

natterchat

Froglife's newsletter - amphibians, reptiles & nature news
autumn/winter 2013

£2.50

the great crested newt issue

Froglife's
latest
research

GCN
research &
policy

plus... River Nene Dragon Finder : Wildlife Ambassadors : Events : book offers

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from the CEO



Froglife has a long and impressive track record of working on Great Crested Newt (GCN) conservation. This has been established through our management of Hampton Nature Reserve, home to the largest known population of GCN in Europe, and also through our numerous projects involving research and on the ground action. In this newsletter we share some of this excellent work with you.

GCN are often viewed as either a 'declining protected species' or a 'pesky and costly distraction' (page 8 GCN Research by Silviu

Petrovan). One can appreciate where 'pesky and costly' comes from - in certain areas of the UK GCN are abundant. It is therefore no wonder that many people question why such a fuss is made about these animals.

It is up to wildlife conservation charities to ensure that this myth is dispelled. This cannot be achieved through sitting around meeting room tables discussing the decline of GCN populations amongst the already converted. Instead, we need to be reaching out to those with less understanding of why these animals are important, are declining and most importantly deserve to be conserved.

So why exactly should we be concerned about Great Crested Newts? Well, first and foremost they have an intrinsic value and a right to exist as much as

any other living creature. Despite being abundant in some areas, at national and European levels GCN are a declining species and without enforcing their protection under various Acts and Regulations (see page 11 Policy Page by James Stead), we are in danger of losing them completely. Finally, GCN form a vital part of our ecosystem and who knows what the impact of their loss would be.

Our work at Froglife focuses on creating and enhancing habitats and helping people to engage in conservation. In order for our work to be effective we need to ensure that everyone is invited to join in, particularly those that are often excluded. Wildlife will not be conserved by a select few; it simply has to be championed and campaigned for by the masses. It's a mixed time for

our social inclusion programme. As our Dragon Finder work develops, we wrap up our Wildlife Ambassadors project. Most project funding is for a maximum of three years, and many donors will not repeat fund the same project. The lessons learnt through Wildlife Ambassadors will be embedded in our future work, but life would certainly be easier if funding was more long term. Funded by Access to Nature, we trained 107 Ambassadors who between them completed 800 hours working on wildlife conservation projects, a great achievement.

We are extremely grateful to all of our supporters for the lengths that you go to to ensure that Froglife can continue our crucial work.

Kathy Wormald, CEO
kathy.wormald@froglife.org

froglife news : autumn / winter 2013

River Dragons

With London Dragon Finder a year old in October, and the main bid for Scottish Dragon Finder awaiting a decision from the Heritage Lottery Fund, we were really excited to be awarded a development grant for a project along the River Nene.

Rob Williams, previously our Scottish Conservation Coordinator, has joined

the team in Peterborough to map out a project packed with habitat improvements, educational activities and volunteer work along the length of the River that runs from its source in Northamptonshire to the Wash in Lincolnshire. We will be submitting the main bid early in 2014, with the hope to have all three projects up and running later in the year.

Our free Dragon Finder app is available across the UK, for anyone to download and get out spotting amphibians and reptiles on their patch. Find it at www.froglife.org



Photos: Sam Taylor, Silviu Petrovan and Laura Brady

Shuttleworth (AKA Graham Fellows) has also written us a song! Written especially to celebrate all things amphibian for Save the Frogs Day 2013, you can listen to Love the Toads (Warts and All) for free at www.soundcloud.com



John Shuttleworth Loves the Toad (Warts & All)

As well as supporting us with a generous donation from his recent tour, comic musician John

Find out more about how you can support Froglife, and the difference your money can make at www.froglife.org

Froglife is the campaign title for The Froglife Trust. Registered Charity Number 1093372 (in England & Wales) & SC041854 (in Scotland); Registered Company Number 438714 (in England & Wales). The views expressed in Natterchat are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of Froglife.

