

# The Natter



# Jack

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NEWSLETTER OF THE BRITISH HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
*THIS ISSUE PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 2010*

## When a Picture Paints a Thousand *Wrong Words . . .*



In the previous issue of *The NatterJack*, our centrefold carried two pictures taken from a sequence of images of what appeared to be an Olive Ridley nesting beach apparently being “ransacked” by unscrupulous egg-collecting locals. It was very easy to draw this conclusion, after all, the camera never lies - does it?

Well in this instance, it did. What was actually occurring was something much, much different and if the pictures had come with supporting text trying to pass this off as a conservation effort, it would have been very difficult to believe.

However that is exactly what it was - read on!

*(Continued on next page)*

THE BRITISH HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

63 Years in Herpetology

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Within days of receiving this set of photos in a “viral” email (and literally hours after *The Natter Jack* was in print) I was also included in a separate email group on the same subject which included a response from Dr. Todd Lewis, our esteemed Herpetological Bulletin Editor and Manager of Estacion Biologica Cano Palma, Costa Rica.

Todd wrote: “I don’t know how these photos got started, but the originator would have been wise to have done his/her homework first. The photos depict a formal co-management model between the University of Costa Rica, a community organization called ADIO, and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MINAET) in Costa Rica. It’s a legal harvest of surplus eggs from the Olive Ridley arribada colony at Playa Ostional on the Pacific coast – an arribada is a mass nesting of sea turtles, characteristic of Kemp’s and Olive Ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys kempii*, and *Lepidochelys olivacea*).”

Todd continues “In such a nesting strategy, the turtles will nest simultaneously with the result that natural predators may be “overwhelmed” and sufficient numbers of eggs/hatchlings are produced to maintain the species. Arribadas can involve many thousands of turtles nesting day and night for several days. The downside is that the turtles regularly dig up each others’ eggs, causing destruction not only to those eggs, but, due to bacterial decomposition of the broken eggs, gross contamination of the surrounding sand. As a result, arribada beaches often realise a very small (1-2%) hatch success. The scenario may seem maladapted, but in reality the Olive Ridley is the most

numerous sea turtle species in the world, so the strategy clearly reflects a successful evolutionary strategy.

The egg harvest at Ostional is a strongly regulated and legal, emphasising a sustainable harvest of eggs that are doomed to be destroyed by subsequent arribadas. The following facts are useful:

1. The program is regulated under a co-management model between University of Costa Rica, a community organization called ADIO, and the Costa Rica Ministry of Natural Resources.
2. Every 5 years the program is reviewed and the egg harvest management plan is reviewed and updated as needed, then submitted to the Government for approval.
3. The current plan notes that:
  - a. The current density of nests is 11 nests per square meter (Olive Ridleys can only sustain about 2 nests per meter without impacting hatchling emergence success).
  - b. During the arribadas (which happen more or less monthly), the females dig up the nests of previous nesting events.
  - c. Due to the high level of egg breakage, putrefaction rates are very high and the resulting high levels of fungus and bacteria contaminate 100% of nests, reducing emergence success to near zero. Removal of surplus eggs has actually raised the population because it increases the hatch success by 5%.
  - d. Eggs can only be harvested during the first 36 hours of an arribada.

- e. To be declared an “arribada”, more than 80 adult females must be nesting simultaneously.
4. The egg harvest program employs 300 local people and the gross income from the program is about \$150,000 USD. About 15% of the eggs are harvested. While there are constant concerns about the balance between maintaining the community’s desire and tradition to harvest and consume (or sell) the eggs and the need to protect this precious resource on balance the program is widely viewed as a progressive example of pragmatic conservation. ”

Todd concludes: “Bottom line — The program is legal, it is well-regulated, and the population is rising.”

The front cover picture depicts the tranquil scene as turtles begin to gather

on the beach for the start of the arribada, prior to arrival of the egg collectors.

