

EDITORIAL

The conservation of amphibian and reptiles in Scotland – the role of publishing

C.J. McInerny

University of Glasgow, President Glasgow Natural History Society (GNHS), Chairman Biological Recording in Scotland (BRISC), and Clyde Amphibian and Reptile Group (CARG)
School of Life Sciences, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ

E-mail: Chris.McInerny@glasgow.ac.uk

Scotland contains rich populations of amphibians and reptiles, some of which are important in a U.K. context. In other parts of the U.K. amphibian and reptile populations and ranges have declined and contracted due to a combination of urbanisation, fragmentation of habitats, and pollution. While Scotland has rich populations it is crucial that we do all we can to protect these animals which make an essential contribution to Scottish ecosystems. To inform such conservation approaches, baseline information is required on numbers, distribution, annual cycles and habitat requirements.

A step forward in this process was the publication in 2016 of *The Amphibians and Reptiles of Scotland* (McInerny & Minting, 2016) by the Glasgow Natural History Society (GNHS). This book attempted to draw together all known Scottish information at the time. By doing so, it also revealed many gaps in the knowledge. These gaps were highlighted, and in some cases formed the basis for subsequent research.

The Proceedings of the June 2018 conference *The Amphibians and Reptiles of Scotland: current research and future challenges* published in this supplementary issue of *The Glasgow Naturalist* are the next step in the process. They show the range of research being done to conserve and protect amphibians and reptiles, with much directly relevant to Scotland. This information will, we hope, inform conservation approaches including those supported by government through Scottish Natural Heritage.

In conclusion, it is only through published research informing conservation practices and approaches that we can ensure the long-term persistence of these wonderful creatures in Scotland for future generations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Iain Wilkie for co-editing this supplementary issue of *The Glasgow Naturalist*. I thank Roger Downie for his encouragement as the then GNHS President for supporting publication of *The*

Amphibians and Reptiles of Scotland. And I thank my co-author Peter Minting for helping to produce the book, and Ian Andrews, Chris Cathrine and David O'Brien for their contributions.

REFERENCE

McInerny, C.J. & Minting, P. (2016). *The Amphibians and Reptiles of Scotland*. The Glasgow Natural History Society, Glasgow. Free download at www.glasgownaturalhistory.org.uk/books.html