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Cover photo: David Kilbey

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project profile



Here we focus on one of Froglife's conservation and learning projects around the UK. This time, Laura Brady fills you in on our Wildlife Ambassadors project working with the unemployed in Peterborough.

Froglife project: Wildlife Ambassadors

Staff and volunteers involved: Project Officer Laura Brady, Support Officer Jodie Coomber, and volunteers from Better Together through the YMCA.

How long has the project been running? The project started in July 2010 and will finish in September this year.

The aims, objectives, outputs and outcomes: The project aimed to work with people who were out of work, education or employment and also new to conservation. We developed new skills and gave training to help them discover new paths, whilst improving their chances of finding employment, education or volunteering opportunities. Through a

varied training and events programme, the work achieved improved opportunities for participants and the wider community to experience and learn about the natural environment. Our outcomes were seven green spaces improved for the public, four new wildlife ponds, ten ponds restored, and even a medicinal herb garden at Peterborough Museum!

The results so far: We have worked with 107 Ambassadors on the project, completed over 800 hours of sessions and in excess of 90 hours of taster, celebration and event days. At our events we have seen over 2600 people. The local green spaces we have improved include Green Backyard, Railworld, Olive Branch Community Gardens,

Woodfield Park and Peterborough Museum. We created and restored ponds, improved interpretation, created wildlife-friendly habitats, and also improved access for local communities. Froglife are continuing to develop work in this area, so watch this space!

Any highlights? We have had some great examples of how the project has helped people over the past 3 years. Our star Ambassador is Ash Jarvis, who started as a Wildlife Ambassador and has volunteered over 500 hours working with Froglife (see page 6). Through events across the city we have had the opportunity to catch up with old Ambassadors and see how far they have come. The project has seen a number of them go back to college, find new

employment and even welcome two new babies!

Funded by: Access to Nature (a scheme funded by the Big Lottery Fund and run by Natural England)

How Froglife supporters can get involved: Now that the project is coming to an end, it would be fantastic to know that the green spaces are still being used and loved. It would be great if people could get down to some of these sites and either enjoy the work achieved, or get involved and volunteer some time!

For more information: laura.brady@froglife.org

Find out more at www.froglife.org

people / places / culture

the spotter: sam taylor

Spotting amphibians, reptiles and people who are passionate about them



"Kermit has a lot to answer for" was one of comments on *Costing the Earth* earlier in 2013. The accusation was that frog conservation is not taken seriously due to the perception of them as comic, silly animals - thanks to Kermit.

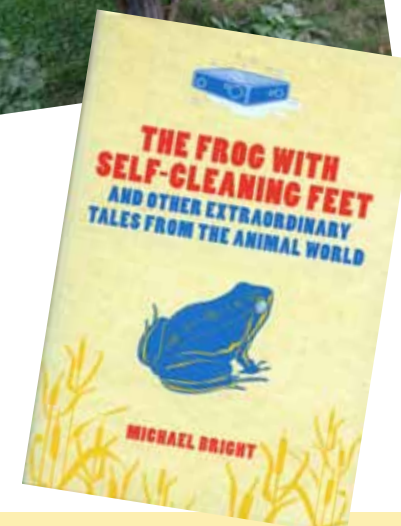
I think that people can be encouraged to engage with animal conservation of the species that feature in popular culture, and know conservationists who love Kermit. However, why do so few people know frogs are more threatened with declines and extinction than mammals (like Baloo and Dumbo) or birds (like Sam the Eagle and Road Runner)?

Perhaps it's because amphibians are underrepresented after Kermit, and the links between the funny frogs and the real ones aren't spelled out. Frogs don't often feature on wildlife documentaries

or 'serious' books. They are a bit stuck with a cute, childish image rather than being seen as beautiful, mysterious or as vulnerable as other animals are. There's a need for us all to supplement the cute and funny representations of frogs with more information about the threats they face.