To find out more about this fascinating conservation effort, please go to: <http://www.ecocostas.org/index.php/component/content/article/45-socios/189-cinco-casos-de-manejo-de-recursos-naturales-en-costa-rica>  
<http://ostionalcr.tripod.com/>

I am pleased to say that personally I didn’t forward the original email to anyone, and took great delight in resending Todd’s explanation to everyone that was listed in the thread I received (and there were many!). I can only apologise that I jumped to the wrong conclusion and reproduced the apparently quite distressing pictures in our pages. A boss of mine once said “What you know you don’t know is not a problem. It’s what you *don’t know* you don’t know - that’s the problem!” Ed. ❖

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## INTERPOL co-ordinated operation targeting illegal trade in endangered reptiles leads to arrests and seizures worldwide

**L**yon, France - A worldwide operation co-ordinated by INTERPOL and involving 51 countries across all five continents against the illegal trade in reptiles and amphibians has resulted in arrests worldwide and the seizure of thousands of animals as well as of products worth more than 25 million Euros.

Including national wildlife enforcement authorities, police, customs and specialised units from participating countries, Operation RAMP (September - October) focused particularly on illegal activities relating to the trade and possession of endangered reptiles such as turtles and snakes which included Boa

constrictors. The operation resulted in thousands of searches and inspections being conducted, and saw hundreds of suspects being investigated or charged as part of an on-going series of investigations. The goods seized included leather products, and illicit firearms and drugs were also uncovered.

During the two month-long operation, which led to investigations into individuals and companies as well as inspections of premises such as seaports and wholesalers, INTERPOL’s Environmental Crime Programme unit acted as a key operational communications and intelligence centre, facilitating the exchange of information





between the world police body's member countries participating in the operation.

"Our goal in Operation RAMP was to detect and apprehend suspected wildlife criminals, whilst also furthering co-operation and collaboration between agencies and countries in an effort to enhance the fight against organized environmental crime," said the Director of INTERPOL's Specialized Crime unit, Bernd Rossbach.

"While investigations will continue well beyond the conclusion of Operation RAMP, this

operation has shown what the international law enforcement community can collaboratively achieve against suspected environmental criminals and their networks."

"The success of this operation would not have been possible without the close co-operation and dedication of the police, customs, wildlife law enforcement agencies and specialised units in all of the participating countries," added Mr Rossbach.

John Scanlon, Secretary General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), who was briefed on the results of the operation during a visit to INTERPOL headquarters on Tuesday, said "The fact that INTERPOL helps coordinate such worldwide operations

illustrates the level of serious criminality that is now commonly linked to illegal trade in wildlife. I congratulate all the national agencies that participated in

Operation RAMP, and the INTERPOL officers worldwide who supported them. Such operations reinforce the very close working relationship that exists between CITES and INTERPOL," the head of CITES said on the sidelines of a meeting with INTERPOL Secretary General Ronald K. Noble.

Whilst Operation RAMP focused on detecting and

apprehending suspected criminals and criminal groups, emphasis was also placed on ensuring the compliance of lawful traders such as private license holders, public retail outlets and wholesale distributors alongside targeted enforcement actions at national ports where imports and exports transit, collectively resulting in thousands of inspections during the two-month operation.

As the second global operation led by INTERPOL against wildlife crime, results to date from Operation RAMP follow those of its precursor, Operation TRAM (February 2010), which targeted the illegal trade in traditional medicines containing wildlife products and which led to the seizure of products worth more than 10 million Euros. ❖





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# Enrichment

by Jon Coote

Just because you find it attractive and interesting don't believe that a captive reptile will too. For example photographic or painted backgrounds can have a dramatic effect on our perception of a nicely decorated terrarium. It is however unlikely that the housed reptile has any regard for it at all, other than it represents an impenetrable barrier. This is not to say that we should not use them but that we need to understand what adds enrichment value to a cage for our reptiles and what does not. Enrichment is not enriching if it does not enrich.

