

## Contact Details:

### Amphibian and Reptile Conservation

655a Christchurch Road,  
Boscombe,  
Bournemouth,  
Dorset BH1 4AP

T: 01202 391319

E: [enquiries@arc-trust.org](mailto:enquiries@arc-trust.org)

[www.arc-trust.org](http://www.arc-trust.org)

### What is Amphibian and Reptile Conservation?

Amphibian and Reptile conservation is a national charity that specialises in conserving our native amphibians and reptiles.

We have our main offices in Boscombe, Dorset.

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation owns, leases, or formally manages over 80 nature reserves across the UK, including 45 sites in Dorset.

**These sites are important areas for rare reptiles and amphibians.**

### How you can help

You can get involved with practical conservation work, surveying and monitoring, volunteer wardening, or becoming a friend of your local site.

Getting involved with training, habitat management techniques and rare species handling can provide excellent experience for a future career in conservation.

**For more information visit our website, or contact the office.**

# VOLUNTEER NEWS



*ARC volunteers helping to control birch on East Ramsdown. ▲*

Photo Stuart Handyside / ARC Volunteer Task Leader



amphibian and reptile  
**conservation**

### In this Edition:

- Autumn Task Dates
- Birch Control Experiment
- Grazing Update

amphibian and reptile  
**conservation**

Dorset | September 2010

# It's Winter task season again!



**...and as you will see in the middle pages we have lots of volunteer tasks scheduled this autumn!**

This year we are trying something new and running what is essentially two teams of task leaders. This means we can run tasks on our urban sites around Bournemouth and Poole at the same time as running tasks in the Purbecks. So I hope you can make it...

Also in this issue we have articles on the birch control experiment that many of you have helped out with over the summer and which will be continuing throughout the autumn, as well as an update on grazing on Dunyeats and Parley Common.

We also have a number of Reptile Rambles organised for September in the hope of finding some reptiles before they go into hibernation for the winter. With any luck these last sightings will keep us going until the spring!

**Thanks again to you all.**

*Rowland Griffin*

Dorset Reserves Community Officer



*Shetland cattle on Dunyeats (left), British White cattle on the Isle of Purbeck (right).*

Photos: Rick Sharp  
ARC Dorset Field and Health & Safety Officer



## Grazing for Conservation

**Rick Sharp**

*Dorset Field & Health and Safety Officer*

**ARC has been setting up livestock grazing on a selection of reserves over the last few years to help create and maintain habitat/vegetation structure and quality for reptiles and amphibians.**

Our reserves on the Isle of Purbeck have been grazed by British Whites for a couple of years now. This year we have introduced grazing to two of our urban reserves in Bournemouth and

Poole, namely Dunyeats and Parley Common. These two projects have been carried out under the umbrella of the Dorset Urban Heaths Grazing Project.

Using native breeds such as British Whites (Purbeck), Shetlands (Dunyeats) and Belted Galloways (Parley) we can be sure that they are better suited to the harsh heathland environment than other breeds. We hope that by using low numbers of cattle we will, as well as keeping saplings and Molinia grasses at bay, limit the impact to reptile populations.

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Urban sites</i>	<i>Meeting point</i>	<i>Grid Ref</i>
15/09/2010	East Ramsdown	Head out from Hurn on Avon Causeway, 1st right after Forestry Commission's Ramsdown car park, follow ARC signs from gate	SZ133977
25/09/2010	Town Common	Junction of Marsh Lane and Dudmoor Farm Lane	SZ149948
29/09/2010	Noon Hill	Noon Hill Drive, Verwood	SU099088
06/10/2010	Ferndown	Ringwood Rd	SZ070993
13/10/2010	East Ramsdown	As above (15/09/2010)	SZ133977
20/10/2010	Parley	Lone Pine Drive	SZ086991
27/10/2010	Ferndown	Wimborne Rd car park	SU065007
30/10/2010	Town Common	Junction of Marsh Lane and Dudmoor Farm Lane	SZ149948
03/11/2010	Dunyeats	Gravel Hill Rd Layby, North of Dunyeats roundabout	SZ016964 SU099088
06/11/2010	Noon Hill	Noon Hill Drive, Verwood	SZ086991
10/11/2010	Parley	Lone Pine Drive	SZ133977
17/11/2010	East Ramsdown	As above (15/09/2010)	SZ016964
20/11/2010	Dunyeats	Gravel Hill Rd Layby, North of Dunyeats roundabout	SU065007
24/11/2010	Ferndown	Wimborne Rd car park	SZ149948
01/12/2010	Town Common	Junction of Marsh Lane and Dudmoor Farm Lane	SU099088
08/12/2010	Noon Hill	Noon Hill Drive, Verwood	SZ149948
11/12/2010	Town Common	Junction of Marsh Lane and Dudmoor Farm Lane	SZ133977
15/12/2010	East Ramsdown	As above (15/09/2010) Lions Hill Way, Ashley Heath	SU106039

