

9th Festival of Nature – 20-24th May

The theme of this 9th festival is “**On the water’s edge**”.

If you don’t have a water source close to or in your gardens, why not take advantage of the opportunity offered to you to build a pond during the Festival of Nature or over the weeks leading up to it?

Building a pond is relatively simple and has a very modest cost. It doesn’t require a lot of skill and, in one working day, several people can get it done.

As appendix you find the necessary instructions:

Appendix: Building a pond in the garden

Preparation

Tools

- **To map out the edges:**
 - Tape, some 50cm stakes and some string.
- **For the levelling:**
 - Pickaxe, spade, shovel, rake.

Materials

- Tarpaulin corresponding to the size of your pond
- Sand
- Chalk to map out the edges of the pond (optional)

Surface and depth

The dimensions of your pond depend on the space available to you. It is possible to build a good pond if you have 8-10m². Don't forget to prepare enough space around the water source: a bank one metre wide, for example.

A hole of 2m x 3m and 50-60cm deep is enough for your first pond.

Safety

You need to prepare a small fence around the entire pond to stop small children from falling into the pond by accident. Law requires us to follow this precaution (for example in France).

Construction

Start by making a plan of the future pond and mark it out on the ground by using the stakes, the tape and the string, which will allow you to mark out a circle or an arc of a circle.



Once the perimeter of your pond is mapped out, it is time to roll up your sleeves and take the pickaxe, spade and shovel to dig the hole. The earth dug out of the hole can be put on the bank: that way you will have less to dig. If you add a depth of 20cm of levelling soil on the bank, you will only have 40cm to dig to achieve a pond 60cm deep.

It can be easier to make the banks on a slope.



A pond on an allotment in Quétigny

When the hole is at a good depth, it is time to level the bottom and the banks before laying the tarpaulin. According to the type of soil, it can be very handy to put a bed of sand at the bottom of the hole to stop it piercing the tarpaulin.

Tighten the edges of the tarpaulin by burying the edges 30-40cm from the edge of the pond after sizing it to the right dimensions.

And there you go; you only have to fill it... with rain water or from a well.

Next you can plant some aquatic plants that you will find at the water's edge or from a garden centre. Frogs and other amphibians and water insects will quickly arrive and take residence in this new space available to them.

Don't forget the fence!

This pond will be very useful to your gardens as the frogs, for example, are big eaters of slugs and other harmful insects. The pond is also very useful for birds that will come and drink there before getting rid of harmful insects for you.

This pond, other than the above mentioned services, will be an educational space in your gardens and a natural decoration that will be appreciated by all as the vegetation takes residence there.



A pond on an allotment in Bron

Now, take advantage of the Festival of Nature or another occasion to invite the public, students, journalists and school children to the opening or during the sessions. Don't hesitate to show your know-how, especially when they contribute to the embellishment of your gardens and the development of biodiversity.

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