In contrast to what I have just said above there is some anecdotal evidence, from the Czech Republic, that some captive Caribbean Land Iguanas exhibit unwanted aggression when placed in display cases unless these are painted bright yellow. It is the colour that appears to calm them psychologically. Green Iguanas unsurprisingly perhaps seem to prefer bright green cages interspersed with bright colours, such as artificial flowers.

Reptiles are essentially sedentary, particularly in captivity; they are probably more than adequately fed and have few reasons to expend energy in searching for it. Factors that can encourage exercise can be built into a cage design, such as increasing the floor area. This can be as simple as housing captive reptiles in larger cages, where appropriate, or increasing the number of accessible floors. I remember writing in the IHS journal the Herptile about a snake cage design from

the late 1970's that incorporated a drawer beneath the main floor of the cage. This drawer was accessible to the snake through a drainpipe arrangement set at the front of the cage. This drainpipe extended into the drawer so that it was not possible to guillotine the snake inadvertently by pulling the drawer out completely.

Cage location can be important. Arboreal species prefer to live in cages located above human eye level. In the wild Boa constrictors are most frequently found 6 to 10 feet above the ground. They will move higher than this only if disturbed.

Snakes and lizards are quite tactile in their interactions with their environment. Snakes, in particular, move on their bellies and probably easily discern the different textures of various substrates. A variety of substrates, in the same cage, may well add tactile interest for a bored snake. Substrates that allow burrowing activity may be particularly appreciated. Snakes seem to have very good spatial awareness and use both visual and tactile memories when travelling along familiar routes.

Smooth substrates, such as newspaper, although readily changed when soiled, provide insufficient purchase for many snakes to feel comfortable upon. They appear to me to be rather how it must feel like to live continually on an ice rink, without skates! Similarly some snakes may prefer smooth branches to climb on but most prefer those with a rougher bark to easily cling to. Branches also provide



more interesting pathways through a given volume of space.

It is sometimes surprising where a lizard or snake might prefer to be in a cage once given multiple choices. Shelters or hides are highly prized by most reptiles. Placing these at multiple points within the cage, including at higher locations can be much appreciated, even for species considered to be terrestrial. Turtles also appreciate somewhere to hide, such as within floating vegetation, especially when small and feeling vulnerable to predators. Floating plastic leaves can retain good hygiene practises whilst satisfying this requirement.

Lizards, amphibians and turtles can respond to sound. Items in their cages that they can move to produce sounds can be appreciated, and may discourage them from using less appropriate items. Turtles for example seem to like the noise made by bouncing glass aquarium heater stats up and down, which needs to be prevented for obvious reasons! It is even possible to train reptiles to appear from hiding for a food reward by, for example, tapping on a branch, or their cage, with feeding forceps.

We all know that insectivorous reptiles can be better exercised by feeding them little and often, though the time constraints of a busy human life can conflict with this. They may even be confused by multiple insects being offered in the same dish or at the same time, preferring a single target to fully concentrate on. Shoaling fish exhibit the same predator survival tactic. There are reptile products available to place in cages that offer the promise of providing live food intermittently,

though these are not as 'new' or original as they may purport to be.

Over 120 years ago in 1882 Johann von Fischer, from Vienna, described a novel method of feeding mealworms to his captive colony of chameleons; these produced 793 fertile eggs for him; unfortunately he hatched only two, in a media that included fresh camel dung!

Johann's mealworm feeder was in the form of a black metal wire woven basket with one mesh hole enlarged enough to allow one meal worm at a time to crawl through. This he hung from the top of a cage, filled with mealworms. They exited through the hole and crawled around on the outside of the weave, to then be picked off by the chameleon lying in wait. These mealworm containers were hung in well-lit places so that the chameleons could see the light colored mealworm contrasted against the dark background.