We were excited to hear about popular science book that could help: *The Frog with Self Cleaning Feet and other Extraordinary Tales from the Animal World* by Michael Bright. Packed with "easy to digest animal trivia" along the lines of Q.I. facts, it includes weird and wonderful information about amphibians and reptiles (among other animals).

The facts come from scientific papers and range from being humorous, incredible and grotesque to moving and tragic. Bright also makes an effort to weave in conservation facts, with lost and found amphibians mentioned in the afterword. It's a lovely book to dip in and out of, and you can imagine it sparking 'did you know?' conversations. If those conversations include 'did you know that frogs like Kermit are at risk of extinction?' it'd be a good start.



Thanks to The Robson Press, we have 5 copies of 'The Frog with Self-Cleaning Feet' to giveaway. You can enter our prize draw to be in with the chance of winning a copy by sending an email with your name, address and the subject 'frog feet book giveaway' to sam.taylor@froglife.org by 1st December.

Got a suggestion for a person, book, film or place for the spotter? Get in touch: sam.taylor@froglife.org

Give the Gift of a Lifetime

Remember meeting your first frog? It can be a magical moment. Every year, Froglife transforms over 100 habitats and helps thousands of people fall in love with their first frog, toad, newt, snake or lizard.

You can be part of our mission simply by leaving a legacy in your will, helping us to ensure that future generations enjoy our native wildlife.

Visit www.froglife.org/support/legacy for more information, call the office on 01733 602102 or email sam.taylor@froglife.org



what I'm up to...

Ambassadors & Beyond

A volunteer's journey

Froglife's Public Engagement Officer, Sivi Sivanesan caught up with long-term volunteer Ashlea Jarvis to find out what she's up to:

"I've been interested in animals and wildlife ever since I can remember," explains Ash. "I spent my youth glued to anything with David Attenborough in it, and I have them all on DVD now too!"

Ash started volunteering for Froglife on the Wildlife Ambassadors project in 2011 when she went to an event we were hosting. "It was the first time I'd ever volunteered, but I signed up straight away as I was out of work.

My first day was a bit scary meeting all the new people but we were out on Hampton Nature Reserve doing exactly what I wanted to do. On the first day we saw a Great Crested Newt!"

Being a Wildlife Ambassador built up Ash's confidence and she began volunteering on the My Wild Life project as well. "I enjoyed interacting with young people. I like to think that if I've got one person interested in nature, that's good enough for me."

Ash also enjoys making a difference to local green spaces. "When we worked at Peterborough Museum

it was just a patch of useless scrub and we turned it into something functional and beautiful. That's what the Ambassadors are good at and that's why people should volunteer, it makes you feel good when you see the result."

Ash spreads the word about her volunteering through Blipfoto, an online journal that people post photos to. "I started in 2010 posting generic photos etc. and when I started with Froglife I got lots more interesting photos. My photography has gotten better too. My favourite memory of volunteering with Froglife is the first time I saw an Adder, you

Find out more at www.froglife.org

Every edition, we feature a Froglife supporter taking action to help amphibians and reptiles. This time, Public Engagement Officer Sivi Sivanesan talks to Ashlea Jarvis, Froglife volunteer for the last 3 years.

If you would like to let us know what you're up to or to suggest someone who should be featured please email sivi.sivanesan@froglife.org.



Photos: Ash Jarvis, Jodie Coomber and Laura Brady

Ash has volunteered over 500 hours for Froglife. She has travelled across the UK, made new friends, encountered lots of wildlife and enjoyed every minute.

see them on TV, but the first time I saw one in real life, it was like wow - that's an Adder!"

Since 2012 Ash has been working part time at a local garden centre whilst continuing to volunteer with Froglife. "I decided to go for it after I realised through volunteering that I didn't want a job that meant that I was sat behind a desk. I'd been out of work for a year until then so I was elated when I got the job. Volunteering is a great way of getting you out of the loop of applying for jobs, and not hearing anything and getting disappointed; when you're volunteering you actually feel that you are doing something with your time."

Visit <http://www.blipfoto.com/Ashmeister> to see Ash's blog.

