

12.4 AMPHIBIANS

Application (all amphibian guidelines)

These guidelines are aimed at identifying and selecting important amphibian sites excluding domestic gardens. As well as the presence and absence of species the guidelines also utilise estimates of population sizes. These are based on the guidelines for the selection of SSSIs (JNCC, 1998). To rely on count data, information should be gathered by experienced personnel. Data should be available for two years out of a five year period.

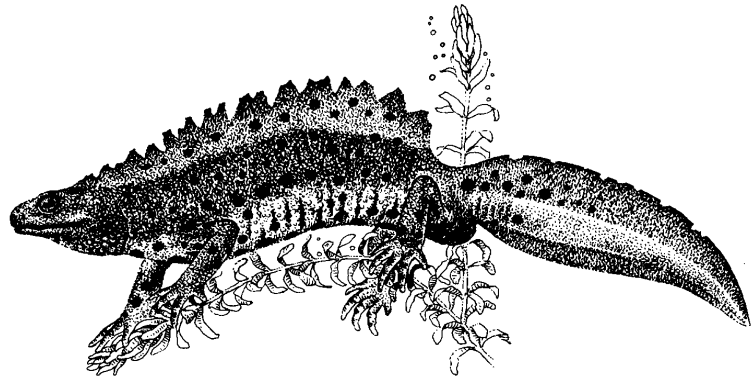
The designation of sites should attempt to include both aquatic and terrestrial habitats of importance. Consequently as well as breeding ponds sites should include adjacent habitat known or likely to be used by the amphibian species for which the site is designated. Hibernating sites should be included wherever possible.

Where there are clusters of ponds that all contribute to maintaining a meta-population of an amphibian species they can all be included potentially as one site. The ponds should not be separated by any obvious barriers and preferably connected by suitable amphibian terrestrial habitat. In general water bodies within 100 metres of each other should be lumped together as a cluster. Where there are isolated ponds within 500 metres of the cluster they could also be considered for inclusion if they are connected by amphibian terrestrial habitat, known to be used or likely to be used by amphibians.

Justification (all amphibian guidelines)

All amphibian species are believed to have declined significantly over Britain in recent years, largely as a result of habitat loss and pollution. Derbyshire remains an important county for amphibians and has records of five native amphibians. The common frog and toad are widely distributed within the county, although their main breeding habitats (ponds) are threatened by infilling, lack of management and processes of natural succession. The smooth newt is relatively common across Derbyshire except in the Dark Peak where the palmate newt is more frequent. The Great Crested Newt is well established in parts of the White Peak Natural Area but has a scattered distribution in the east and south of the county. The Common Toad was included as a UK BAP priority species following the 2007 UK BAP Review

The protection of the best breeding sites and associated terrestrial habitat is justified for all species.



Great Crested Newt

Amphibian Selection Guidelines

Sites that meet one or more of the following guidelines will be eligible for designation as a Local Wildlife Site.

Am1 Any site that regularly supports four or more species of amphibian native to Derbyshire.

Application

Sites identified under this heading should exclude garden ponds, swimming pools and any known introduced populations. The boundary of the site should also include an appropriate amount of adjacent land for hibernation and foraging.

Justification

The presence of four or more amphibian species is considered to be a significant assemblage of amphibians for Derbyshire.

Am2 Any site which scores 7 or more from table 10 on its amphibian species assemblage.

Application

To determine the amphibian assemblage score reference should be made to Table 10. The scores have to be for breeding sites surveyed during the breeding season. Daytime netting should be made during a 15 minute period for sites for every 50 metre of water's edge. To compute the total score, add the scores for individual species. Add one point for three species being present.

Justification

Five species of native amphibian are recorded from Derbyshire. All of which have declined in the UK over the last 50 years as a result primarily of habitat loss. As well as number of species the number of individual amphibians is also important in assessing the value of a site for amphibian species.

Table 10: A scoring system for the selection of sites with assemblages of amphibians, (derived from Joint Nature Conservation Committee 1998 and Nature Conservancy Council, 1989).

Species	Method	Low population Score 1 point	Good population Score 2 points	Exceptional population Score 3 points
Great Crested Newt	Seen/netted in day	<5	5-50	>50
	Counted at night	<10	10-100	>100
Smooth Newt	Netted in day	<10	10-100	>100
	Counted at night			
Palmate Newt	Netted in day	<10	10-100	>100
	Counted at night			
Common Toad	Estimated	<200	(200-2,500)	>2,500
	Counted	<75	75-500	>500
Common Frog	Spawn clumps counted	<50	50-500	<500

Am3 Any site that supports a good population of Great Crested Newt.

Application

Any site is eligible provided a 'good' population as defined in Table 10 is satisfied. The sites may consist of one or more water bodies as described above.

Justification

The Great Crested Newt is a species of European importance (Natural Habitats etc Regulations) and sites supporting the species should be protected.

Am4 Any site which regularly supports an 'exceptional' population of any amphibian species.

Application

An exceptional population will be determined by reference to Table 10.

Justification

Five species of native amphibian are recorded from Derbyshire. All of which have declined in the

UK over the last 50 years as a result primarily of habitat loss. The presence of an exceptional assemblage of an amphibian species is rare and merits protection.