It is apparent that the training of captive reptiles is enriching both for them and for us, their keepers. For example at Disney's Animal Kingdom, in Florida, they have trained Poison Dart Frogs to emerge to an auditory cue, a clicker, to all then congregate on a single piece of slate, and to individually enter small clear plastic containers. This enables the frogs to be transferred between cages without handling and limited stress. Disney also train their crocodiles. Both frogs and crocodiles seem to enjoy working to get their food in this way. What this indicates is that probably the majority of reptiles and amphibians are trainable. This opens up exciting possibilities for the enrichment of captive reptiles as it has proved already with captive birds and mammals. ❖





## Travelling Menageries

*“Menagerie is a Place where they keep Animals of several Kinds for Curiosity” (Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition)*

The Travelling Menagerie, also known as the Beast Show, is the term commonly used to describe itinerant animal exhibition as it developed during the nineteenth century. The expression travelling zoo was also used, and as well as exhibiting on the fairground, they were a stable feature of the circus. The travelling menagerie reflects the increasing wealth and influence of fairground showman in the nineteenth century, interest generated by new knowledge in the natural sciences and the publics' fascination with the exotic and the dangerous.



*Bostock and Wombwell's Show Snake Charmer. Nottingham Goose Fair. 1924*

### Origins

The origins of menageries themselves, as collections of both domestic and exotic animals, can be traced to classical times. Both Roman Emperors and, later, European Royalty, kept menageries for entertainment and prestige becoming regular additions to wealthy homes throughout Europe from the

seventeenth century onwards. Animal exhibition itself is recorded from the very earliest times, taking the form of 'dancing' bears, 'sapiant' animals or, as in Elizabethan London, Bear Baiting. However, though its origins may lie in the spectacles of the Roman amphitheatres, the Travelling Menagerie itself is a peculiarly modern phenomenon.

As colonial expansion brought further and more regular contact with remote regions, birds and animals unseen in Europe arrived at the ports. Here, collectors searched, encouraging the sailors to return with animals thus supplementing their income. By popular legend, George Wombwell started his menagerie with two

snakes bought from a sailor at the Port of London. Below is an interesting advert in the Bristol Mercury and Universal Advertiser from September 1807:

### *EXTRAORDINARY REPTILES*

*Amongst the Number of Natural Curiosities arrived in this City, there seems none to equal or rival the Two wonderful Siboya Serpents. Those Ladies and Gentlemen who have already seen these extraordinary Reptiles, are so highly gratified with the sight of them, that the Proprietor flatters himself, from their high Recommendation that all ranks of people will gratify their curiosity, as they are undoubtedly the only ones of the Kind ever exhibited in the kingdom alive.*

*To be seen at a commodious room at the White Swan, St. James's Back.*

*N.B. The Proprietor gives the utmost value for Foreign Birds and curious animals. ❖*



## Crocodile brings down aircraft

An aircraft that crashed in the Democratic Republic of Congo this summer, killing 20 passengers and crew including the British co-pilot Chris Wilson, 39, reportedly came down after a crocodile smuggled aboard in a sports bag escaped, sparking a panic. The small plane crashed as it approached Bandundu in August, thrown off balance by a stampede of passengers trying to avoid the reptile.

The cause emerged last week in testimony from the sole survivor. ❖

*Source:* Sunday Times, 24th Oct 2010

## Cricket Virus Hits North America

The cricket virus that virtually caused the extinction of the Brown House cricket from being commercially produced in the UK and Europe over 10 years ago, has now been confirmed to be laying waste to the cricket industry in North America.

The USA cricket growers were well aware of the risk of importing insects from Europe, but unfortunately it now appears that the Canadian cricket producers were not. The disease is spreading rapidly across the whole of North America with a number of significant long term businesses now ruined.

Cricket with this virus can survive and develop some resistance over multiple generations if given access to radiant heat within heat gradients. The American industry mainly uses space

heating for its cricket production. Unfortunately this heating method does not allow infected crickets to develop a fever response to fight the disease.