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Ash's top 5 tips for making something useful for wildlife

1. Plan ahead and think what you can do with that object or space
2. Always make sure that anything that you use is recycled/wildlife-friendly. Any recycling centre is a great source of things to transform into something useful
3. You can find wildlife anywhere so make some room for wildlife
4. Try to incorporate bee- and butterfly-friendly plants in any planting scheme
5. Every animal needs water, so if you have room, a pond, or water feature will benefit wildlife.

You can volunteer with Froglife on a range of different projects. Please visit www.froglife.org for more information.



Museum garden before and after



Declining protected species or pesky and costly distractions?

by Silviu Petrovan



Great Crested Newts (Triturus cristatus) are not only spectacular looking animals, they are also one of the numerous previously common species of plants and animals that have declined sharply after the Second World War over much of Western Europe.

A declining species

The reasons for their decline are typical for many other European species, in particular the great reduction in the number and quality of ponds in farmland, as well as the general intensification and mechanisation of agriculture. This has resulted in large monoculture fields, removal of hedgerows and increased use of pesticides. Traditional farmland ponds, which for centuries have been vital for farmers as water sources for their livestock, have become largely superfluous with the increase of modern pipe systems. Where not filled in by farmers to create more

space for growing crops, they have often become neglected and shaded by trees, polluted by pesticides and heavily silted up, all of which heavily impact on the capacity for this species to continue to breed there. Fish introductions to ponds and the multitude of invasive species, in particular plants such as New Zealand stonecrop (*Crassula helmsii*), have also contributed to the decline in suitable breeding ponds for this newt. In addition, for species with relatively poor capacity for movements over land, such as the Great Crested Newt, the increased isolation and fragmentation brought about by urban sprawl, road building and expansion have resulted in a multitude of pockets of habitat of various sizes. Centred around one or more ponds, newts can survive there, but without the possibility to travel to new areas where they can mate. This species lives in "metapopulations", a concept that describes a number of

interconnected populations which are separated by areas of poor suitability. Some of these subpopulations, in particular the very small ones, can become extinct over time. However, as long as the connectivity and the habitat are still there, the animals will in time recolonize the area. Break that connectivity and each subpopulation becomes isolated, without possibilities for arrival of new individuals and consequent inbreeding and ultimately disappearance. No surprise then that the species is legally protected in the UK and most of Europe and that it is an offence to kill them or destroy their habitat.

Uncommonly common

Despite all of this, Great Crested Newts are not necessarily rare; in fact in some areas of the country, such as around Peterborough where Froglife's head office is located, many of the existing ponds still have



Data and research

Natural England, the statutory agency responsible for protected species, have started this spring a process of large scale pond surveys that can answer some of the most difficult questions about this species, such as how many ponds still exist in different parts of the country, in what condition are they and how many of the ponds still maintain this species. While the work has been discontinued for the time being, hopefully it will restart in the coming years and will be able to provide a much clearer picture of the situation for this species and some better targeting of funds needed for translocations and mitigation work.

For our part, Froglife is continuing taking action into addressing several of the reasons for the decline of this species and to promote healthy and well-connected populations. We manage, on behalf of the landowners, an exceptional size population in a post industrial site in the south of Peterborough called Hampton Reserve (Orton Pit). This is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Natura 2000 site with an estimated population of over 30,000 Great Crested Newts. We are currently running research

projects looking into the use of occupancy modelling for surveys; with funding from Natural England we have just started a collaborative PhD research project with the University of Hull into the usage of road mitigation structures for this species, in particular tunnels under the roads. We continue to expand some of our habitat creation and restoration projects such as Dragon Finder and Living Water. Excitingly, we will be starting a new Living Water project in the Sheffield area, specifically looking into restoring and increasing the amount of available pond and terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newts. This project will take place for a year from September 2013 and survey results from this spring suggest there is not a moment to lose; most of the sites seem to have lost their newt population in the past 10 years in that region, almost certainly due to pond neglect and small size. It is a very interesting time for people involved with Great Crested Newts, as so many things are afoot right now with this species. We can only hope that in 1-2 years time many of the questions about this species will have been answered, and changes in place to help protect them appropriately long into the future.

