

Clyde Amphibian and Reptile Group

Minutes of Autumn 2017 Meeting:

9th November 2017 at Network Rail Office, St Vincent Street, Glasgow

Attending: Brian Beck (BB), Erik Paterson (EP), Richard Weddle (RW), John Sweeney (JS), Chris McInerney (CM), Roger Downie (RD), Scott Donaldson (SD), David Chatterton (DC) and Ashleigh Wylie (AW)

Apologies: Rachael Iveson, Salma Rahman, John Fowbert, Jackie Clark, Dave Garner, & Rennie Mason

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting

GCN Monitoring in East Dunbartonshire

Brian Beck provided a brief summary of his GCN monitoring in East Dunbartonshire and stated that only a limited amount of work could be conducted this year due to injury. There were still a number of access restrictions in place, such as private roads and a deep quarry, but BB stated he will try to work around these restrictions for next year. eDNA surveys of ponds at Lennoxton were conducted with the results sent to Pete Minting.

BB also stated that the boardwalk at Cochno had been reinstated and the area was teeming with tadpoles.

ARG-UK /ARC News

The Herpetofauna Workers Meeting will be held on the 3rd and 4th February 2018 in Northampton.

Appointment of Minutes Secretary

CARG thanks Rachael Iveson for having undertaken the role of Minutes Secretary to date. Ashleigh Wylie has agreed to take on the role of Minutes Secretary.

Changes to the Constitution

Roger Downie raised that he is still having trouble accessing the bank account because of an issue with the bank and the account signatories. Roger highlighted that it is becoming increasingly difficult for charities to have a bank account and that he was in discussions with ARG UK about the changes they are having to make to their constitution because of changes to charitable law.

Roger took on the task of updating CARG's constitution after it was no longer deemed fit for purpose, especially concerning financial issues. The new version was sent out to members on the 27th October via email with an invitation to accept the constitution through proxy vote if members could not make it to the meeting. Several clauses of the constitution were discussed and/or updated at the meeting including:

- Clause 5.1 – This clause was highlighted as it states that the membership fee for CARG is £1 per year (not £1 for life as is sometimes discussed). It was agreed that once access to the bank accounts was sorted and the amount in the bank account was known, the membership fee of £1 per year could be adopted.

- Clause 3.5 – *‘No business can be transacted at a Committee meeting unless a quorum of at least three members is present.’* JS asked whether this clause should state the number of committee members that should be present. It was agreed that it should be updated to state that at least one of the three members is an office bearer.
- Clause 8.7 – *‘Expenditure in excess of £250 requires prior approval of the Committee, unless the funds for this expenditure have been obtained from an external source specifically for this purpose’.* JS questioned the total monetary value outlined within this clause given the total funds available to CARG. It was decided that the Treasurer would have a float of £50 available to use for small purchases such as postage, and that expenditures up to £100 could be approved by the committee. Any expenditure above £100 would require the approval of the whole group.

Action – RD to update the clauses to the constitution as per the above.

BB proposed that subject to these updates, the changes to the constitution (as sent to all members on the 27th October, and as updated in the meeting 9th November) were considered approved and this would be adopted by CARG. This was seconded by CM.

Action – Roger to circulate the updated constitution once all updates were added/alterred.

Chris thanked Roger and Richard for all the work that was put in to updating this constitution.

Clyde ARG Records Project

RD, with approval of CARG, applied for money from the Blodwen Lloyd Binns Bequest from Glasgow Natural History Society (GNHS) to aid with cleaning up the historical herpetofauna records of JA Gibson. CARG was granted a sum of £500 to carry this out. RD created a job advert for the role which will be circulated to the group. It will be paid by honorarium, with RD proposing that the money is left within the GNHS account and paid from there, given the issue with the CARG bank account. Chris agreed to be the named person to whom applications can be sent. Deadline for the applications is the end of the first week in December. RW and CM kindly agreed to be the mentors for the position. It was decided that the role, which would also be suitable for undergraduates or recent graduates, would be advertised by the following organisations (if agreed): CARG; GNHS; Glasgow University Zoology Society; University of West of Scotland Zoology Society; advert within the Graham Kerr Building. Applications would be checked by CM, RD and RW and shortlisted applicants would be interviewed by the interview committee (CM, RD, RW).