By being able to raise their body temperatures higher than they normally would they can beat the disease sufficiently to survive and reproduce. Then over a number of generations they can develop sufficient resistance to the virus to become commercially viable again, providing they continue to be offered radiant heating rather than space heating.

The only alternative, as was generally chosen in the UK and Europe, is to change cricket species. It is only the Brown House cricket that is vulnerable to this virus and other cricket species are unaffected. The problem in the USA is that the Federal authorities are unlikely to ever license an alternative cricket species to be produced commercially, due to invasive species concerns.

It remains to be seen how the Americans deal with this crisis, but it is likely to get much worse before it gets any better. ❖

*“When you can measure what you are speaking about and express it in numbers, you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meager and unsatisfactory kind. It may be the beginning of knowledge, but you have scarcely advanced to the stage of science.”*

A famous statement from Lord Kelvin





# The Cane Toad

by Luke McNair

The Cane Toad it seems is the toad of my dreams,  
It's held among herpers in highest esteem.  
It waddles about and voraciously eats,  
And has dog food and wax worms as occasional treats.



With its mouth turned down in a permanent frown  
And eyes an exotic confection  
As frogs and toads go, from its tips to its toe  
It's the acme of anuran perfection.

Some see 'em as an amphibian hethen,  
Some as a pet sent directly from heaven.  
Those chappies down under dislike it the most  
And frequently shoot it with AK47.



Some industrious Aussies have put down their arms  
And started to lick them and not cause them harm,  
Some other bright sparks have cashed in on all this,  
And 'ave started to market cane toads on a stick

Though machine gunned and licked,  
Prodded and kicked,  
The Cane Toad will waddle on bravely.



Long live the Cane Toad. That's what I say.  
It may eat the odd mouse and some frogs on the way  
But to live with this toad it's a small price to pay.  
And with that rousing speech I will end this essay.



## Curious observation, by Prof. John Stanford

**D**uring October 2009, at a height of over 900 metres above sea level, on the East-facing Mediterranean side, slopes of the basically limestone Caballo Verde mountains at the northern extremity of Alicante Province of Spain, and within the village district of Benimaurell, some 25 km from the sea, the following observation was made:-

Walking across rough, rock-strewn gorse/heather/bramble-infested land in the early afternoon of a warm and brightly sunny day, my eye was caught by a rapid writhing, cork-screwing, movement close to a gorse bush. This proved to be a small snake, approximately 15cm long and 5-7mm in diameter. Its scales were small and of a white-pale grey colour with evenly scattered small dark spots. The head of the snake passed imperceptibly into the body, and the eyes appeared small. Immediately next to the writhing snake was a large beetle, 7-8cm long and 10-12mm broad, of the type known as Devil's Coach Horse. I watched for about 30 seconds, when the beetle caught hold of the snake and bit it tenaciously

at about its mid-point. The snake writhed even more vigorously, wrapping itself over and under the beetle between its legs. The writhing of the snake slowed and it was apparently dying when I left the scene.

To my mind at the time I arrived, the beetle had already bitten the snake which was writhing in apparent agony as a result of (?) injected digestive enzymes.

This type of beetle is rare in the district and I had not seen one before over the 30 years of visiting the property. However, some 7-8 years ago, the local shepherd reported being bitten on the side by a similar beetle whilst sitting in the scrubland close-by. He showed me a large red blotch on his side, perhaps 20cm in diameter with a raised oedematous central area, all of which resolved over a couple of weeks. The shepherd had never seen such a beetle before and said that its bite was worse than a scorpion's sting, of which he had several experiences.

I have not been able to identify the species of either beetle or snake, though the latter was most probably of the burrowing type. ❖

### Classifieds

#### BOOKS FOR SALE

##### BIOLOGY OF THE VIPERS

edited by Schuett, Hoggren, Douglas and Greene. 580 pages, 16 colour plates, black & white photos and numerous charts and diagrams.