Great Crested Newts. Due to their protected status this is creating nationally a considerable need for ecological consultancy companies to intervene and survey and to translocate animals into new areas during preliminary phases of construction work. This can result in tensions and misunderstandings with the general public, particularly with inflammatory headlines such as "School building stopped because of 3 protected newts" definitely not improving the situation. Yet, despite the fact that a substantial amount of money is spent on relocating Great Crested Newts in the UK, all the information available suggests that nationally populations might still be declining. It is vital therefore that the reasons for this are clearly understood.



Photos: Silviu Petrovan, Tom Langton

research round up

a summary of the science: great crested newts



by Paul Furnborough

Paper 1: Non-consumptive effects of predatory three-spined sticklebacks (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*) on Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*) embryos

Author: Laurence Jarvis

Source: *Herpetological Journal* 20: 271-275 (2010)

It is well known that predatory fish can and do cause declines and potential extinctions of Great Crested Newt (GCN) in ponds. The obvious mechanism is predation on larvae, which are neither toxic like adults nor wrapped in protective leaves like eggs. GCN larvae also tend to swim in the more exposed mid-water column.

In order to explore other impacts of fish on GCN, Jarvis set up 5 tanks with stickleback and 5 without. He then put GCN eggs into mesh bags to protect them from predation and introduced them to all 10 tanks.

About 50% of all fish-free eggs hatched (as we would expect, given GCN's genetic quirk which kills half their eggs) whereas just 25% of eggs hatched from the fish tanks, showing that fish do have a non-predatory impact on GCN development.

Through monitoring the water quality Jarvis was able to discount changes in oxygen, nitrate and pH levels, caused by fish presence, as being responsible for this reduced hatching success. By treating fish with fungicide, disease could also be excluded. Jarvis suggests that fish pheromones might be the culprit.

Despite this all the eggs that hatched did so around the same time and to the same size, showing that GCN are not able to change their developmental behaviour to adapt to a hostile (in this case, fishy) environment.

This study reinforces the evidence set supporting the view that GCN ponds should be designed and maintained as fish-free habitats.

Paper 2: Geographic variation in habitat requirements of two coexisting newt species in Europe

Authors: Rannap and Linnamägi

Source: *Acta Zoologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 58 (1), pp. 69-86 (2012)

Great Crested Newts (GCN) and Smooth Newts (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) largely share a European distribution range and co-exist in many ponds across varied habitats. GCN are in decline primarily due to habitat destruction, degradation and fragmentation. Why then are these factors not causing Smooth Newt populations to suffer similarly?

Rannap and Linnamägi suggest that this is because different elements of their shared habitat are critical to each species, and it is the elements which are critical to GCN which are most threatened.

This study collates evidence for habitat preference in GCN and Smooth Newts across 35 studies. The authors not only compared habitat preferences between species, but also looked at whether these preferences varied across their geographic range. Unfortunately the data were not in a suitable format for meta-analysis so the authors were restricted to making general assessments of patterns.

Their paper supports the view that fish ponds are less likely to support GCN than fish-free ponds; it also highlighted the importance of woodland as part of their terrestrial habitat across their range, although they can also use grassland or non-cultivated fields. Only in the northern latitudes (Norway and Sweden) do sunny ponds appear to be a critical factor. In the UK even up to 60% pond shading can be tolerated. By contrast, pond area and depth was a more important factor at lower latitudes.

Smooth Newts were more tolerant of both fish and shade, probably due to their more cautious larval behaviour (favouring the pond bottom and edges) and shorter larval development time. They are also more tolerant of a range of terrestrial habitats, with woodland cover only being an important factor at their range margins. In a landscape with increasing fish ponds, fewer woodlands and ageing, more shaded ponds, Smooth Newts are therefore the more resilient species.

