

# Garden Amphibian & Reptile Hunt 2017



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## Document Control

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## INTRODUCTION

The 'Garden Amphibian and Reptile Hunt' was a joint project between Hampshire Amphibian & Reptile Recording Network (HARRN) and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust aimed at engaging new and existing recorders across Hampshire and Isle of Wight, and boost herpetofauna records across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

The project was promoted mainly via social media (Facebook, Twitter, HantsSpecies Yahoo group and the Trust's webpage), the HARRN mailing list held by the Trust and the 'Down to the Coast' HLF project on the Isle of Wight.

## METHODOLOGY

Participants were asked to record all amphibians and reptiles seen over the late May bank holiday (27-29 May 2017).

The following guidelines were provided as an introduction to spotting herpetofauna and how to record the results:

- Choose one day of the bank holiday to explore either your garden or a site you visit regularly such as a local park (avoiding anywhere that has lots of disturbance).
  - For reptiles, walk around slowly and as quietly as possible, looking for nice areas they could bask, such as sheltered, south-facing banks or log piles. Binoculars can be handy to see ahead. The earlier part of the morning (9-11am) and in the evening (5-7pm) can be good times of day for reptile spotting.
  - For amphibians, try looking in bodies of water, such as ponds and lakes (don't get too close!) and under damp or rotting logs, although be careful when moving any items, make sure you put them back where you found them and limit how much you check to avoid too much disturbance. Visiting ponds as it gets dark is a great way to see newts.
  - Although we want lots of records, we do ask not to damage habitat in your quest to find herpetofauna!
- Record all the reptiles and amphibians you see on a piece of paper, if you need help with ID, you can use the Trust's species explorer <http://www.hiwwt.org.uk/wildlife/species-explorer/animal>, or take a photo and send it to Sarah Jackson, Senior Ecologist, at [Sarah.Jackson@hiwwt.org.uk](mailto:Sarah.Jackson@hiwwt.org.uk)
- When you have finished, submit all your sightings using this google form <https://goo.gl/forms/BZzGTJOzOj67yvip2> (please submit all records by Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June). Even if you don't see or find anything, please let us know because even negative records are valuable. This data will also be shared with the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre and Isle of Wight Local Records Centre.

By taking part you will be a citizen scientist, contributing to our knowledge and understanding of amphibian and reptile distribution across the two counties. A report, including your results, will be posted on the Trust's website following the Garden Amphibian and Reptile Hunt.

## RESULTS

All common species of amphibian and reptile, plus great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*, were recorded over the bank holiday weekend.

### Amphibians

Common frog *Rana temporaria* was the most frequently encountered species, recorded on 75% of sites, and with a peak of 12 individuals recorded on one site.

Evidence of breeding (eggs or spawn) was recorded for all six amphibian species.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Percentage of Sites (%)	Peak Count
Common frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>	75	12
Common toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>	25	1
Great crested newt	<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	8	Eggs only
Palmate newt	<i>Lissotriton helveticus</i>	33	1
Smooth newt	<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>	42	6
Small newt (smooth or palmate)		25	4

### Reptiles

The most frequently encountered reptile species was slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, seen on 66% of sites, with a peak count of 10 individuals recorded under tins in one participant's garden.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Percentage of Sites (%)	Peak Count
Adder	<i>Vipera berus</i>	8	1
Common lizard	<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	8	1
Grass snake	<i>Natrix natrix</i>	25	2
Slow worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>	66	10

A big **THANK YOU** to all those who took part and submitted your records, 63% of the results were submitted by new recorders!

## FUTURE RECORDING

You can submit records at any time. If you have a one-off record, please send it to the county recorder for amphibians and reptiles at [HARGRecorder@hiwwt.org.uk](mailto:HARGRecorder@hiwwt.org.uk).

When you send in a record please remember to include the following information:

- Your name.
- The date of your observation.
- The precise location (include a postcode and also a grid reference if possible, e.g. SU123456)
- The species seen (use the scientific name if known).
- Additional details such as quantity, alive/dead, adult/juvenile, will also be useful.

If you are a regular recorder, why not join Living Record [www.livingrecord.net](http://www.livingrecord.net). Living Record is an online recording system online system allowing the input of all species records. Recorders are able to view their own records, as well as shared distribution maps and downloading their own records as an excel spreadsheet. The Trust reserves are also mapped so recorders are able to record sightings on our reserves. All records will still be verified by the relevant county recorder before being sent to Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC).

To join Living Record visit [www.livingrecord.net](http://www.livingrecord.net) and set-up an account with your name, e-mail address & post code.