In superb, 'as new' condition - **£45.00.**

##### SNAKES OF THE AGKISTRODON COMPLEX

by Gloyd & Conant. 616 pages, 52 colour and black & white plates, and numerous maps and diagrams. In excellent condition - **£45.00.**

##### A REVISION OF THE WORM SNAKES OF SOUTH-EASTERN AFRICA (Serpentes: Leptotyphlopidae)

by Broadley & Watson, 48 pages, line drawings and charts - **£7.00.**

All prices include packing and postage to UK destinations.

Email Dave at [hawkmoth@supanet.com](mailto:hawkmoth@supanet.com)



## Council Matters

There are several vacant posts on BHS Council which we would like to fill as soon as possible. The posts of *The NatterJack* Editor and Trade Officer remain open; a brief description of duties can be found below.

BHS Council are also considering the proposal of a new post, Meetings Organiser. Again, details can be found below, but please note at present this is an idea in progress, not an official post and will only become one if and when an incumbent comes forward to take on the role.

At the 2011 AGM, one post of Ordinary Member will be vacant, so we are looking for nominations now in order to ensure the position is filled in March next year.

Finally, we would like to recruit an Auditor to confirm the BHS accounts at the end of each fiscal year. Although this is not a Council (Trustee) post, the area of expertise and the remit is very specific, and we would like to recruit a BHS member with the relevant qualifications to undertake this task and join our band of volunteers.

All Council posts are voluntary, require the incumbent to report to Council, and attend quarterly meetings usually held in London (excluding the Auditor).

### ***The NatterJack* Newsletter Editor**

3 year term. Responsible for the regular production of the monthly newsletter. Collation and procurement of material from various sources, researching articles, editing, layout and production of print-ready artwork. Previous experience of page-making software would be preferred, as would access to suitable hardware (Adobe PM or Indesign software can be provided). This is a demanding role requiring a high level of attention to detail,

as well as contact on a regular basis with the membership.

### **Trade Officer**

3 year term. Would suit a person with an interest in government legislation, and/or with contacts in the trade of reptiles and amphibians. Could involve attendance at SUN meetings and liaison with government departments to represent the views of the BHS, although this role is open to further development by the successful candidate.

### **Meetings Organiser**

3 year term. This is a new post which is currently being given consideration by Council. The successful applicant will be responsible for the planning, organisation and coordination of an annual programme of meetings in addition to those regularly presented by BHS (CBC at Amersham, Joint Scientific meeting at Bournemouth, AGM). The lack of regular meetings is high on the agenda of many members and is a cause of concern. However, such meetings require a considerable amount of effort to organise so following discussions at the previous two Council meetings, we seek to recruit an enthusiastic member to take on this interesting and demanding role. The full remit is open for development under the direction of Council.

### **Ordinary Member**

3 Year Term. Required to attend Council meetings to represent the views of the general membership. Occasional other duties as assigned and specified as a result of meeting actions.

### **Auditor (Term does not apply)**

The Auditor acts as an independent examiner and holds the Society's Trustees to account, ensuring honest and responsible stewardship of the Society's finances





by performing an examination of the Society's annual accounts. Please note, this is a non-Council, non-Trustee post and is exempt from the usual responsibilities of Council.

To be eligible for this position, you must:

1. be independent of the Trustees - this excludes the Trustees and relatives of Trustees, but members of the Society are not excluded
2. have a practical understanding of accounting methods

The Society prepares simple "receipts and payments" accounts, so the independent examiner does not need the same in-depth knowledge of accountancy as, for instance, the auditor of a commercial company. Examples of people who might be suitable for the role include bank managers, local authority treasurers and tax inspectors; financial awareness and numeracy skills are the key requirements for an Independent Examiner.

