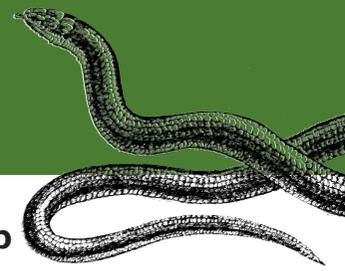


# Amphibian and Reptile Enhancement

## Biodiversity Specification #2



This specification details three habitat enhancement features for native reptiles and amphibians. Please refer to your planning consent to determine which parts of this document are relevant to your application site.

### 1. Hibernaculum

A structure which provides reptiles and amphibians with shelter during the winter.

#### Location

Un-disturbed location where flooding is unlikely. Must be within or next to suitable habitat\* and:

- Either; in a shady spot within 250m of a pond (amphibians)
- Or; in an open, sunny location (reptiles)

#### Preparation

Cleared in accordance with Biodiversity Specification #1 or bespoke Precautionary Working Method Statement if conditioned by planning consent.



Great Crested Newt - Chris Dresh (ARC)

#### Size

Minimum 2m long, 1m wide and 1m high.

#### Construction

1. Mark out the footprint (minimum 2m<sup>2</sup>), remove turf and excavate to a depth of 50cm. Where flooding cannot be ruled out, remove turf from the footprint, but do not excavate.
2. Fill the footprint or hole with cut timber, brush and grubbed-up tree roots. A small amount of inert rubble, bricks or rocks may be placed at the bottom (<20% of total).
3. Pack untreated bark chippings or top soil into larger gaps.
4. Cover with soil or turf, leaving small areas of timber or rubble exposed to allow access.

#### Maintenance

Leave the structure un-disturbed. Vegetation may be cut during dry weather between April and September if desired, but no shorter than 150mm.



Newly created hibernaculum - Pete Case (NCP)

### 2. Egg-Laying Heap

Egg laying heaps maintain heat and moisture from decomposition, which is required to incubate grass snake eggs. Grass snakes are a harmless species which are highly dependent on suitable egg-laying sites.

#### Location

In an area which receives full or partial sun, within or next to suitable habitat\*.

#### Preparation

Cleared in accordance with Biodiversity Specification #1 or bespoke Precautionary Working Method Statement if conditioned by planning consent.

#### Size

Minimum 1m<sup>3</sup>.

#### Construction

1. Arrange a loose layer of brash on the ground.
2. Place material on top of this. Piles may consist of the following (in combination or individually): cut vegetation (inc. grass clippings), manure, compost and untreated sawdust.

#### Maintenance

Add fresh vegetation clippings or manure once every two years during April, May or October. Do not disturb at any other time of year as reptiles may be hibernating.

Manage trees and shrubs to ensure the pile receives at least partial sun.

# Amphibian and Reptile Enhancement

## Biodiversity Specification #2



### 3. Habitat Pile

A pile of brash and logs which offers shelter from the weather and predators throughout the active season and provides habitat for invertebrate prey. Easily constructed using material from vegetation management.

#### Location

Un-disturbed location where flooding is unlikely. Must be within or next to suitable habitat\* and:

- Either; in a shady spot within 250m of a pond (amphibians)
- Or; in an open, sunny location (reptiles)

#### Preparation

Cleared in accordance with Biodiversity Specification #1 or bespoke Precautionary Working Method Statement if conditioned by planning consent.

#### Size

Footprint at least 1m<sup>2</sup>.



#### Construction

1. Arrange material on cleared ground. Piles may consist of solely brash or logs, or a combination of both. Place heavier material at the bottom. Use a mixture of large and small-diameter pieces to increase the number of crevices available.
2. Compact the core of the pile, arranging the top layers and outer edges in a loose fashion.

#### Maintenance

Do not move the pile, but add additional material at least every two years following tree and shrub management.

\* *Suitable habitat is generally considered to be tussocky grassland, scattered scrub/bracken or hedgerows.*

#### Further Resources:

Edgar, P., Foster, J. and Baker, J. (2010). "Reptile Habitat Management Handbook". Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Boumemouth.

Baker, J., Beebee T., Buckley, J., Gent, A. and Orchard, D. (2011). "Amphibian Habitat Management Handbook". Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Boumemouth.

Both available at: <https://www.arc-trust.org/habitat-management-handbooks>

**Acknowledgements:** This leaflet was prepared with support from Jim Foster and Dorothy Driver (Amphibian and Reptile Conservation).

### Amphibian and Reptile Identification

Head to the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation website for further information regarding native amphibian and reptile species - <https://www.arc-trust.org/pages/category/reptiles-amphibians>.

### Legal Protection

Remember, all reptiles are protected from injury and killing under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 and great crested newts are afforded stricter protection.

### Report your Sightings!

Data is critical for informing conservation decisions. You can contribute to our understanding of reptile and amphibian populations by reporting your sightings on the Record Pool- <https://www.recordpool.org.uk/>.