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Purbeck sites</i>	<i>Meeting point</i>	<i>Grid Ref</i>
29/09/2010	Clouds Hill	Tank View Point, King George V Road, Bovington	SY826904
09/10/2010	Worgret	Puddletown Road, look for a driveway with two white posts on left of road if travelling from Wareham, enter site through gate directly in front of you	SY896871
13/10/2010	Creech	Grange Road entrance	SY918839
27/10/2010	Clouds Hill	Tank View Point, King George V Road, Bovington	SY826904
06/11/2010	Great Ovens	Morden Road Car Park	SY923903
10/11/2010	Creech	Grange Road entrance	SY918839
24/11/2010	Worget	As above (09/10/2010)	SY896871
08/12/2010	Holme Mount	Holme Lane, off Grange Road, follow signs to the gun club, park in gun club car park	SY911854
11/12/2010	Creech	Grange Road entrance	SY918839

## Reptile Rambles

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Site</i>	<i>Meeting point</i>	<i>Grid Ref</i>
08/09/10	Town Common	Opposite Avon Causeway pub	SZ137975
16/09/10	Parley	Lone Pine Drive	SZ086991
18/09/10	Great Ovens	Morden Road Car Park	SY923903
26/09/10	Ferndown	Wimborne Road Car Park	SU065007

If you would like to join in with a task or get more details and directions to the sites please contact: Rowland Griffin on **01202 391319** or email [rowland.griffin@arc-trust.org](mailto:rowland.griffin@arc-trust.org).

All tools, equipment and **biscuits** provided. Wear suitable clothing and footwear and bring your own lunch. **Tasks usually run from 10am until 3pm. Reptile Rambles will start at 10am and usually finish between 12pm and 1pm.**

## Birch Control Trials

**Stuart Handyside**

*ARC Volunteer Task Leader*

### Birch saplings are taking over the world!!!!

Well, no they're not really taking over the world but it does feel like that sometimes and they are a big problem on many of our reserves. So how do we control birch re-growth after cutting? According to old Dorset folklore you must cut birch saplings at midnight during a full moon with a toad on your head! Ok, so I made that up, although it might be worth a try?!

No, a more scientific approach is needed and after many hours extensive

research (probably in the pub!) Gary Powell (ARC Senior Reserves Manager) suggested we run a trial during the summer months cutting the birch saplings while they're in full leaf. Each month we would mark out an area or 'plot' and divide each plot into two halves, all birch saplings within these plots would be removed using our trusty bow saws and loppers. Then one half would have the cut stumps treated with Roundup and the other half would be cut but left untreated. We can then compare the effectiveness of each method. ▶

◀ Presumably to stop ARC volunteers spending the summer lounging about in beer gardens, Rowland decided to run the trial as volunteer tasks! The trial would start at East Ramsdown with two tasks in July, and then one a month in August and September. At the time of writing this article we have just completed the two July tasks which were well attended and proved very successful. I would like to thank all those

volunteers who worked very hard in very warm sweaty conditions, without once muttering 'who's bright idea was this'?

The individual plots were photographed before and after each task and will be monitored throughout 2011 for signs of re-growth. Hopefully our efforts will prove to be a success, otherwise it's back to 'toads on heads at midnight'!



Before

After

### *Birch removal experiment at Ramsdown*

Photos: Stuart Handyside / ARC Volunteer Task Leader

## BHS/ARC Joint Scientific Meeting

**It's that time of year again when ARC joins forces with the British Herpetological Society to organise their Joint Scientific Meeting.**

The meeting offers the opportunity to listen to the latest herpetological research from home and abroad as well as the chance to catch up with friends, both old and new.

It will be held as usual at the Bournemouth Natural Science Society on Christchurch Road, Bournemouth on Sunday 5th of December.

I will be sending out more information when speakers, dates and costs are confirmed.

If you are interested in attending contact Rowland Griffin:  
[rowland.griffin@arc-trust.org](mailto:rowland.griffin@arc-trust.org)  
or 01202 391319

