



UK priority species pages – Version 2

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SPECIES PAGES FOR 2007 UK BAP PRIORITY SPECIES

(see endnotes for an explanation of the various components of this compilation).

Coronella austriaca Laurenti, 1768

Smooth Snake

1 General information

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Level 1 | Herptiles (amphibians and reptiles) |
| Level 2 | reptile |
| On 1997 UK BAP list | |

2 UK BAP criteriaⁱ

| 1. International threat | 2. International responsibility (2a) + moderate decline in UK (2b) | 3. Marked decline in the UK | 4. Other important factor(s) |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| True | False | False | True |

3 Evidence for Criteriaⁱⁱ

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Criterion 1 | Red listing in 11/14 Countries in Western Europe. Listed as Vulnerable in Germany, Norway, Switzerland, Poland, Finland, Endangered in Netherlands, Lithuania, Latvia, Extinct in Denmark, care demanding in France and Sweden. |
| Criterion 2a | |
| Criterion 2b | |
| Criterion 3 | |
| Criterion 4 | Declines in UK prior to 1980's paralleling heathland loss, due to its reliance on this habitat. Population presumed to be currently stable but dependent on conservation action. About 0.13% world population occurs in UK. Could be linked with heathland HAP plans, but only if they address species specific requirements, which are currently not accomodated. Suitable heathland management itself is conservation dependant, so it follows that any reptile associates are also conservation dependant. |

4 Distribution by Country

| England | Scotland | Wales | Northern Ireland | International Waters |
|---------|----------|-------|------------------|----------------------|
| Y | N | N | N | |

5 Distribution Information

| | |
|--|---|
| Distribution data source | Stage 1 information |
| Distribution data notes | Only occurs in England on lowland heath sites |
| number of sites (where less than or equal to 10) | |
| Units used for number of sites | |

6 Actions identified by expertsⁱⁱⁱ

| Action number | Action text | Reporting category |
|---------------|---|--|
| 1 | SPECIES SPECIFIC : On protected sites, the condition and connectivity of heathland habitat has to be enhanced and maintained to restore this species to its former population levels and via translocation, if needed, to restore the former range. On SSSIs where the species occurs it needs to be specifically identified as a listed 'Interest Feature' in more cases than at present to promote & draw attention to its conservation need. Should be cross-linked to Lowland Heathland plan (but only if species specific requirements are acknowledged e.g. noting danger of inappropriate management such as use of burning, and impact of over-grazing on reptiles on heathland) and/or could be grouped with actions for sand lizard on heaths. | Species-specific prescriptive habitat action |
| 2 | SPECIES SPECIFIC : Areas of habitat (mostly outwith the protected site series) require sympathetic habitat management to improve condition, connect formerly larger tracts of heathland, and to allow the expansion of the species range. This includes; the prevention of fires, management to provide adequate cover levels of appropriate heather growth stages, scrub and tree management/control/removal, appropriate grazing regimes (and avoidance of these if needed). | Species-specific prescriptive habitat action |
| 3 | SURVEY/MONITORING : Ongoing survey work should be continued/expanded under NARRS umbrella, not only to monitor conservation status, but also to determine presence of this cryptic species at potential sites where status is unknown and to fully understand the species' distribution. | Species-specific monitoring/survey |
| 4 | WIDER ACTION- AGRI-ENV :Agri-environment schemes need to ensure effective, and non-detrimental, management of heath sites and of 'peripheral areas' (e.g. for connectivity and range expansion) | Wider "landscape" action |
| 5 | WIDER ACTION- PLANNING : Land use planning policy needs to ensure that (i) sites are safeguarded and (ii) potential linkage/ corridors between them are protected and managed, especially in light of likely affects of climate change (where non-heath habitats may be seen to have increasing importance for this thermophilic | Wider "landscape" action |

| | | |
|--|-----------|--|
| | species). | |
|--|-----------|--|

7 Signpost to Priority Habitat^{iv}

| |
|--------------------------|
| Priority Habitat Name |
| Heath: Lowland Heathland |