The Treasurer and other members of the Council will provide support and assistance to the new Auditor as they get to grips with the role. The Society will also pay an Honourarium of up to £350 for each annual audit.

Members interested in any of the above posts should write to the Secretary at 11 Strathmore Place, Montrose, Angus, DD10 8LQ, email [secretary@thebhs.org](mailto:secretary@thebhs.org) or telephone 07778 830192 for more information.

Interested parties must be current BHS members, and require two nominations, also from current BHS members. To make this procedure easier, the Secretary can provide a pre-printed letter to be signed by the relevant parties. All nominations received will be advertised ahead of the AGM in March 2011, and if more than one nomination is received for any post, the successful applicant will be decided by ballot.

If you enjoy a challenge, and want to be more involved in herpetology and influence the running of the BHS, come and join the BHS Council!

### Gift Aid

Many thanks to all those who have returned their Gift Aid declarations. This is a great source of extra income for the Society but depends entirely on you to provide the necessary information. If you are a UK Tax payer and haven't done so already, please do send your signed declaration back to the BHS Secretary as soon as possible. ❖

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Please send your herpetological items, cuttings, reports, stories, photos, letters, comments and classified items for *The Natterjack* to Trevor Rose at the following address:

11 Strathmore Place, Montrose,  
Angus, DD10 8LQ  
or e-mail: [secretary@thebhs.org](mailto:secretary@thebhs.org)

**Registered headquarters:**

The British Herpetological Society,  
c/o The Zoological Society of London,  
Regents Park, London, NW1 4RY.

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# HERPETOFAUNA WORKERS' MEETING 2011



**A 21st  
Anniversary  
Celebration of  
The UK Amphibian and  
Reptile Group Network**

**SATURDAY / SUNDAY • 29 / 30 JANUARY 2011**

**Park Inn Cardiff City Centre  
Mary Ann Street, Cardiff, CF10 2JH**



## Saturday 29 January

Presentations to include:

- **How many great crested newts are there really? Modelling great crested newt status.** *John Wilkinson & Dorothy Wright (ARC)*
- **Garden Herps Survey.** *Mike Toms (British Trust for Ornithology)*
- **Economies of scale: revised protocols for NARRS reptile surveys.** *David Sewell (Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology)*
- **Local adaptation: implications for Scottish frogs in a changing environment.** *Anna Muir (University of Glasgow)*
- **Natterings from the North - the current state of natterjack conservation in Cumbria.** *Bill Shaw (ARC)*
- **Water quality.** *Jeremy Biggs (Pond Conservation)*
- **Johnstown Land Tribunal.** *Liz Howe (CCW)*
- **Spatial ecology of adders in the Wyre Forest.** *Nigel Hand (Herefordshire Amphibian and Reptile Team)*
- **Genetics and herps conservation.** *Tobias Uller (University of Oxford)*
- **Changing approaches to mitigation - past and future.** *Tony Gent (Amphibian and Reptile Conservation)*
- **Natterjacks in Woolmer Forest.** *Trevor Beebee (University of Sussex)*

**Social Evening**, including speakers *Trent Garner and Freya Smith (Institute of Zoology)* on **Amphibian Disease and Frogswab 2011**.

## Sunday 30 January

Workshops to include:

- |                             |                                     |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 <b>Amphibian disease</b>  | 4 <b>Reptile mitigation</b>         |
| 2 <b>Water quality</b>      | 5 <b>County recording for herps</b> |
| 3 <b>Non-native species</b> | 6 <b>Adder swab sampling</b>        |

## Cost

### Conference package Friday - Sunday

*(includes meal on Friday evening, accommodation Friday and Saturday night, two-day conference and Saturday evening meal/social event).*

**Only £210** (£180 for ARG members) • **Day rates £45** (£30 ARG members).

Full programme and booking form available from: [www.arguk.org](http://www.arguk.org)



**Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the UK**  
VOLUNTEERS WORKING FOR THE CONSERVATION OF AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

**amphibian and reptile**  
**conservation**







## Upcoming BHS Meetings

**28<sup>th</sup> November 2010**     **British Herpetological Society and  
Thames & Chiltern Herpetological Group Joint Meeting**  
3.00 - 7.00pm, Drake Hall Amersham community Centre, HP6 5AH  
See NatterJack No. 184-5-6 for more details.

