



Herpetofauna Workers' Meeting 2016

Saturday 6th to Sunday 7th February 2016

The Oxford Hotel, Godstow Road, Oxford, OX2 8AL

Please note: This programme is subject to change.

Saturday 6th February

09.30-10.00 Registration and coffee.

Morning session: Chair: TBC.

10.00-10.10 *Welcome address.*

10.10-10.35 *Conserving the critically endangered Chinese giant salamander.* Ben Tapley (Zoological Society of London).

10.35-11.00 *Insights from long-term monitoring of adders in East Anglia.* John Baker (Suffolk Amphibian & Reptile Group).

11.00-11.25 *Natural England: organisational update and European Protected Species news.* Katharine Woods and Rob Cameron (Natural England).

11.25-12.00 *Coffee break.*

12.00-13.30 **Workshop Session 1.**

13.30- 14.40 Lunch and posters.

Afternoon session: Chair: TBC.

14.40-15.05 *Snakes on a Plane: Using refugia to research the abundance, habitat requirements and thermal behaviour of grass snakes on a site in Norfolk.* Sarah Gelpke (University of East Anglia).

15.05-15.30 *Helping toads across Kent's roads: an ARG approach.* Amy Wright (Kent Reptile & Amphibian Group).

15.30-15.55 *A herpetologist's guide to recording aquatic invertebrates.* Will Watson (Herefordshire Amphibian & Reptile Team).

15.55-16.15 *Herpetofauna monitoring in Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Reserve: a big return from a small citizen science project.* Rob Gandola (Herpetological Society of Ireland).

16.15-16.45 *Coffee break.*

16.30-17.30 ARG UK Annual General Meeting.

Social evening

19.00-21.00 Gala Dinner.

21.00-22.00 Quiz & Raffle.

22.00-Late Bar, close & depart.



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Sunday 7th February

09.30-10.00 Registration & Coffee.

10.00-11.30 **Workshop Session 2.**

11.30-12.00 Coffee break.

Afternoon Session 1: Chair: TBC

12.00-12.30 *Using eDNA in a national monitoring programme for great crested newts: results from PondNet.* Jeremy Biggs (Freshwater Habitats Trust).

12.30-12.55 *Using big and small data to determine the effects of marsh frogs on common frogs.* Aidan Mackay (DICE, University of Kent).

12.55-13.20 *Herpetofauna conservation in Jersey: past, present and future.* Rob Ward (DICE, University of Kent).

13.20-14.20 Lunch and posters.

Afternoon Session 2: Chair: TBC

14.20-14.45 *Revising the "Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines".* John McKinnell (Scottish Natural Heritage).

14.45-15.10 *The final chapter in a conservation success story? Completing 10 years of post-translocation monitoring of great crested newt (Triturus cristatus) in Scotland.* Lynsey Harper (University of Hull).

15.10-15.35 *City Frogs: Urban Myth or Urban Success Story? Investigating the value of Sustainable Drainage Schemes.* Marcia Rae (Highland Council).

15.35-16.00 *Settling slow-worms: A translocation project five years in.* Katharine Banham (Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Northamptonshire).

16.00-16.10 Closing remarks.

16.10-16.40 Coffee and departure.



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Workshop abstracts

Delegates to select three workshops in order of preference at time of registration. We will endeavour to give you your preference, but please note spaces are limited and so your choices cannot be guaranteed. Note that this year we include tuition-based sessions (workshops A and E) as well as the conventional discussion-based workshops.

Workshop A: Using the Record Pool for online recording

Leader: Steve Langham (Surrey ARG), Thom Starnes (ARC) & John Wilkinson (ARC)

The Record Pool is a unique resource: an online recording tool that allows herp data to be more easily shared locally and nationally, driven by the needs of the herp conservation community. This workshop will guide participants on use of Record Pool, including submissions and verification. We also want to gauge your views on future developments to the Record Pool. NB: if you bring your wifi-enabled laptop or mobile device you'll be able to work on the Record Pool during the workshop (though if you can't bring one, you can still participate). See: www.recordpool.org.uk

Workshop B: Changing European Protected Species licensing: more habitat creation, less translocation?

Leader: Rob Cameron (Natural England)

The Habitats Directive requires strict protection for European Protected Species (EPS: great crested newt, natterjack toad, pool frog, sand lizard and smooth snake). In this workshop, Natural England will discuss new options for enhancing EPS regulation. They would value discussion with delegates over a more strategic approach, focusing more on habitat creation, and less on protecting and translocating individual animals. With the ongoing review of the Habitats Regulations, this is a timely workshop. Please come along to share your views on the best way to regulate our most threatened herps.

Workshop C: Amphibians in drains: finding the way out

Leader: Pete Minting (ARC)

Amphibians often get trapped in roadside drains, and a flurry of activity in the last few years means there are more solutions available or in the offing. This workshop will describe the ways you can resolve existing drain problems, including practical solutions such as ladders and altering kerbs. We'll demonstrate the main options currently available, and seek your ideas for further improvements. Please come along if you've ever wondered how you can help amphibians trapped in drains, or to share your experiences with this problem.

Workshop D Reptile Survey - towards better guidance

Leader: Chris Monk (Derbyshire ARG)

There is a need for updated guidance for reptile surveys incorporating best practice, recent research and advice from experts in the field. This would assist ARGs and naturalists carrying out survey for conservation purposes and provide a reference for assessing survey reports produced by consultancies for development proposals. The workshop will discuss people's experience of reptile surveys and what advice they currently use. It will then gather views on the scope of new guidance, e.g. level of detail, species to cover, audience, and how to make it understood by planners and others who have to assess the results of reptile surveys.

Workshop E: Introduction to great crested newt Habitat Suitability Index

Leader: Angela Julian (ARG UK) and Dorothy Driver (ARC)

The great crested newt Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) is an incredibly useful tool for assessing habitat quality, and for feeding into habitat management planning. This workshop is aimed at people new to HSI, or those wanting a refresher. The workshop will explain how to undertake an HSI assessment, including the guidance you need to consider and how to interpret scores. Please come along if you'd like to get to grips with this invaluable technique. Not recommended for those already highly familiar with HSI. For more information, see the ARG UK HSI guidance here:

<http://www.arguk.org/download-document/9-great-crested-newt-habitat-suitability-index-arg-advice-note-5>