



WILDLIFE FACTFLIE: Great crested newt

The great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) is widespread across lowland England and Wales so look out for them between March and October. They grow, on average, up to 17cm and can live for 6-15 years. Great crested newts are protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, and are a Priority Species under the UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. The populations of great crested newts in the UK are important across the world!

The great crested newt is also known as the 'warty newt' and looks like a mini dinosaur. It is the largest newt species in the UK and almost black in colour with spots on its flanks, a bright orange tummy and warty skin. The males have a long, wavy crest along their body and tail during the breeding season. Newts are amphibians. They breed in ponds during the spring and spend much of the rest of the year feeding on insects in woodland, hedgerows, marshes and grassland or hibernating underground, among tree roots and in old walls.

Favouring clean ponds for their breeding, it is important that we maintain a clean and healthy freshwater habitat for great crested newts. At Ribble Rivers Trust, we work to help keep ecosystems healthy and functional, which is essential for the great crested newt to continue to thrive. To find out how you can help improve freshwater habitats for newts, sign up to volunteer with us: <https://ribbletrust.org.uk/volunteering/>

DID YOU KNOW?

The pattern of black spots on a great crested newt's belly is as unique as our fingerprints so individuals can be identified by looking at these markings.