Photos: Laura Brady

Find out more at www.froglife.org

policy page great crested newts

by James Stead



Welcome to the exciting world of Great Crested Newt legislation! Great Crested Newts are a rarer sight than our small newt species (Smooth / Palmate) and the case in Europe is similar. Because of this the Great Crested Newt receives heavier protection by law under several Acts and Regulations, but what does all this mean? What exactly constitutes an 'offence' by law? And which Acts / Regulations apply to each country of the UK? Read on below to find out all this and more..!

Relevant Acts / Regulations:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 UK
- Countryside Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000 England and Wales
- Nature Conservation Act 2004 Scotland
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations England and Wales (2010) / Scotland (2007 amendment)

Handling / possession of Great Crested Newts

It is an offence to kill, injure, capture, disturb or take Great Crested Newts in the UK.

This includes impairing the animal's ability to survive, breed, rear / nurture young, hibernate or migrate.

Under the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations* and the *Nature Conservation Act* it is also an offence to take or destroy Great Crested Newt eggs.

These offences are punishable under the *CROW Act* and *Nature Conservation Act* even due to 'reckless' actions i.e. undeliberate actions caused by lack of due care.

Great Crested Newt breeding / resting sites

It is an offence to intentionally damage, destroy or obstruct access to a structure occupied by or in use by Great Crested Newts for shelter / protection.

It is also an offence to damage or destroy a Great Crested Newt breeding site.

These offences are punishable under the *CROW Act* and *Nature Conservation Act* due to 'reckless' actions.

Great Crested Newt sale / trade

It is illegal to possess, transport or control a living or dead Great Crested Newt.

It is also an offence to sell or exchange a Great Crested Newt or anything derived from it.



Penalties for offences

So what happens if someone commits an 'offence'? They face a conviction and up to a £5,000 fine for each offence on one individual newt (so this can accumulate per newt!). Under the *CROW Act* in England and Wales they may also be liable to serve up to a six month prison sentence. It's important to note that only suitable and experienced personnel licenced by the relevant statutory authority may survey for / disturb Great Crested Newts.

Please note European / UK legislation of a protected species is a complicated affair and information given is a summary guideline. For full descriptions of Acts / Regulations, please see the relevant statutory authorities' websites for your area.

- England: Natural England (www.naturalengland.org.uk Tel: 0845 600 3078)

- Scotland: Scottish Natural Heritage (www.snh.gov.uk Tel: 01463 725000)

- Wales: Natural Resources Wales (www.naturalresourceswales.gov.uk Tel: 0300 065 3000)

Every edition features news from our national Toads on Roads project, where thousands of volunteers all over the UK help to rescue Common Toads on the way back to their breeding ponds. After a strange Spring, Communications Coordinator Sam Taylor takes a look at the recent news for toads.



I don't think I've ever had so many phone calls about the weather as I did in Spring 2013! At the point we would normally expect things to be tailing off in terms of toad activity, we hadn't even experienced the peak. Journalists from a range of news outlets were picking up on the story, and the poor team for SpringWatch were desperately waiting for Spring to start so that they could get out filming. It was hard to imagine that the previous year we had been worrying about drought conditions on many of the toad crossing sites, especially after the incredibly wet summer that followed.

We were thrilled that Spring finally came as the BBC SpringWatch team headed to the Henley-on-Thames Toad Patrol to film the story of a female Common Toad. They did a great job, really bringing to life the amazing life cycle of the animals, the long and treacherous journey

they make and the difficulties our road network can throw up for them. You can view 'a toad's journey' narrated by Michaela Strachan online at www.bbc.co.uk

As the data from Toad Patrols across the UK has been coming in, the numbers were (not unexpectedly) down on previous years. A big thank you to everyone who has sent their data back; it's never too late, so please do keep them coming! As the female toads may reabsorb eggs when the conditions are not favourable for breeding, and as toads may migrate at different times than expected when weather is not ideal, it's likely that there was a mix of both toads and volunteers missing migration contributing to the lower numbers.

