

Pond Microbiome

Observe a miniature habitat

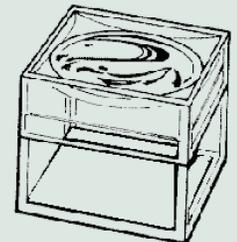


What lives in a pond?

When you think about pond life, maybe your mind conjures up images of ducks, frogs, cattails, and lily pads. But did you know that ponds are also home to **microscopic organisms**: plants and creatures too small for your eyes to see? Though these organisms are small, they're an important part of the food web that keeps a pond's **ecosystem** healthy.

With just a clear container and a pond sample, you can create your own **ecosphere** (a self-contained and self-sustaining ecosystem), and get a close-up look at the **microbial** world of protozoa, insects, algae, and tiny animals like tardigrades (water bears)!

Kit contents:



pipette

DIY POND ECOSPHERE

1 Collect a pond sample in your bottle.

For a good variety of microorganisms, be sure your sample includes not only **pond water**, but also **sediment** (mud, silt, sludge) and **vegetation** (algae, weeds, and other plant life). **Rocks** are good too!

2 Place your bottle in a spot with indirect sunlight, such as a north-facing windowsill.

Direct sunlight may **over-heat** and damage your ecosphere. Do not disturb the bottle once you've placed it-- allow the water to **settle** and become clear enough to see through.

3 Observe your ecosphere!

What kinds of organisms can you see in your bottle? What do you **notice**? To get a closer look, use your pipette to collect water and view it using the magnifying box.

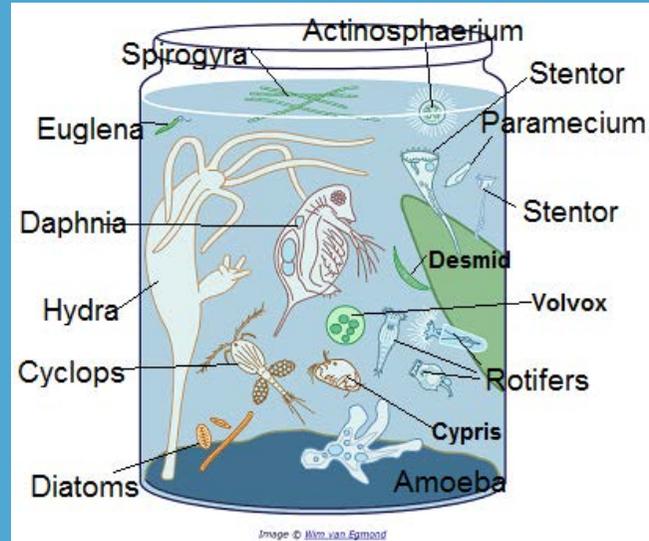


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image: <http://www.microscopy-uk.org.uk/ponddip/index.html>

Learn how to identify the microorganisms in your ecosphere at tinyurl.com/ImagineIFMicroPond