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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 and in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.

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

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



**amphibian and reptile
conservation** 

In this Edition:

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- The new team
- Hampton Court success!

*Ferndown Common
pond dipping* ▲

**amphibian and reptile
conservation** 

Dorset | September 09

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust launches.

As you may have heard The Herpetological Conservation Trust has metamorphosed.



Since the 6th of July we have been officially merged with the conservation charity Froglife.

After talks involving trustees and staff from both organisations it was decided that the merger would be of mutual benefit to both charities. The new organisation 'Amphibian and Reptile Conservation' will be a new stronger voice for herpetological conservation across the UK.

There will be offices in both Boscombe and Peterborough where staff will

continue to work on their existing projects in each area. ARC staff from both offices will be working together on new projects in the future.

Why not have a look at our new website at www.arc-trust.org to see what we've been up to and to sign up to see the latest news about Amphibian and Reptile conservation.

▼ The new team!



▲ The Garden at Hampton Court

Hampton Court Garden Launch



Back in July staff from the newly formed Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, embarked on an exciting project which combined forces with students from Kingston Maurward College in Dorchester.

The Dragon Garden was created for the Hampton Court flower show, to demonstrate an amphibian and reptile friendly space, which you could easily transfer to your own back garden at home, to encourage wildlife to take up residence.

The show coincided with the launch of the new organisation, and was an excellent platform to promote the new Trust, and raise awareness of the decline of amphibians and reptiles in our country.

Staff from Dorset, London and Peterborough came together to talk to people, answer any burning questions about frogspawn failure, newts in need and snakes in the swimming pool! Staff also spent a lot of time chatting to people about the merger of the two charities and up-coming projects. People also had the chance to become a frog friend by joining Amphibian and Reptile Conservation.

Not only did the week long show reach thousands of people, but the Dragon Garden also managed to win a bronze medal! Not bad for a first time exhibitor!

A smaller version of the Dragon Garden will be displayed at the Dorset County show this year, www.dorsetcountyshow.com.

Date and time	What's happening	Where	Additional info
7/10/09 10am start	Practical Task	Ferndown Common	Meet at Pompeys Lane entrance SZ 063 997
10/10/09 10 am start	Practical Task	Newton Gulley	Meet at Norden park and ride SY 958 828
14/10/09 10 am start	Practical task	Newton Gulley	Meet at Norden park and ride SY 958 828
21/10/09 10 am start	Practical task	Ferndown Common	Meet at Pompeys Lane entrance SZ 063 997
25/10/09 10am start	Practical task	Parley Common	Meet at Lone Pine Drive SZ 086 989
28/10/09 10 am start	Practical task	Dunyeats	Meet at Merriefield Avenue SZ 010 964
4/11/09 10 am start	Practical task	Worgret	Meet at entrance off Puddletown Rd SY 894 873
7/11/09 10 am start	Practical Task	Great Ovens	Meet at Morden Rd car park SY 921 909
11/11/09 10 am start	Practical Task	Creech	Meet at entrance off Quarry Road SY 093 995
18/11/09 10 am start	Practical Task	Lytchett	Meet at entrance off Sandy Lane SY 975 928
25/11/09 10 am start	Practical Task	Gallows Hill	Meet at end of Puddletown Road, turn right. Lay-by on right. SY 842 910
2/12/09 10 am start	Practical Task	Ferndown Common	Meet at Pompeys Lane entrance SZ 063 997
6/12/09 10 am start	Practical Task	Parley Common	Meet at Lone Pine Drive SZ 086 989
9/12/09 10 am start	Practical Task	Noon Hill	Meet at Noon Hill Drive SU 099 088
16/12/09 10 am start	Practical Task	Ferndown Common	Meet at Pompeys Lane entrance SZ 063 997

If you would like to join in with a task, then please call to let us know, also to get more details and directions to the site; **01202 391319**

All tools and equipment provided. Wear suitable clothing and footwear and bring your own lunch. **Tasks usually run from 10 am till 3 pm.**

Summer Events

This summer has seen a mixed bag of weather and some busy weeks for Amphibian and Reptile Conservation.

We have attended around 20 events throughout Dorset and some further afield. This ranges from pond dipping and bug hunting days to wood carving snakes and frogs with an artist at an environmental event in Boscombe. We have spoken to and got hands on with thousands of people over the last few months!

The Nature Pole, a wood carving done at the Wild about Boscombe event run by Dorset Wildlife Trust, was started on the day of the event by local artist Rachel Huggett, with members of the public invited to have a go at carving the wood too. The pole will be installed somewhere in Boscombe Gardens when finished, why not go and see if you can find our handiwork!

We were assisted at some of these events by some of our regular volunteers. This help is invaluable to us and if you are interested in helping out at future events please contact us. It's a great opportunity to meet lots of people, answer their questions and dispel some of their fears!

We have also completed a summer season of surveys on the 10 keys sites. Not surprisingly, animals proved increasingly difficult to find as the weather got hotter.

We decided to have a break from surveying and then the rain came!

The hope is that September will provide the opportunity to see some animals. This tends to be a good time of the year to see reptiles as they begin to prepare for their winter hibernation.

Surveying on Dunyeats ▼



▲ People were invited to have a go

Project Updates

Upton Esso, is a project which was started at the beginning of the spring season.

The site which has been owned by HCT for some time had been left to become extremely overgrown and untidy. The site was cleared of the 15 ft high gorse bushes and general rubbish to reveal a rather large bare site which could be used for many different purposes.

After some consultation with the local parish council, it was decided to try and create a wildlife garden area which could be used by local community groups, residents and schools.

The first task day saw a good turnout of volunteers of the younger variety, as local children mucked in to help out with the digging of the first pond. The liner was kindly donated by volunteer Pete Eyles, and there was also interest from local residents.

After the initial digging of the pond another liner was donated to us and the next task involved a few more volunteers and the fire brigade to fill two freshly lined ponds.

Since that day there have been some unfortunate incidents involving both of the ponds getting vandalised. As a consequence there are no liners in either of the ponds and also no water!

We intend to re-do the ponds and have the garden fenced to at least try and deter any future vandalism. There will be tasks going on to try and improve the site over the coming months.

Despite the vandalism we still managed to spark the interest of local schools and guide groups who came out to lend a hand on several occasions with tidying up, planting seeds and generally getting mucky in the name of wildlife conservation!

Upcoming season: we need your help!

In the coming autumn season we can look forward to getting back out on some of our sites and continue the practical conservation work that is so valuable to the habitat.

As usual we will be having tasks in a variety of locations on Wednesdays and some weekends, so have a look at which ones look good for you and come and lend a hand on your local nature reserve (or one further afield if you like!).

Getting out and about in your local area is a great way to meet likeminded people and do something positive for your community and native wildlife.

We usually meet in the morning on site and then head off to the task led by

the Community Officer, or one of our volunteer task leaders.

Tasks are often scrub clearance such as small Birch and Pine, with a controlled fire on site to burn up the cuttings (most welcome on a cold autumn day!) and plenty of hot drinks and biscuits on offer.

Some sites are very quiet, and joining in with a task can be a great way to get to know a place in your local area, which you may not even know existed.



Your help can improve habitats for the UK's rarest reptiles that depend on the Heathland habitat, which covers most of our sites.



The small pond goes in ▲



▲ *The larger pond pre vandalism*



▲ *Upton juniors lend a hand*



▲ *Smooth snake on Parley Common*