This year we have also been doing some extra research and support for Toads on Roads. With help from Patagonia and Natural England we



Find out more at www.froglife.org

SPOTLIGHT ON HENLEY ON THAMES

Henley on Thames is one of the oldest Toad Patrols, with a stunning lake near the road that the toads migrate to. The site benefitted from one of the first amphibian tunnels under the road, but it is currently unused and the Patrol have been looking for other options. With help from Biffa Award, they have now created a pond on the 'right' side of the road and hope to encourage the amphibians to adopt that as a breeding pond instead. It will be really interesting to see the data from the site in the next few years.

Henley is also home to the River and Rowing Museum, and a fantastic display of artworks and dioramas inspired by Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*. Last year we ran an activity at one of the Museum's family fun days and a few of the team were lucky enough to meet Mr Toad himself!

The Henley Toad Patrol is also one of the biggest Toads on Roads sites, rescuing around 7,000 toads a year.



Photos: Oliver Kratz, Laura Brady, Sivi Sivanesan, Matt Wilson

22785
The number of toads saved in Spring 2013

2,754
The number of toads found killed in Spring 2013

2883
Number of days volunteered by Patrollers

3
Average number of volunteers in a Toad Patrol

203
The number of newts found killed in Spring 2013

1515
The number of newts saved in Spring 2013

188
The number of frogs found killed in Spring 2013

1715
The number of frogs saved in Spring 2013

have installed the first motion capture cameras into amphibian tunnels at one site, and have been looking at options to improve the situation for Patrolling at another. These projects will act as case studies for other sites, to keep pushing for the best solutions for the toads. There will be more about these ideas on the new and improved Toads on Roads area of the website in coming months. Thanks to John Heaser from Norfolk Toad Watch, we have a swanky new database to help!

Once again, a big thank you to every single volunteer involved in Toads on Roads here's to an interesting Spring in 2014 whatever the weather has in store, and a bright future for our toads.

Froglife does not receive funding to keep the Toads on Roads project going, so every penny donated really helps! The profits from our colourful toad greetings cards go to our Tuppence a Toad appeal, and you can find them in our online shop at www.froglife.org/shop

Natterchat Autumn/Winter 2013

out and about with froglife events / volunteering / talks / training

We have an exciting diary of opportunities for you to meet some of the Froglife team, get involved with projects or help out through volunteering. More information on our events can be found on the website at www.froglife.org/events

Date	Event	Details	Type
Every Thursday & every other Saturday	Hampton Nature Reserve Volunteer Sessions, Peterborough	10am-3pm on Thursdays and 9.30am-3.30pm on Saturdays. Please contact paul.furnborough@froglife.org or 07508 020437 if you would like to get involved. Habitat management work including pond restoration, scrub and reed clearance	Practical volunteering open to adults
Sunday 1st September 2013 All day	Crafts and pond dipping Hogganfield Loch, Glasgow	No need to book, just come along and join in	Fun event, open to all ages
Wednesday 25th to Sunday 29th September 2013 10am-5pm	The Countryside comes to Town at Walthamstow Marshes, Lea Bridge Road, Leyton, London, E10 7QL	This family friendly event, bringing the countryside into London, has something for all ages and all interests. Dragon Finder will be running a stall. Adults £4, Children FREE. Buy tickets on the door.	Fun event, open to all ages
Monday 14th to Friday 18th October 2013 10am -3pm (lunch 12- 1pm)	Life Under the Surface School Sessions at WaterWorks Centre Nature Reserve, Lammas Road, off Lea Bridge Road, Leyton, London E10 7NU	Exciting craft workshop that celebrates the variety of wildlife living in UK ponds. One-off £30.00 booking fee per class. Call 08456 770 607 or email youthandschools@leevalleypark.org.uk	Fun event, open to all ages

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staff / volunteers

froglife factfile: kathy

toads, airedales and managing froglife



Name: Kathy Wormald

Role: Chief Executive

What does that involve? Managing the charity on behalf of the Board of Trustees and ensuring that the charity is delivering against its strategic plan. Supporting other senior managers in their roles within the charity. Generally ensuring that the organisation is well managed, cost effective and that all projects and staff are delivering against their specific targets. I also manage our ecological consultancy company. This work provides Froglife with much-needed unrestricted funds.

