

MEADOW POND

Also known as the 'Tip Pond' this is one of several natural ponds on the reserve and is home to a variety of aquatic invertebrates and pond plants.

Unfortunately, in long dry spells, the pond can almost dry up, forcing many organisms to try and survive in the remaining puddles.

An invasive plant species called New Zealand Pygmy Weed or 'crassula helmsii' is present in the water. It forms a thick green carpet up to one metre in depth. This prevents sunlight from penetrating the water and can, if not cleared, seriously inhibit the survival of plant and aquatic invertebrate species.

Volunteers remove the weed from the pond, usually in the summer months. Once raked out, it cannot be transported off site for fear of contaminating other areas. If you look to the rear of the pond you may be able to spot the crassula safely stored under a large tarpaulin sheet where it will stay until a safe method of disposal is found.

Volunteers have to disinfect all footwear as they leave the pond and any tools are similarly treated to minimize the risk of inadvertently spreading the plant. Just a small fragment ending up in the wrong place could easily get hold and have a huge impact on plants and invertebrates in another wetland area.

The pond is often cordoned off with fencing to prevent dogs from entering and similarly transporting fragments of the plant to other wetland areas.