ARG UK and the ARG network in 2018

Dr Angela Julian
Coordinator ARG UK

www.arguk.org

Amphibian and Reptile Groups of UK (ARG UK) is a registered charity (number 1165504) committed to the conservation of native amphibians and reptiles and their natural environment by supporting the development of a network of independent volunteer amphibian and reptile groups (ARGs)
ARG UK Highlights from 2018
Adders are Amazing!

A pilot programme to engage the wider community in adder conservation in Pembrokeshire.

- Working with communities on the St David’s Peninsula to create an exciting and positive focus on the natural environment, with the adder as its flagship.

- This will help to ensure a resilient future for adders in this area, and develop a sense of community pride in this beautiful, sensitive species.

- The findings and outcomes from the programme will be used to inform further outreach projects across Wales, UK and Europe, to help reverse the pervasive negativity associated with adders and other native snakes.

Total number of people engaged since March 2018 = 1,219
Adders are Amazing!

Working with Schools

The WIs and the Stitchy Witches

Artists’ groups

Images copyright Sam Langdon

ARG UK
Involving the whole community in a magical lantern procession

500 school children with their families came to St David’s Airfield to help our giant puppet adder go into hibernation
Media coverage

BBC’s ‘adder extinction’ post downloaded over 250,000 times, and the interviews with Sam and Iolo were aired on BBC Wales, S4C and Radio 4.
Land Manager Adder Networking Days

We ran two adder days for land managers in 2018: at Cleeve Hill (Gloucestershire) and NT Dudmaston Hall & Kinver Edge (Shropshire and Staffordshire).

Over 64 land managers attended from:
- National Trust
- Natural England
- Forestry Commission
- Local authorities
- Butterfly Conservation
- Wildlife Trusts
- Local conservation groups
- Golf course green keepers

More adder days are planned!
Working with the Ministry of Justice

Dave Willis (Herts ARG) MoJ Training Programme:

• 37 staff and prisoners trained in 2018 across 4 establishments in England and Wales: HMP Springhill, HMP North Sea Camp, HMP Hollesley Bay and HMP Prescoed

• GCN identified at HMP Springhill and this data used to help external ecologists.

• Toad populations identified at 3 sites.

Courses are being booked for 2019. Local ARG assistance welcome!
What’s in your Pond?

Training days and citizen science surveys in Northern Ireland

Image copyright Toby Edwards
Publications

Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom
Advice Note 10
www.arguk.org

Reptile Survey and Mitigation Guidance for Peatland Habitats
Version 1, April 2018

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APPENDIX: Flow charts and mitigation summary for:

The Herpetofauna of Wiltshire

Gareth Harris, Gemma Harding, Michael Hordley & Sue Sawyer
March 2018
Wiltshire reptiles and amphibians. Records centre and
Wiltshire Amphibian & Reptile Group

Make the Adder Count: population trends from a citizen science survey of UK adders

Emma Gardner¹, Angela Julian², Chris Monk³ & John Baker⁴

¹School of Biological Sciences, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6AY, UK
²Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom (ARG UK), 82-92 Finsbury Park, London, EC1M 4TG, UK
³Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom (ARG UK), 62-82 Great Watford Way, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP1 2EG, UK
⁴Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom (ARG UK), 54 Barons Court, Hammersmith, London, W6 9LE, UK

Amphibians and Reptiles in Leicestershire and Rutland: A Review
by Andrew M. Heaton, County Recorder for Amphibians and Reptiles, 2018
Regional Events

South East Amphibian and Reptile Group Regional Meeting
10:00 am – 4:00 pm, Saturday 12th January 2018, Marwell Zoological Park
Thompson’s Ln, Golden Common, Winchester SO21 1JH

Vanishing Viper 2019: A European Perspective on Adder Conservation
by Amphibian and Reptile Groups of UK
£38 - £48
100% fund – supporting practical conservation

Gallows Hill – Yorkshire ARG creating new ponds and hibernacula

Images copyright YARG
100% fund – supporting practical conservation

Unusually in 2018 we donated the entire proceeds of the ARG UK 100% fund raffle at the HWM to a very worthwhile legacy project set up by Steve Parnwell and family, following the tragic loss of Madeleine Parnwell just before Christmas 2017. At the 2019 AGM, Steve updated us on their progress towards turning a patch of Cambridgeshire farmland back into a wildlife haven - Madeleine's Patch.

