



# Herpetofauna Workers Meeting 2012

## Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2012

The International Centre, St Quentin Gate, Telford, Shropshire TF3 4JH

### Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January.

09:30- 10:00 Registration & Coffee.

#### Morning Session. Chair: David Orchard (ARG UK).

10:00- 10:10 Welcome address. Tony Gent (Amphibian & Reptile Conservation).

10:10- 10:30 What's next for herp conservation in England? Paul Edgar (Natural England).

10:30- 11:05 The use of population genetics in UK adder conservation. Faye Willman (Institute of Zoology).

11:05- 11:20 ARG Update – Matthew Ellis (NEWARN).

11:20- 11:55 The new Natural England/ DEFRA pond surveillance pilot project: developing new approaches to biodiversity data collection in the voluntary sector. Dr. Jeremy Biggs (Pond Conservation).

11:55- 12:25 Coffee Break.

#### Session 2. Chair: Dr. John Wilkinson (Amphibian & Reptile Conservation).

12:25- 13:00 The distribution and dispersion of herpetofauna in lowland farmland. Rosie Salazar (WildCRU, University of Oxford)

13:00- 13:35 Amphibians and Sustainable Drainage Systems in the Scottish Highlands. David O'Brien (Highland Biological Recording Group).

13:35- 14:35 Lunch.

14:35- 16:00 **Workshop Session 1.**

16:00- 16:30 Coffee Break.

#### Session 3. Chair: Julian Whitehurst (Cheshire & Wirral ARG)

16:30- 17:05 Pool frog reintroduction update. Dr. John Baker (Independent Consultant).

17:05- 17:20 ARG Update – What's that snake? and more. Nigel Hand (HART).

17:20- 17:35 ARG Update – Local Authorities – Law unto themselves. Ian Tanner (WART).

#### End of formal presentations day 1.

17:35- 18:30 Poster session – a chance to take a look at what ARG's are doing around the country and the opportunity to chat to group members.

Bar open 19:15- 01:00

19:30- 21:30 Gala Dinner.

21:30- 22:30 Quiz – The return of 'Have I got newts for you?!

ARG UK Raffle – Proceeds go to the ARG UK 100% fund.

## Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January.

09:00- 09:30 Coffee and Registration for Sunday day delegates only.

09:30- 11:00 **Workshop session 2.**

11:00- 11:30 Coffee break.

### **Session 4. Chair: Dr. Tony Gent (Amphibian & Reptile Conservation).**

11:30- 12:00 *The UK sand lizard captive breeding and reintroduction programme. The why, the how and the results.* Chris Davis (ARC).

12:00- 12:20 *Connecting London's Amphibian & Reptile Environments (CLARE) - Scaling the city.* Sophie Hinton (ARC).

12:20- 12:35 *ARG Update – Identifying pond conservation sites for great crested newts –* Mike Phillips (Krag).

12:35- 12:50 *Update on UK Chytrid –* Freya Smith (Institute of Zoology and Imperial College London).

12:50- 13:30 *Keynote Speaker – Nick Baker (Naturalist & Broadcaster) 'Tales of Scales. Beyond the pond – The trials & adventures of an amateur herpetologist.'*

13:30- 13:40 *Review of the weekend and close.* David Orchard (ARG UK)

13:40- 14:50 Lunch

14:50- 16:20 ARG UK AGM – all welcome.

16:20 Departure

## **Workshops**

### **Dealing with negative attitudes to reptiles. Leaders: Nigel Hand (Herefordshire Amphibian & Reptile Team) & Gary Powell (Amphibian & Reptile Conservation).**

Bring your weird and wonderful stories about mis-identification of reptiles in gardens and the subsequent extreme reaction of householders. How have you dealt with these kinds of enquiries? This workshop plans to explore the negative attitudes of some of the general public to reptiles- your experiences will be used to help those less-versed in responding to negative attitudes. A joint advisory note will be produced (ARG UK and ARC) for use by ARGs and the general public.

### **Making the Adder Count. Leaders: Jon Cranfield (Herpetologic Ltd/ ARG UK) & Chris Monk (Derbyshire Amphibian & Reptile Group).**

Anecdotal and other evidence (e.g. from NARRS) points to the fact that the adder is now by far our rarest widespread reptile – and is in need of urgent conservation attention. The Make the Adder Count (MTAC) surveys have been running since 2005 – but are they doing what we'd hoped? Can we detect trends – locally, regionally or nationally – and is the adder now a component of management plans as a BAP priority species? This workshop will look at the results of MTAC to date, highlight adder conservation issues (including current genetic studies) and discuss how MTAC surveys can address these issues going forward. Workshop findings will inform and support MTAC surveys, recording and feedback mechanisms etc.

### **Amphibian recording. Leaders: Mike Phillips (Kent Amphibian & Reptile Group) Danial Winchester (Surrey Amphibian & Reptile Group).**

This workshop will look at the achievements of amphibian recording in Kent (Krag) and discuss key topics and recording tools employed. Group work will cover the issues involved in successful recording schemes and prioritize approaches. The resulting output will ultimately be used to create an ARG advisory note on amphibian recording.

### **Pond monitoring for volunteers. Leader: Dr. Jeremy Biggs (Pond Conservation).**

This workshop will follow on from the presentation being given by Jeremy Biggs on this research project which is being run by Pond Conservation and ARC, in conjunction with a range of freshwater related recording groups (e.g. BDS, BSBI, Aquatic Coleopteran Conservation Trust, Buglife etc.). Results will inform efforts to engage volunteers in effective recording of pond taxa.