

Nature Conservation - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: What action is needed to protect species when carrying out building work, including extensions/patios, works to trees or clearing the garden?

A: Some species are protected by law making it illegal to kill, injure or disturb them or their habitats. In Leicester the most common protected species are bats, badgers, birds during the nesting season (March to September) and great crested newts. A survey for protected species may be needed to support a planning application and a licence to move species or clear the area they live in. Please check our **Planning application requirements** pages for more information.

Further information is also available from the following organisations:

- **The Bat Conservation Trust**
- **The Badger Trust**
- **Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust** (frogs, toads, newts, snakes and lizards)
- **Natural England**

Q: My pond is drying out, what can I do?

A: Many of our ponds in Leicester have suffered in recent years from drying out during the summer. In most cases, this is a natural cycle and wildlife has learnt to adapt by visiting the ponds in spring when full of water to enable breeding, and leaving as the ponds dry out. Topping-up ponds should only be done in an environmentally sensitive way, by collecting water in rain butts or drained off roofs and directed carefully into the ponds. **Topping-up should not be done directly from a tap as it is bad for wildlife.**

Q: My pond has too much frogspawn, what should I do?

A: The amount of frogspawn in ponds can vary year on year. There is no such thing as too much frogspawn in a pond and the amount is likely to balance out naturally. Please do not remove or transfer frogspawn to another water body as you may unknowingly transfer different diseases and plants.

Q: I have problems with foxes and badgers in my garden, what can I do?

A: Foxes and badgers are common in gardens in Leicester. There are various methods of discouraging foxes from domestic gardens. Please check our **Environmental health pages** for more information. There are methods to discourage badgers from an area, however it is always recommended to seek advice before taking any action and as it can be illegal to restrict the movements of badgers or to damage their setts. Please contact the **Local Badger Group** for more information.

Q: I have Japanese knotweed in my garden, what should I do?

A: Japanese Knotweed is now a serious threat to many natural habitats, especially watercourses and wetlands, because of its vigorous growth that smothers less vigorous native flora. It can also cause structural damage to buildings and other hard surfaces. It has to be removed and disposed of carefully to comply with legislation and to stop it spreading into other areas. Please see our **Japanese knotweed** pages for more information.

Q: Where is the nearest local nature reserve?

A: Please see our pages on [Local nature reserves](#)

Q: Where can I see wildlife and natural green space in the city?

A: There are a variety of fantastic [Parks and green spaces](#) in Leicester, managed and maintained by the city council. The River Soar provides a corridor for wildlife to disperse; Watermead Country Park South and Aylestone Meadows are two of the biggest [nature reserves](#) and have a large variety of wildlife and are easily accessible. Other nature reserves to visit are at Knighton Park, The Orchards and Kirby Frith.