If you would like to support Madeleine's Patch please do visit their JustGiving page. www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/madeleines-patch
ARG UK – Financial summary
2018-19 (draft)

Total Income = £57,789

Total Expenditure = £55,899

Surplus = £1,890
Balance carried forward = £34,425
Balance on 31 Jan 2019 (Unrestricted balance) = £36,315
Charity no = 1165504

Grants
Individual donors
Sponsorship
Events
Educational sales
Training
Other income

Volunteer costs
Website costs
Office support
Insurance (ARG UK)
Project costs
Staff costs
Travel costs
Governance costs
ARG Activity Survey - Summary

How active is your ARG, on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is inactive and 5 is very active

2016 = 36 responses
2018 = 39 responses
Do you use the ARG UK insurance cover?

2016 = 36 responses
2018 = 39 responses

Percentage responding

Yes: 88.6%
No: 11.4%
How many members does your ARG have in total

- 2016 = 36 responses
- 2018 = 39 responses
In the past year what activities has your ARG taken part in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toad patrolling</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training courses</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External events</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey and monitoring</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local research projects</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National/international research projects</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat creation/restoration</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory (other wildlife organisations)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory (general public)</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning enquiries</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snake welfare</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage responding

2016 = 36 responses
2018 = 39 responses
Where do you send your record data (tick all that apply)

2016 = 36 responses
2018 = 39 responses
Welcome to the Record Pool

The Record Pool collects data on herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians) in the UK and to makes it available, locally and nationally, for conservation purposes.
What are the major constraints to your ARG

- Finance
- Volunteer time
- Insufficient committee members
- Insufficient volunteers
- Conflict of interests with other NGOs
- Time
- Lack experienced/licensed members
- Members also consultants and busy at critical times

Percentage responding
What can ARG UK do to help support your ARG better

• Provide a mechanism for species licensing for members
• We can find lots of willing volunteers to do the exciting stuff such as surveys, but nobody wants to contribute to the admin involved in running the group or organising the activities. Unless you can help with this, I don't think there is anything ARG UK could do further at the moment!
• You're great! We're very happy to be part of the family and I don't think there's much more you could do
• More regional events which might be a little cheaper to attend. We have many members who would like to attend the larger events but are unable to due to cost. Regional events may also encourage cohesion between ARGs.
• We need to find ways of getting people out surveying and submitting results without it all falling to me to organise. This is true of group activities too.
• Hosting ARG publications
• Anything that would encourage volunteers to take more of a lead role in organising events and activities.
• Can ARG source some funding to help with training?
• More updates on projects on a wider scale that require volunteers
ARG UK- strategy for 2019

• To continue to make a significant impact on conserving all native species of amphibian and reptile in the British Isles.

• To continue to support and develop the network of county-based independent volunteer amphibian and reptile groups (ARGs) across the UK.

• To work towards greater inclusivity and diversity, by welcoming and encouraging people from a broader range of backgrounds, to become involved in conserving amphibians and reptiles in the UK.

• To encourage the wider public to be more aware of, and sensitive to, the ecological needs and conservation of amphibians and reptiles in the UK.
ARG UK- strategy for 2019

We will achieve this by:

• Supporting the ARGs by phone, through visits and by email support. To help new ARGs set up, and revitalise those that are struggling. Encouraging mentoring with neighbouring ARGs.

• Up-dating and upgrading IT, membership and survey support, including: ARG WEB, Record Pool, ARG UK web-site, ARG Groups mini websites, social media.

• Maintaining and promoting existing programmes including land manager training, ‘What’s in your Pond?’ (NI/HSI) and collaboration with MoJ.

• Expanding ‘Adders are Amazing!’ to other ARGs through an online resource pack, and workshops/training sessions.

• More support for ARG regional meetings – including ‘Vanishing Viper 2019’, (June 8-9 with University of Bangor Herp Soc).

• Working with other NGOs on national or specialist projects e.g. ARC Trust on Snakes in the Heather and Dragonscapes in Wales, HSI in Northern Ireland, Froglife on Toads on Roads.
A big ‘Thank You’ to all our generous sponsors without whom, this would not be possible!
Thank you – and finally

Farewell to a dear friend and colleague –
Archie Lang