

Species Action Plan: Great-crested Newt - *Triturus cristatus*

Current Status & Importance

- The largest newt found in the UK.
- Listed on Annexes II and IV of the EC Habitats Directive and Appendix II of the Bern Convention.
- Protected under Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations, 1994, (Regulation 38) and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).



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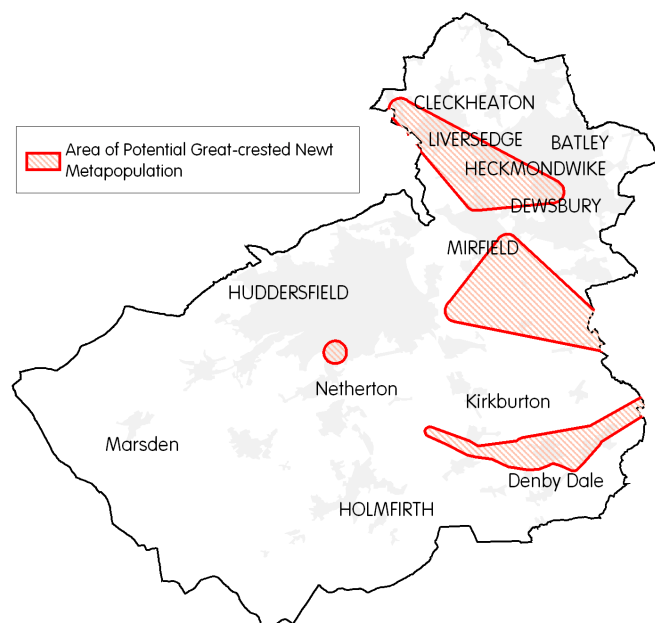
- Kirklees population of sub-regional importance with one nationally significant site in Kirklees.

Habitat

- Breeds in ponds. Surrounding terrestrial habitats are equally important for feeding and hibernating. These include rough grassland, woodland, dry-stone walls and other areas where species can find cover.
- A large area of terrestrial habitat (25 ha plus) is desirable for population viability.

Distribution

- The UK population is amongst the largest in Europe, where it is threatened in several countries.
- Although it can be locally common, the species has suffered a significant national decline.
- There are 14 known breeding ponds in three distinct areas (possible meta-populations) within Kirklees. The Laneside Quarry site at Kirkheaton is designated as a Site of Scientific Interest (SSI).



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Great-crested Newt potential meta-populations in Kirklees

Conservation Issues

It is believed that the loss of colonies has been due to many factors including:

- Loss of suitable breeding ponds by in-filling for development, farming, waste disposal, neglect or fish stocking.
- Degradation, loss and fragmentation of terrestrial habitats.
- Pollution from agro-chemicals.

Objectives

- Protect ponds and terrestrial habitat of existing colonies from loss through development.
- Maintain the viability of present colonies and ensure no net loss of sites or reduction in size.
- Develop opportunities for new colonies in the meta-population areas identified on the above map to increase the resilience of those populations.
- Monitor the size of the differing populations and identify any further colonies.

Target areas for habitat management and creation

- The meta-population areas identified on the above map.

Targets

- Create habitat linkages between existing colonies through the creation of new breeding ponds within each meta-population. Achieve this for at least one meta-population by 2011.

Key Links and Organisations

- Site protection: Kirklees Council; Natural England.
- Management and restoration of habitats: Yorkshire Wildlife Trust; Kirklees Council.
- Monitoring: Yorkshire Wildlife Trust; Kirklees Council, developers where relevant.

See Also

- [UKBAP Species Action Plan](#)