

## CARG minutes 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014

### Network Rail Glasgow Office

**Present:** List circulated

**Apologies:** Erik

**Matters arising:**

- John- Erik has now set up a CARG Facebook page. A few comments are now on the page and new photos including adders spotted on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February.
  - Action- members to add new information to page
- John- has created recording forms, maps and simple instructions for the toad drain project to assess drains near known toad breeding locations- more details will be provided later in the meeting.
- Suzie stated that she has asked the team at Jacobs if any old kit could be donated and they have passed on 12 high visibility vests of various sizes for the group to use. Possibility of other donations in the future.
- John- Gillian Neil had mentioned that the CSV grant could be a possible source of funding for the group to buy equipment such as torches. Dave Garner commented that this closes on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February.
  - Action-Maggie will send details on to John about this pot of funding.

**News**

No new updates from ARG UK or ARC

**Reports**

- Membership report- Chris Cathrine has asked to step down as he has moved out with the CARG area. There were 6 new group members last year.
- Treasurer's report- Maggie- £504.84 in the account and nothing has been spent. Ewan has a donation from the Stirling RSPB group of £25 as he gave a talk last year.

**Projects-**

\*Toads in drains project- John

15 toad spawning sites which could have possibly problems associated with drains effecting migrating toads. John has created a table with possible problems sites indicated. Members have been asked to volunteer to check each of these sites and mark if they are high, medium or low priority for completing night surveys to check for any trapped amphibians. 7 of the 15 sites have been completed, 4 are low priority, 2 are medium and 1 is high. JOHN CAN YOU PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMAITON ON THIS THAT CAN BE SENT WITH THE MINS. If sites are high or medium risk they will have night surveys completed on them. It is recommended that this is completed within the next couple of weeks as it is likely they will start migrating soon. John has some kit available for people to use including high visibility vests, nets and torches.

\*Update on escape ladders for amphibians trapped down drains- Peter Minting

Presentation given on research completed on this including work completed by RAVON in the Netherlands. Ladder trials have included using different materials with the best type found being a matting material (Enkamat).

Tayside ARG as running a campaign currently with the public and are helping to save rodents as well.

One of the main problems highlighted during trials was the lack of a gap at the edge of the drain- this prevents the ladder coming up the side and being able to remain unconnected to the removable section. Problems arise when ladders are attached to covers and are then moved when the covers are lifted for clearing of drains. There are also H&S concerns about trials as surveyors have to spend time on roads checking drains and installing ladders. There is hope that in the future a fully pot featuring an escape ladder will be designed and used in the future.

One hurdle to overcome is to work with council roads departments to implement ladders in necessary areas- something that Tayside ARG are doing.

John asked if this would be easy to do and Dave Garner said he could discuss this with the roads department in Glasgow City Council. Peter said he has contacted North and South Lanarkshire councils regarding this topic and is awaiting a response.

Action Peter to keep CARG updated with any updates on this, particularly with any developments with roads departments.

### **Events and Training-**

\*Spawn surveys. Dave Garner said he has two volunteers ready to help with spawn counts and has asked CARG members for help with larger sites such as Hogganfield and Robroyston. Dave has copies of maps and information on priority habitats. It has been suggested that this information goes on the CARG website to gain more help. Eilidh suggested contacting volunteers with the Seven Lochs project as they could help with sites such as Cardown Moss.

Vicky Ogilvy said that Froglife could help promote this to volunteers in and around Glasgow.

Dave said he can send members the equations to work out spawn counts- calculating total number of spawn clumps from mats.

Richard Weddle mentioned there can be variations in the way records count clumps or submit their records. Ewan suggested that people split meters squared to work it out. Several members suggested running a training day for volunteers and those unsure of taking part in spawn surveys. Quadrates could also be made from plumbing piping to help volunteers visualise square meters.

Action- CARG members to contact Erik or John if available to help with surveys. Vicky to pass on information on surveys to Glasgow based Froglife volunteers.