8 Additional information from specialists^v

| Attribute | Value |
|--|---|
| NBN current scientific name | <i>Coronella austriaca</i> |
| NBN common name | Smooth Snake |
| classification level 1 | Herptiles (amphibians and reptiles) |
| classification level 2 | reptile |
| Latest UK Population/extent Estimate | 88:4,048 |
| Units of measurement | populations:individuals |
| Proportion left | 1 |
| decline | 0 |
| over observed years | 0 |
| decline over 25 years | 0 |
| fraction of European countries where taxon is Red-listed (where | 11/14 in western europe |
| Crit1 satisfied Yes/No/ Unknown | yes |
| Confidence in assesment crit 1 | high |
| Additional comments/ information including confidence in assessm | Red listing info from Eunis web site (nb doesn't include UK).Listed as Vulnerable in Germany, Norway, Switzerland, Poland, Finland, Endangered in Netherlands, Lithuania, Latvia, Extinct in Denmark, care demanding in France and Sweden. |
| Crit2 satisfied Yes/No/ Unknown | no |
| Crit3 satisfied Yes/No/ Unknown | unknown |
| Factor | Declines in UK prior to 1980's paralleling heathland loss, due to its reliance on this habitat. Population presumed to be currently stable but dependent on conservation action. About 0.13% world population occurs in UK. Could be linked with heathland HAP plans, but only if they address species specific requirements, which are currently not accomodated. Suitable heathland management itself is conservation dependant, so it follows that any reptile associates are also conservation dependant. |
| Crit4 satisfied (Yes/ No/ Unknown) | yes |
| Confidence in assesment crit 4 | high |
| 1st source | European Environment Agency (2005) |
| 2nd source | HCT Rare Herp Database |

| | |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| 3rd source | Beebee & Griffiths (2000) |
| Other sources | Arnold (1995) |

9 Additional information for species listed under the Habitats Directive^{vi}

| Attribute | Value |
|---|--|
| Conclusions - overall assessment | (U1+) - Inadequate but improving |
| Conclusions - range | (U1+) - Inadequate but improving |
| Conclusions - population | (U1+) - Inadequate but improving |
| Conclusions - habitat | (U1+) - Inadequate but improving |
| Conclusions - future prospects | (FV) - Favourable |
| Published sources and/or websites | <p>BEEBEE, T.J.C. & GRIFFITHS, R.A. 2000. Amphibians and reptiles: A natural history of the British herpetofauna. The New Naturalist series. London: Harper Collins.</p> <p>COOKE, A.S. & SCORGIE, H.R.A. 1983. The status of the commoner amphibians and reptiles in Britain. Huntingdon: Nature Conservancy Council.</p> <p>GENT, T. & GIBSON, S. 2003. Herpetofauna Workers' Manual. Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.</p> <p>GLEED-OWEN, C., BUCKLEY, J., CONEYBEER, J., GENT, T., MCCracken, M., MOULTON, N., & WRIGHT, D. 2005. Costed plans and options for herpetofauna surveillance and monitoring. English Nature Research Reports, No. 663.</p> <p>THE HERPETOLOGICAL CONSERVATION TRUST. 2005. Evaluation of the 2005 Conservation Status of <i>Coronella austriaca</i> in the United Kingdom. Working document, unpublished.</p> <p>Map Data Sources</p> <p>The Herpetofauna Conservation Trust Rare Species Database; Reptile Records for Wiltshire 1900 – 2003; and Reptiles and Amphibians Dataset (via the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway).</p> |
| surface area of range in km ² | 4289 |
| surface area of range in km ² EU | 4289 |
| Date of range determination | 1990-2006 |

| | |
|---|--|
| Quality of data concerning range | Moderate |
| Range trend | Stable (=) |
| Range trend magnitude (%) | Not applicable |
| | |
| Range trend period | 1994-2006 |
| Range trend reasons 0 - Unknown | False |
| Range trend reasons 1 - Improved knowledge/more accurate data | False |
| Range trend reasons 2 - Climate change | False |
| Range trend reasons 3 - Direct human influence | False |
| Range trend reasons 4 - Indirect anthropo or zoogenic influence | False |
| Range trend reasons 5 - Natural processes | False |
| Range trend reasons 6 - Other (specify) | False |
| Reasons for reported trend in range specify | Not applicable |
| Population_min | 354 |
| Population_min EU | 354 |
| Population_max | 354 |
| Population_max EU | 354 |
| Population units | Other |
| Population units other specified | Occupied 1-km squares |
| Population date | 2005 |
| Population method | 2 - Extrapolation from surveys of part of the population |
| Population quality | Moderate |
| Population trend | Stable (=) |
| Population magnitude (%) | Not applicable |
| | |
| Population period | 1994-2006 |
| Pop trend reasons 0 - Unknown | False |
| Pop trend reasons 1 - Improved knowledge/more accurate data | False |
| Pop trend reasons 2 - Climate change | False |
| Pop trend reasons 3 - Direct human influence | False |
| Pop trend reasons 4 - Indirect anthropo or zoogenic influence | False |
| Pop trend reasons 5 - Natural processes | False |
| Pop trend reasons 6 - Other (specify) | False |
| Reasons for reported trend in Pop specify | Not applicable |
| Surface area of the habitat in km2 | 238.5 |
| