**AMPHIBIAN AND REPTILE REPORT FOR 2024**

Records for all eight indigenous species were received during 2024. However, Common Frog and Grass Snake had noticeably fewer records than usual. Indeed, for both species the number of records was lower than in any year since 1986. Nor were there many records of either of the two newt species. Toads were widely recorded though, and Viviparous Lizards continue to be recorded in the region of Lax Hill, confirming the delayed success of the 2007 translocation from Wing Treatment Works.

Serendipitous camera captures of Toads, Lizards and Grass Snakes from mammal surveys has been most helpful.

**Common Frog** *Rana temporaria*

Common Frogs were recorded from a mere six sites in the following six parishes:-

Egleton, Ketton, Leighfield, Oakham, Ridlington and Wing.

Spawn was only recorded from three of these parishes:-

Oakham, Ridlington and Wing.

However, froglets were found in a field near Egleton in July.

The first spawn was on 5 March in Oakham, which is the average date for records in the last 40 years.

Last year I commented that the number of spawning sites was the lowest in the last 40 years. Unfortunately, I have to state that this year’s total is even lower.

The first sightings of frogs were on 16 February in Oakham and Wing, and the last on 22 July.

**Common Toad** *Bufo bufo*

Common Toads were recorded from 15 sites in ten parishes:-

Braunston, Brooke, Hambleton, Ketton, Morcott, Preston, Ridlington, Uppingham, Wardley and Wing.

Although there were no reports of spawning, toad tadpoles were seen at 3 sites:-

Ridlington, Lagoon 3 at Rutland Water (Hambleton) and Wardley.

The first record of the year was on 14 February in Wing, alas dead, but a live toad was seen on 17 February nearby. On 18 February one was found deep in a tunnel in Morcott by Jenny Harris whilst surveying for bats

**Smooth Newt** *Lissotriton vulgaris (*formerly *Triturus vulgaris)*

Smooth Newts were recorded in Langham, Ridlington and Wing.

The first record was on 17 February in Ridlington and the last on 2 August in Wing.

**Great Crested Newt** *Triturus cristatus*

All the records of Great Crested Newts were in the 12 days between 6 March and 18 March. Two were road casualties in Wing and another was photographed after being disturbed from its solace under a dustbin in Wing. The other record was from Langham

**Viviparous Lizard** *Zootoca vivipara (*formerly *Lacerta vivipara)*

Viviparous Lizards were found at six sites in five parishes:-

Hambleton (Rutland Water Nature Reserve), Ketton, North Luffenham (Airfield), Pickworth and Tickencote (Bloody Oaks).

The RWNR records shew a further spread from Lax Hill. At North Luffenham they were said to be numerous on the tarmac when the observer was walking his dog.

**Slow Worm** *Anguis fragilis*

There was only one record from the village of Burley this year on 2 May

**Barred Grass Snake (Grass Snake)** *Natrix helvetica (*formerly *Natrix natrix)*

Grass Snakes were only recorded at four sites in three parishes:-

Empingham, Hambleton (Rutland Water Nature Reserve) and Leighfield.

Two different snakes were seen at each of the two RWNR sites at one of which a camera trap revealed different individuals.

The first sighting was at Leighfield on 18 April and the last near Mallard hide at RWNR on 21 September.

This has been the lowest number of records received since 1986.

**Adder** *Vipera berus*

Two Adders were seen at Ketton Quarry between 30 March and 2 April. The last sighting was on 31 August

Records were contributed by:-

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