Get involved in protecting ponds and nurturing newts

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Now, thanks to a grant of more than £43,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), people in 25 parishes stretching from the Malvern Hills to Bromyard Downs will have the chance to get involved.

Through the Ponds Network Project, Herefordshire Nature Trust and Herefordshire Amphibian and Reptile Team will be helping local communities to learn more about the pond habitats and wildlife in their neighbourhoods. Volunteers will be trained to survey ponds and identify the species in them as well as being inspired to create new ponds.

Pond networks are an important part of the landscape and the project will be delving into the archaeological aspects of pond history, how they formed where they did and why. An earlier survey by Herefordshire Amphibian and Reptile Team mapped almost 300 ponds in the area.

The new project will provide information to update the biodiversity maps held at the Herefordshire Biological Records Centre with investigators looking for as many species as possible, including the Great Crested Newt and the grass snake.

A range a community events and activities will be held to spark people's interest and get them involved and schools will have the chance for educational visits and will be given advice on how to create their own ponds.

An exhibition with details of the project will tour county shows, country fairs and other events to raise awareness of the project and help recruit further volunteers.

Reyahn King, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund West Midlands, said: "Ponds make a vital local contribution to the county's biodiversity and this project will ensure their health and wellbeing into the future by tapping into community interest and encouraging volunteer help,"

For Herefordshire Nature Trust Project Officer Nigel Hand said: "This will be an exciting project to run as it has a strong focus on education and survey. I look forward to meeting with people and remembering past and present ponds". He added: "I am sure many of us have childhood memories of old village ponds or farm ponds and observing the fascinating creatures within."

Further information

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