

## 3 steps to convert your pool to a pond

**Step 1:** Goodbye to chemicals and turn off the pump and filter



**Step 2:** The initial construction phase



**Step 3:** The final touch



*“Once the kids moved out we hardly ever used the pool and it was costly and time consuming to maintain. This has been an inspiring project for us — we now have a thriving pond with healthy plants and loads of birds visiting each day. The pond is a beautiful feature in our yard”*

*Ku-ring-gai resident*



*A well designed pond creates habitat for local wildlife*

## About WildThings

Ku-ring-gai Council's WildThings program aims to protect urban wildlife and create habitat in our backyards to encourage the return of wildlife.

Current WildThings projects include:

- Pool to pond
- Native beehive placement

If you are passionate about our wildlife and its presence in our local areas - why not get help in your own backyard?

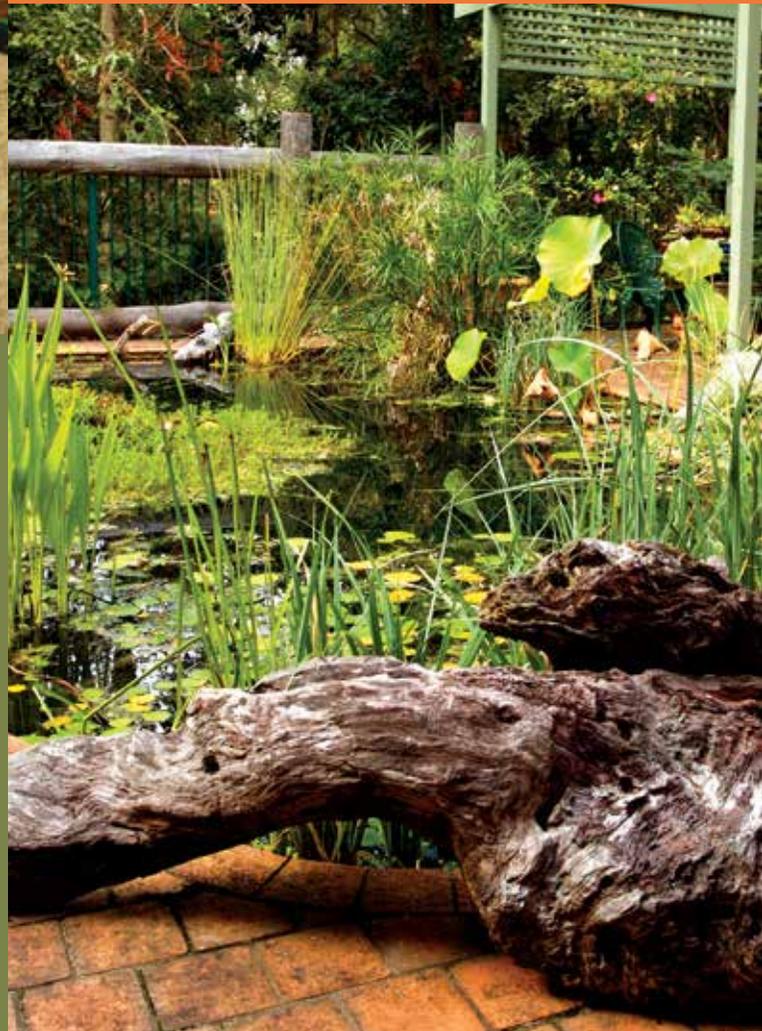


[www.kmc.nsw.gov.au/wildthings](http://www.kmc.nsw.gov.au/wildthings)

February, 2014

# Pool to Pond

Turn your swimming pool into a thriving pond



## Why turn a swimming pool into a pond?

- If your pool is not being used, maintenance is an expensive chore. Converting your pool into a pond is a creative alternative to having it filled in.
- Transforming a pool into a pond does not destroy an important family asset which can be converted back to a pool if desired.
- A pond acts as a wildlife refuge and will attract a wide range of native fauna, especially birds and frogs.
- A converted swimming pool is a rainwater tank without a lid, giving you access to many thousands of litres of clean water.



## Convert your pool to a pond in 3 steps

### Step 1: Goodbye to chemicals and turn off the pump and filter

If you have a chlorinated pool stop using chlorine. Within a few days the chlorine will have disappeared.

With a salt water pool, you must replace the salt water.

### Step 2: The initial construction phase

Build or place platforms for aquatic plants to sit on. These can be:

- An island made of besser blocks
- A floating foam island wrapped in shade cloth
- A plastic table.

Make sure you create some escape points for wildlife, such as rope or logs.

### Step 3: The final touch

Add native fish and local aquatic plants. Now sit back, get something to read, relax with a drink and revel in your own backyard billabong.

The conversion process will take about two summers as your new pond environment becomes established.

### How can Council help?

Ku-ring-gai's WildThings program provides some start-up native fish and aquatic plants and technical assistance for local residents. Contact us to learn more, arrange a pond tour or receive support.

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## The big questions

### Are aquatic plants necessary?

Yes, they are vital. Aquatic plants act as filters, for crystal clear water you want about 25% vegetation coverage.

### Is the water healthy?

Yes, frogs and fish will not live in polluted water.

### Do I need a filter?

No. Once your pool is a pond you stop all cleaning, allowing leaves etc to collect on the pool bottom.

### My pool turned green. Will it stay that way?

No. When you stop applying chemicals the water is colonised by a particular type of algae that turns the water green. This algae will eventually be replaced by different algae that does not colour the water.

### What if my water smells?

With over 70 pool conversions in the Ku-ring-gai area, this has never been a problem.

### When can I add plants and fish?

The best time to add fish is when you discover mosquito wrigglers in your pond. If the water can support wrigglers, it can also support plants and fish.

### How will I select suitable plants and fish?

Ku-ring-gai's WildThings program has produced a brochure outlining a range of suitable native fish and plant species and suggested local suppliers. Download your copy at [www.kmc.nsw.gov.au/wildthings](http://www.kmc.nsw.gov.au/wildthings).

### Are mosquitoes a problem?

Mosquitoes should not be a problem. There are approximately 60 mosquito species in Sydney, only 3-4 of these bite humans and they dislike breeding in water deeper than 30cm.

### Are there any safety considerations?

To ensure safety your pond must be fenced to meet regulations for backyard swimming pools. The water is not suitable for drinking.