

Reptile Method Statement

Overflow Car Park Extension,
The Oaks, Havant Crematorium



Sarah Jackson
August 2019

Acknowledgements

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Arcadian Ecology & Consulting Ltd (Arcadian Ecology) were appointed by The Southern Co-operative, under the direction of Will Salvetti, Land Manager, to produce a reptile works method statement.

1.2. Site Description

The Oaks, Havant Crematorium is located to the north of Barton's Road, Emsworth, Hampshire (SU 734 082). The site covers approximately 3.7 hectares and comprises the crematorium building, car parking, grassland and woodland with a small pond.

1.3. Scheme of Works

An extension to the overflow car park at the crematorium is proposed.

1.4. Remit and Scope of the Report

The report provides a method statement for undertaking works to avoid the risk of injury or death to reptiles which have the potential to be utilising the proposed works area.

2. ECOLOGY AND LEGISLATION

2.1. Ecology

There are six native species of reptile found in the UK, all of which are found in Hampshire. There are four common species, adder *Vipera berus*, grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, common lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, and slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, and two rare species smooth snake *Coronella austriaca* and sand lizard *Lacerta agilis*.

All reptiles hibernate over winter, from October to February, with adult sand lizards hibernating as early as August. Some species, including common lizard and adder, will start to emerge in February, but most will be during March. During April and May, reptiles will be foraging to replenish weight lost over winter and mating. Young will be born from July to September, the month depending on the species.

Three reproductive methods are found in reptiles. Grass snakes and sand lizards produce eggs that are buried in a suitable medium such as compost or sand, which hatch from August to September. Smooth snakes produce live young; whilst adder, common lizard and slow worm are ovi-viviparous. Ovi-viviparous species have eggs which hatch within the body then give birth to live young.

Reptiles are found in a range of habitats. Most typically live in heathland, but also wetlands, grasslands, woodland edges and gardens, depending on the species. The range of each species also varies considerably from common lizards that will cover a few tens of metres to grass snakes that can cover several kilometres over a season. Food availability, habitat quality and connectivity will affect the distances covered.

All reptiles are carnivores. Common lizard and sand lizards feed on invertebrates such as spiders, grasshoppers and crickets, and slow worms on soft-bodied invertebrates for example slugs and snails. Adder, grass snake and smooth snake eat larger prey including small mammals, other reptiles and grass snakes will feed on amphibians due to their association with aquatic habitats.

2.2. Status

All six reptile species are considered to be suffering declines in the UK.

2.3. Legislation

The four common reptile species, adder, grass snake, common lizard and slow worm are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) against the intentional or reckless killing, injury, sale or trade of any animal.

Sand lizard and smooth snake are offered full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), sand lizard and smooth snake are listed on Schedule 5, and protected under section 9, making it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a sand lizard or smooth snake (unless it can be shown to have been legally acquired)
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a sand lizard or smooth snake while it is occupying a structure or place which is used for that purpose
- Sell, offer or expose for sale, or have in your possession, or transport, for the purpose of sale, any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a sand lizard or smooth snake

Under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill
- Deliberately disturb; in particular that is likely to impair their ability:
 - a. (i) To survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
 - (ii) In the case of hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate;
 - b. To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong
- Deliberately take or destroy the eggs
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place
- Be in possession of, or to control
- Transport, sell, exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead sand lizard or smooth snake, or part of.

3. WORKS METHOD STATEMENT

Areas associated with the works are considered to have the potential to support common and widespread species of reptile (particularly slow worm and common lizard).

As common reptile species are provided partial protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, steps must be taken to ensure that no common reptile species are killed or injured and should include dissuasion techniques, appropriate timings of work (September to October) and a watching brief.

- All site staff must be aware of the potential presence of common reptile species (common lizard and slow worm) at the site and their appearance.
- The dissuasion technique will take the form of a phased cut in September (or at least two weeks prior to the commencement of works) of the area to include the overflow car park and surrounding area where machinery movements or materials are likely to occur in association with the works.
- A hand search will be conducted of the area prior to the first cut. The first cut should take vegetation down to 20cm, a second hand search will then be conducted and the vegetation cut to 5cm, a final search will then be undertaken before the vegetation is cut to ground level.
- The area should be cut so as not to isolate reptiles, i.e. not to work in a constricting circle, but from the centre outwards, or work in lines in one direction only; to allow natural movement of reptiles, or any other animals, not located during the hand search from the works area.
- The short vegetation must be maintained until works have commenced on the site.
- If a contractor encounters a reptile during works, it must be carefully relocated to unaffected suitable habitat adjacent to the area of works (e.g. long grassland, base of hedgerow or edge of scrub.).