\*Erik has asked for support with pond surveys in East Kilbride- this would most likely be weekends Ewan said he would help out again. Erik is also going to run some amphibian training in South Lanarkshire- details TBC but is likely to be on a Saturday evening in Hamilton and has asked CARG volunteers if they could assist. John commented he is not currently sure what the target audience is but he has passed on past material to Erik for the session.

Action- any interested members to contact Erik

\*A request has also come in for CAG to attend the Lochwinnoch Bioblitz. Ewan has said he will help again as its good publicity. The last day session wasn't very well attended but the night session Ewan hosted had about 20 people. It was suggested that Ewan should contact Chloe Rossi as she is the new information officer at the reserve and would be keen to help promote this

Action- Chloe's email address to be passed on to Ewan

\*Richard suggested a CARG presence at the Kelvingrove Park event on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May.

Action- Richard to produce a draft announcement of this event for the CARG website to encourage members to offer to attend to promote CARG at this.

\*Erik will be running reptile survey training at Whitelees Wind farm in partnership with the ranger service on site which will be run in autumn. Rennie informed the group that the ranger service have been running reptile recording on site for the past two years using tins but there is a new site in the wind farm extension they are keen to survey and this is where training will take place with member of CARG. The ranger team will be running reptile rummages for member of the public at other areas on site. The date for this has not been confirmed yet.

Action- Erik to send information out to group when date is set for training.

\*John asked the group about who should be the core members to ensure that information was being circulated to key members. All present said they would like to remain on the distribution list of core members.

Action- if any members would like to be included or removed from the core group mailing list contact John

\*John also asked that members submit information for the website blog and add new photos. If anyone has recent and topical content they would like added please contact John or Erik.

Action- members to submit new information to John or Erik for website.

### **Election of office bearers**

- Chair- John Sweeny- remains
- Secretary- Erik Paterson- remains
- Membership Secretary- Ewan (Chris has stood down)
- Treasurer- Maggie- remains
- Minute secretary- Eilidh

## **AOB-**

\*James Burgen is advertising for volunteer field surveyors to help study European Fire Salamanders in Spain. Travel, accommodation and some expenses will be paid- please contact John if you would like more information.

\*Ewan has stated there might be a request to survey for reptiles at Barrhead Sewage works where there are some old records, although it is unlikely any reptiles will be located.

Action- Ewan to inform group if volunteers are needed for surveying

\*Dave commented that newts were recorded this week crossing the road at Frankfield Loch, despite the developers installing animal tunnels and newt fencing to prevent this happening.

\*Richard asked the group about consultancies and confidentiality. Members in general were ok with not hiding any information given, even if it was a Great Crested Newt record. Richard also asked if anyone was interested in helping research the authenticity of records they should contact him directly.

\*Vicky Ogilvy gave the group a brief overview of Scottish Dragon Finder- a Scotland wide project being run by Froglife to engage with local communities and encourage them to record species, and also complete habitat creation and restoration work with landowners around the country.

\*Brian Beck reminded the group of possible funding through Network Rail. Although volunteers and groups cannot submit an application directly it would be received well if it can from a charity, such as Froglife. Money would be given for kit such as waders and torches, so ideal for the group. Brian said he would have to receive information on this within the next couple of weeks to take this forward. – And information should come through Erik. There also might be a chance of getting some of the matting for ladders as Brian said Network Rail use this on projects.

Action- group to submit information to Erik for Network Rail funding by 6<sup>th</sup> March?

\*Eilidh showed the group three maps for the draft Forest Design Plan for the Kilpatrick Hills (owned by Forestry Commission Scotland). This consultation had been delayed until 2014 due to staff changes. FCS is currently waiting to find out if an EIA will be required for this site, decision will be made shortly. Questionnaires were available and Eilidh asked that any completed forms were submitted within a couple of weeks for comments to be included. This information will also be available in the near future on line via- <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/kilpatrickhills>. The plan should be finalised by summer 2014.

Action- any comments sent to [julie.hamilton@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:julie.hamilton@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) by the 6<sup>th</sup> of March

## **Next meeting- 20<sup>th</sup> of November**

\*The group also thanked Brian and Network Rail for the use of its meeting room.