

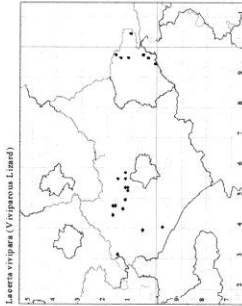
Leicestershire Amphibian and Reptile Network

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Recording Herps in Leics and Rutland

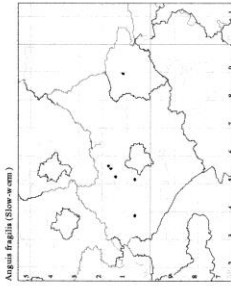
Holly Hayes Environmental Records Centre, whilst continuing to act as the central source of information on animals and plants in the two counties, is keen for specialist groups to take a greater role in biological recording. Hence, Holly Hayes has made a new recording program, Mapmate, available to LARN. New records for amphibians and reptiles will be input to this system by Dorothy, Phillips and Andrew Heaton respectively.

Mapmate is a fairly straight-forward program which allows distribution maps to be easily generated. Now that a good number of recent records have been entered, some useful maps are building up. One of these follows (if the technology, and my ability to use it all go according to plan!).



This is the map for common lizard – mainly Rutland and the west.

In order to make the Mapmate data as comprehensive as possible, please send amphibian and reptile records to me or Dorothy Phillips, or continue to send them to your local natural history society, from where they will find their way to Holly Hayes and eventually to us. Anyone else who is using Mapmate can pass records to us electronically – details in the recent Leicestershire Recorder.



The slow-worm distribution – above – appears to be very sparse in the two counties. It may well be under-recorded, especially in urban areas – in other parts of the country, it is often found in allotments, and similar sites.

Common Lizard

One other interesting piece of information being catalogued by Mapmate is that the common lizard actually appears to be more widespread than previously thought. The map for lizards is shown to the left.

A number of these records require confirmation or recent updating – for example, some of the heathy areas around Moira probably have lizards but need firm recent records. Similarly, the records shown for Rothley, Swithland and many of the Rutland dots are quite old and need updating. If you know of a possible lizard site, please do try to confirm it this year, and send your record in.

Knighton Park

The Friends of Knighton Park have secured a grant from the SITA Environmental Trust to refurbish the ponds in the park. The work was designed to take into account the needs of the frogs and newts which breed there. The Friends are also hoping to combat the removal of frogspawn by providing informative notice boards. Thanks to Mr R Boulter and Mr P Lakin of the Friends for this information.

Reptiles in Your Garden

English Nature has produced a new booklet all about "Reptiles in Your Garden". This answers many of the frequent queries over identification, worries about snakes, encouraging reptiles into a garden, and reptile biology. Copies are available from English Nature's External Relations Team; telephone 01733-455101
www.english-nature.org.uk

Snakes Alive

"Snakes Alive" is continuing to run, so any reptile records for the two counties would be gratefully received. Recording forms are available from libraries, from Holly Hayes or from me.



Waterways and Wetlands

The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers produce a very useful series of books on various aspects of conservation management. One of these which is particularly relevant to amphibians is "Waterways and Wetlands". This book is now available on the BTCV website: www.btcv.org/handbooks
It is worth looking at if you need to solve any wetland management problems.



Frogspawn

I have been recording frogspawn for several years at Saltersford Valley Picnic Site near Oakthorpe, and last year saw the highest ever count of 260+ clumps. The trend seems to have been gradually upwards – has anyone else been noticing this at any site? What is the highest frogspawn count for a site in the two counties? Let me know.

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If you have any items for the next edition of this newsletter, do let me know.

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