Reptile Leaflet Side 1 (English)
Full size A/W S/S 576mm x 210mm + 3mm bleed
Finished size when folded 96mm x 210mm. 4 colour process

Reptiles
in North Wales



Grass Snake by Stu Gregory

Introduction

There are five species of native reptiles living in North Wales. Four of these: Adder, Grass Snake, Common Lizard and Slow-worm, were widely distributed in the area but have all declined in numbers over the last 50 years. A fifth, the Sand Lizard, had become extinct during that period but has recently been re-introduced to a few coastal sites.

We want to know where the four formerly widespread species can still be found. This is where you may be able to help.

This leaflet provides you with some basic information about our snakes and lizards, including where you might find them and how to identify them. On the back of the leaflet is a form to record your sightings. You can also submit your records online.

Please help us to find and protect our remaining snakes and lizards.

Male and Female Common Lizards Photo: Mick Brummage



Descriptions

The **Adder** is the only venomous snake found in Britain. It has a conspicuous dark zig-zag pattern along its back and grows to 60cm (24 in) in length. The brown females are generally larger than the grey males.



Female Adder Photo: Mick Brummage

The **Grass Snake** has a green/olive body with dark streaks on the flanks and a distinctive yellow and black collar behind the head. It can grow to 100cm (39 in) in length and is our largest native reptile.

The **Common Lizard** grows to 15cm (6 in) long. The colour is quite variable with shades of brown, grey and dark green, usually with fine flecks or lines of lighter or darker colouration along the back and flanks.

The **Slow-worm** is a legless lizard. It has a hard, smooth, cylindrical body which is shiny in appearance. Adults grow to 40 cm (16 in) in length. Slow-worms vary in colour from grey to brown, the females usually having darker flanks and a thin dark line along the back.

Finding Reptiles



Male & female Slow Worms Photo: Barry Barnacal

Being cold blooded, reptiles need warm sites for basking to raise their body temperature. South-facing slopes that provide a mixture of open basking sites and dense cover in which to hide are the most favourable.

Adders, Common Lizards and **Slow-worms** can be found in a variety of habitats including: heathland, rough grassland, woodland edge, sand dunes, road verges and old quarries. **Grass Snakes** tend to prefer wetter habitats where they feed mainly on frogs, toads and newts. **Slow-worms** are often associated with gardens and allotments.

The best conditions to see reptiles are when the air temperature is 10-18°c, in hazy or intermittent sunshine and with little or no wind. Hot sunny days are usually very poor because the animals quickly reach their active temperature and move into cover. British reptiles are generally inactive between October and March.

Threats

Small population sizes and slow reproductive growth makes reptiles vulnerable to a range of factors, most importantly:

- Habitat loss and fragmentation.
- Damage and disturbance to habitats, eg. by overgrazing or recreational use.
- In the case of Adders and Grass Snakes, direct persecution by humans.

Legal Protection

All our reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it an offence to intentionally kill or injure them, or to sell or trade them. The much rarer Sand Lizard is given additional protection.

Male Sand Lizard



Photo: Mick Brummage

Further Information

If you wish to learn more about our snakes and lizards we can send you an information pack. Please tick the box on the recording form. This pack will include advice on how you can manage your land/garden for the benefit of reptiles and other wildlife.

North East Wales Wildlife (NEWW) - 01352 742115
Countryside Council For Wales - 01352 706600
Flintshire County Council Ecologist– 01352 703268
Denbighshire County Council Ecologist - 01824 708263
Wrexham County Borough Council Ecologist - 01978 292517
Conwy County Council Ecologist - 01492 575310

RECORDING FORM - Please let us know about your reptile sightings. NEWW will collate these records and send them to Cofnod**

Date dd/mm/yy	Location name	Grid ref or post code	Species	Number seen	Habitat*	Notes

*Habitat: eg Heathland, grassland, woodland, dunes, garden

Your details:
Name:
Address:

Post code:

Telephone:
Email:

May we contact you about this record? Yes/No
Would you like a reptile information pack? Yes/No
Would you like more copies of this leaflet? Yes/No

Copyright and data protection: By submitting this record to NEWW and Cofnod** I share copyright and understand it may be passed onto others. I understand that my details may be held by Cofnod.

You may also record online at **www.cofnod.co.uk**

**Cofnod is the North Wales Environmental Information Service
Please return this form to North East Wales Wildlife, 17 Nant Alyn Road, Rhydymwyn, Flintshire. CH7 5HQ