How long have you been working at Froglife? I have been here for 6 years in this position.

What else do you do? I have a mad Airedale Terrier who also happens to be one of our two office dogs. He needs a lot of walking, so I tend

to spend quite a bit of time walking in the countryside. Sadly we do not see much wildlife as he is far too noisy and boisterous.

What makes you get up in the morning? My dog who charges upstairs the second the alarm goes off and madly licks my face until I get out of bed! I enjoy my job and I do not find it difficult to get out of bed and come to work. There are always new things going on and there is rarely a day that goes by that I do not learn something new.

What do you love about amphibians and reptiles? What isn't there to love? I think the fact that they are quite secretive animals is appealing, the fact that you have to go looking for them and the great ways in which you have to look, such as pond dipping or a reptile rummage. The methods used to survey for them are also intriguing such as night torching, netting, pitfall traps and reptile mats.



Had a great wildlife moment? I grew up in South Africa and spent a lot of my adult life travelling around Africa so I have been very fortunate in seeing a lot of great wildlife. However keeping it local, I must say that my grandson and I went mad earlier this year when on a lovely spring evening we heard the mating calls of a toad from my garden pond. It was such a lovely moment to spend with my grandson and something that I will certainly always remember, I just hope that he does as well.

What's the number one bit of kit that helps you do your job? I suppose my number one bit of kit is my computer. My mobile phone has also become an appendage to me and I think I would totally collapse without it.

What could Froglife Supporters do to help the work you do? Unfortunately most donors will not fund the running costs of an organisation so anyone prepared to do a bit of fundraising for Froglife will be really helping.

book review by
Vanessa Barber



Title: Frog by Charlotte Sleigh

Published by Reaktion Books, London.
ISBN 9781861899200

"Charlotte Sleigh does a good job of condensing the extensive cultural and scientific literature on frogs into a stream of absorbing facts and stories through which the reader can easily hop. 'Frog' is further brought to life through its collection of thought-provoking and high-quality illustrations. Of particular interest are the representations of frogs through the ages and across cultures.

My favourite chapters of the book 'Under the Knife' and 'Evolution on Fast-Forward' explore the importance of frogs as the experimental organism of choice for scientists through the ages. These extraordinary animals were already considered the 'old martyrs of science' in 1850, and have since featured so prominently at the forefront of science that six Nobel prizes in physiology and medicine have resulted from investigations based exclusively on frogs. It is a small wonder perhaps, that the term 'lab rat' has not yet been replaced with 'lab frog'.

Their continued importance at the forefront of scientific discovery is just one reason why 'Frog' goes some way to underlining the importance of these enigmatic little creatures and why we must continue to conserve them.

Sleigh concludes her book with a quote from the 17th Century Dutch anatomist Jan Swammerdam; "There is a much greater number of miracles, and natural secrets in the Frog, than any one hath ever before thought or discovered". Having read 'Frog' I couldn't agree more. For those readers interested in a rich yet concise account of the biology of frogs and their place in culture, this book is an excellent choice."

Thanks to Reaktion Books, we have a free copy of Frog to give away.



To be entered in the free prize draw, please send an email to sam.taylor@froglife.org by 1st December 2013 with your name, address and the subject line 'Frog book prize draw'.

We have a range of cards, books and gifts for Christmas and other occasions in the online Froglife shop at www.froglife.org/shop. All funds raised support our conservation and education work.



Find a range of cards and goodies for Christmas at www.froglife.org/shop

Frog backpack £17

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