Action - RD to publish job advert for role and notify EP so that this can be sent out to members of CARG.

CM raised that he was trying to weed out uncertain records and agreed that he would formally write to NBN with the results of the findings from the Clyde ARG Records Project. He stated that the book *‘The Amphibians and Reptiles of Scotland’* could be used as support when writing to NBN. RW raised that the letter would need to be submitted to CEH as the records were submitted to NBN from this organisation. It would therefore be this organisation who would have to request their removal. RW has passed on information to CM about which records required removal.

Reports

East Kilbride Amphibian Census

Erik gave a brief overview of the surveys undertaken this year, and stated that only frog spawn counts were conducted. EP mentioned that RD is working with Ryan Bird, a masters student who will be looking at water quality in relation to amphibian abundance in East Kilbride and Renfrewshire, with particular focus on SUDS ponds. EP is looking for volunteers to undertake torching surveys next year.

Herp Survey Training – Ayrshire

Erik was asked to run two training events over the summer as part of the Where's Wildlife in Ayrshire Project. The amphibian training event had 6 attendees, whilst the reptile training had 7 attendees. No reptiles were observed during the reptile training.

Outreach Events

EP and BB attended the Lochwinnoch reserve open day on behalf of CARG. CM raised that a similar event had been undertaken in the Glasgow Botanic Gardens and that CARG should consider attending next year.

Action - RD to give the contact details to EP for next year.

Planning Ahead

Upcoming Conference

Roger announced that there was going to be a conference held in Glasgow next year to look at current research and the future of amphibians and reptiles, as a follow on from the book '*The Amphibians and Reptiles of Scotland*'. The conference will take place on Saturday 9th June 2018 in the Graham Kerr Building of Glasgow University. The conference will be held as part of the Glasgow Science Festival. Entry to the conference will be free. It is hoped that something will be done off the back of the conference in terms of school outreach.

GCN Monitoring in East Dunbartonshire

BB will continue with the work at Cleddans and Cochno next year. Brian also raised that Network Rail employees get five volunteer days per year if there are any relevant projects that would require any assistance.

Talk to GNHS

EP is due to give a talk on his honours project at the GNHS meeting on the 9th January 2018.

Future Events/Surveys

BB suggested that an email is sent to members to find out what they would be interested in getting involved with.

Action – EP to email members and find any relevant events.

Scott raised that Friends of Victoria Park are planning to restore the pond behind Fossil Grove.

Action – SD to send contact details for this to EP.

RW raised that next year is the 30th anniversary of Glasgow Garden Festival. There are possibly ponds present within Festival Park that could be upgraded.

Any Other Business

Renfrewshire Council LBAP Update

Renfrewshire Council are in the process of updating their LBAP and wrote to CARG to get their input. RD volunteered to go along to the meeting on the 28th November as a representative of CARG.

The Amphibians and Reptiles of Scotland

Chris McInerny and Pete Minting wanted to express their thanks for CARG's contribution to their book by giving a copy of the book '*Amphibians and Reptiles of Scotland*' to CARG. Erik will keep a hold of the book and members are free to request to borrow it by emailing EP.

Local Records Centre

RW appealed for records from the CARG area to be sent to the local records centre. These can be sent directly to RW at richard@canto.plus.com.

Action: any members with records from CARG are to send records, where possible, to RW.

Network Rail Community Fund

BB reported that Network Rail had a community fund and organisations could receive up to £500 if they apply for the funding and include a safety message in their project to encourage children to stay away from the rail tracks. BB suggested that it would be best if the Secretary & Treasurer apply due to a conflict of interest.

Action – BB to provide contact address to RD.

Website

BB raised that the website for CARG was outdated and required updating. It was decided that we would discuss the concept of a 'Web Page Champion' at the February meeting.

Projects

It was requested that members think up some ideas for projects to discuss at the February meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for **7pm** on the **15th February 2018** at the Network Rail Office, St Vincent Street. There has been a proposal to change this to the **8th** or **22nd February 2018**.