**5<sup>th</sup> December 2010**     **British Herpetological Society and  
Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Trust Joint Meeting**  
9.30am - 5.00pm, Bournemouth Natural Science Society, BH1 3NS  
See NatterJack No. 184-5-6 for more details.

## BHS Sunday Conservation Tasks

- 5th December 2010**     Rempstone tramway (F.C.) - F.C. Gate SY 994 840 - Gorse/  
Pine
- 9th January 2011**     Luscombe (B of P) - Main gate Shore Road SZ 044 890 -  
Gorse/Bramble
- 23rd January 2011**     Blackheath (F.C.) - Stroud bridge car park SY 889 916 - Pine
- 6th February 2011**     Canford Cliffs (ARC/B of Poole) - Branksome chine car park  
SZ 065 896 - Pine, Gorse, Hottentot Fig
- 20th February 2011**     Trigon (ARC) - F.C. Car park Stroud Bridge SY 889 916  
then Gate SY 882 911 - Rhododendron/Pine
- 6th March 2011**     Pallington Clump (F.C.) - Affpuddle Car park SY 804 923 -  
Pine/Birch
- 20th March 2011**     Northport Pit to Northport heath ( F.C.) - F.C.Office SY 905  
894 - Pine/Gorse

All tasks meet at 10.00am. Please contact Dave Bird on 01258 857869 or 0776 551 2056 if you plan to join a task.

## Other Herpetological Dates

**8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> April 2011**     **British Herpetological Symposium - Bangor 2011**  
Hosted by Bangor University Herpetological Society. Researchers  
from around the UK will present their work. Free to attend.  
More details from: [herp.symposium@gmail.com](mailto:herp.symposium@gmail.com)

**23<sup>rd</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> May 2011**     **Second Mediterranean Congress of Herpetology**  
To be held in Marrakech, Morocco.  
For details go to [www.ucam.ac.ma/cmh2](http://www.ucam.ac.ma/cmh2)

**8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> August 2012**     **7<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Herpetology**  
Vancouver, Canada. Call for symposium papers.  
For further details go to <http://wch2012vancouver.com/>



Presents

# Venom Day

## 11<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

### Schedule

- 10:00am Registration and refreshments
- 10:40am **Wolfgang Wüster** – *No Fangs, No Fun: evolution of venom in snakes*
- 11:20am **Adam Hargreaves** – *Snakebite and poverty*
- 12:00pm **Anita Malhotra** – *Functional diversity in snake venom: a natural experiment in protein engineering*
- 12:40pm **David Richards** - *The world's 'most venomous' snake*
- 01:10pm Lunch Break
- 02:10pm **Paul Rowley** – *Handling techniques and venom extraction at L.S.T.M.*
- 02:50pm **Nick Casewell** – *Snake venom variation: evolution and implications*
- 03:30pm **Rachel Currier** – *Exploring venom variation in the African Puff Adder, Bitis arietans*
- 04:10pm **Iri Gill** – *Venomous at Cotswold Wildlife Park: protocols and procedures*
- 04:50pm **Camila Renjifo** – *Neuromuscular activity of the venoms of the Colombian Coral snakes Micrurus mipartitus and Micrurus dissoleucus: clinical and evolutionary implications*
- 05:30pm Finish

Location is Brambell A12, Deiniol Road, Bangor, LL57 2UW.

Everyone is welcome and the price is £3.50 for members and £7 for non-members on the door.

For enquiries and booking please contact [bangorherpsoc@googlemail.com](mailto:bangorherpsoc@googlemail.com).