

HERPETOFAUNA WORKERS MEETING 2021

Saturday 6 to Sunday 7 February 2021

Conference Programme & Workshop Abstracts

Saturday 6 February

9:30 - 10:00 Registration

Session one:

Session chair: **Chris Cathrine, Caledonian Conservation and ARG UK**

10:00 -10:05 *Welcome address. Dr Tony Gent (Amphibian and Reptile Conservation)*

10:05-10:25 *Managing and monitoring for great crested newts and the wider biodiversity in North East Wales. Mandy Cartwright (ARC)*

10:25-10:45 *Evaluating the evidence base for protected species mitigation measures used in UK housing developments. Bronwen Hunter (University of Sussex)*

10:45-11:05 *Landscape-scale newts: how can localised developments impact on delivering large-scale conservation action? Rowan Avery (NatureSpace Partnership)*

11:05-11:35 Break

Session two:

11:35-13:05 Workshop Sessions (A & B)

13:05-14:10 Lunch

Session three:

Session chair: **Alice Pawlik, University of Exeter and ARG UK**

14:10-14.30 *Amphibians and reptiles on roads in Northeast Suffolk. Dr John Baker (Independent herpetologist)*

14:30-14:50 *Down the drain? Approaches to resolving amphibian gully pot mortality. Dr Peter Minting (ARC)*

14:50-15:10 *Hop off the press 2020: Academic papers relevant to British herpetofauna. Steven Allain (DICE, University of Kent)*

15.10-15.20 *Closing remarks Dr Tony Gent (Amphibian and Reptile Conservation)*

Social evening

19:30-21:00 Virtual social evening quiz



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Sunday 7 February

9:30 - 10:00 Registration

Session one:

Session chair: **Nicola Morris, South West Lakes Trust and Cornwall Reptile and Amphibian Group**

10:00 -10:05 Welcome address.

10:05-10:25 *Slow-worm home ranging and implications for the optimal spacing of artificial cover objects.* **Allyson Hawkins & Louise Masters (DICE, University of Kent)**

10:25-10:45 *National strategy for adder conservation translocations.* **Jim Foster (ARC)**

10:45-11:05 *The viviparous lizard in The Netherlands; continuous decline and call to action.* **Rémon Ter Harmsel (RAVON)**

11:05-11:35 Break

Session two:

11:35-13:05 **Workshop Sessions (C & D)**

13:05-14:10 Lunch

Session three:

Session chair: **Chris Monk, ARG UK**

14:10-14:30 *Dragons in the Hills - engaging with volunteers and communities in the Ring of Gullion to conserve amphibians and reptiles.* **Josh Twining (ARG UK)**

14:30-14:50 *The Ghostly and the Ghastly: The Norfolk Ponds Project and some tips for pond conservation.* **Carl Sayer (University College London)**

14:50-15:10 *NEWTRAP – Automating herp monitoring with underwater camera traps and deep learning.* **Xavier Mestdagh (Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology)**

15:10-15:20 Closing remarks. **Chris Monk (Chair of Amphibian & Reptile Groups of the UK)**

15:20 Close



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Workshop abstracts

Running Saturday 6 February

Workshop A: District Level Licensing and great crested newt conservation in England - including consultant feedback

Leaders: Jon Cranfield (Herpetologic Ltd) & Angela Julian (ARG UK), consultants - Luke Gorman (Atkins Ecology) & Tilly Tilbrook (IES)

The workshop will provide a brief introduction and update on the current status of the great crested newt District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme in England and provide feedback on its effectiveness in different ecological mitigation schemes. A panel comprising of ecological consultants with experience of DLL, will support the presentations and discussions. Case studies will be used to engage workshop participants to answer specific questions relating to whether site-based mitigation strategies are still relevant to newt development projects in England using online polls and a discussion session.

Workshop B: Does climate change herald a new herpetofauna for the UK?

Leaders: Jim Foster and Dorothy Driver (Amphibian and Reptile Conservation)

The coming century looks set for major impacts as a result of climate change. As society grapples with the underlying socio-economic issues, the conservation sector is working on how to address climate change impacts. There are several dimensions, and in this workshop we'll focus on just one particular challenge: does climate change mean we should plan for a new UK herpetofauna? The global redistribution of species as a result of climate change is an emerging field in itself, but to date this has not been thoroughly explored for UK herps. The implications of climate change on species ranges are complex and profound, not least as they will mean that alongside the potential for gains of "new" species, we might expect losses among "current" species. Using online voting and comments, we will seek your views on key themes, including: Is there an appetite for considering species that are currently deemed non-native to be part of our future herpetofauna? If so, what principles should guide such an approach, and how should the risks be managed? Is there is an appetite for accepting a reduced UK range, and possibly regional extinction, for some species that we currently have in the UK? Workshop responses will feed into ARC's work on climate change implications for herp conservation. The workshop will be suitable for all delegates, and does not require a pre-existing understanding of climate change issues.



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Workshop abstracts

Running Sunday 7 February

Workshop C: Pooling our knowledge – digging into pond creation & design

Leaders: Dr Pascale Nicolet/Peter Case (Freshwater Habitats Trust/Newt Conservation Partnership) and Mark Barber/Peter Hill (Amphibian and Reptile Conservation)

The workshop is designed to encourage and increase knowledge of best practice in pond creation for amphibians and other aquatic groups. It will also seek to identify gaps in available guidance and highlight key issues to facilitate the delivery of high-quality wildlife ponds.

Pond creation is critical in restoring the pond resource, provide new clean water habitats for freshwater wildlife and help to halt the decline of amphibians and other aquatic species. Best practice requires knowledge of the ecology of target species, but it is equally important to understanding and consideration other factors such as substrate, water quality, surrounding land-use and landscape characteristics, to achieve maximum benefits for wildlife, and to create sustainable, clean water ponds for the long term.

The workshop will focus on wild ponds rather than garden or lined ponds. Practical recurring issues like planning permissions will be touched upon, but the workshop will focus on key principles rather than detailed practical delivery. The workshop is aimed at a wide audience, from beginners to experienced pond makers.

Workshop D: Evidence based conservation and decision making

Leaders: Silviu Petrovan and Harriet Downey (University of Cambridge)

Research shows that much of the evidence base in conservation remains poorly used by practitioners due to lack of time, paywalls for access or other barriers while conservation decisions sometimes rely on selective or biased evidence. This has significant practical and cost implications because some actions continue to be implemented despite being less effective than others or even having been demonstrated to be ineffective. New synthesis methods can transform this situation by reviewing hundreds of actions simultaneously and systematically and can then be combined with implementation expertise to create robust and transparent advice for practitioners. This workshop will demonstrate how to find, use and contribute to evidence based conservation in order to improve conservation outcomes.



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