get flooding.

Wetland search and find

Wetlands provide a home, breeding ground, source of food, hiding and resting place for many creatures. Can you find them hiding in the reeds below?



Pond snail



Smooth newt



Water vole



Harvest mouse



Egret



Reed warbler



Calling all parents...

Is your house at risk

of flooding?

Communities have experienced repeated flood events in recent years, a trend which is expected to increase in frequency and strength as an impact of climate change.

To find out everything you need to know about local flooding, and how to protect your property and community please visit:
<https://flood.essex.gov.uk/>

Click [here](#)
to find out
your flood
risk





What can I do to save wetlands?

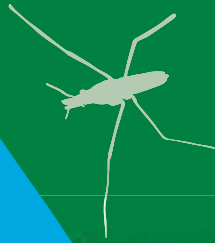


Wetlands are under threat, help preserve them by getting involved in your local wetland centre and/ or create a wetland in your garden.

Making a wetland in your garden or community space can be easy and inexpensive. For a step-by-step guide visit **Gardening for Wetlands/ WWT.**

Why create a wetland?

1. Wetlands slow down the flow of heavy rain into drains, helping to reduce flooding.
2. Wetlands offer a greater variety of native plants attractive to mini-beasts which pollinate fruits and flowers.



Do you know how climate-friendly your garden is?

Click [here](#) to find out!

