

The Herpetofauna of Monkwood Green by Dr Christopher J Betts PhD FBNA MRSB MEnvSc

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This is a list of the amphibians and reptiles I have recorded at Monkwood Green since 1985. There may be other species so do please let me know at christopherbetts@bettsecology.com if anyone has records to add.

Scientific Name	Vernacular Name	Frequency	Notes
AMPHIBIANS			
<i>Rana temporaria</i>	common frog	Common	Breeds in the ponds
<i>Bufo bufo</i>	common toad	Common	Breeds in at least some of the ponds
<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>	smooth newt	Common	Breeds in some of the ponds.
<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	great crested newt	Common	Breeds in some of the ponds. Fewer observed recently.
REPTILES			
<i>Anguis fragilis</i>	slow-worm	Common	Often seen basking.
<i>Lacerta vivipara</i>	common lizard	Infrequent	One or two confirmed sightings but this lizard is not common here.
<i>Natrix helvetica</i>	barred grass snake	Frequent on the Green	Non-venomous colubrid snake now classified as a separate species from <i>Natrix natrix</i> .

Notes on other local herpetofauna

Palmate newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*) – I do not believe these inhabit the Green, but I would be interested if anyone has a record.

Adder (*Vipera berus*). There have been several reports of adder on or around the Green over the years, but I have never confirmed the presence of this species here. The reports turn out to be confusion with grass snakes. That is not to say adders do not occur, but presence requires verification.

A note about fish.

All the ponds and ditches on the Green become desiccated in dry spells which happen in almost every year. This prevents fish from establishing but is a benefit for amphibians as there are no fish to predate their spawn or young. There are goldfish in several residents' ponds including my own, and I used to have some koi carp, but the herons have eaten those!

A few photographs follow (© the author)



Common frog hiding in dead leaves. Frogspawn can be found in the ponds around the Green in spring.



This common toad was happy to be picked up and photographed before returning to its home on the Green.



Find the barred grass snake – there is one in this photo taken on the Green!



Here it is – note the yellow collar.



Slow-worms are common on the Green and can often be found basking in the summer.



Great crested newt (female). I am seeing far fewer of these newts on the Green than a few years ago.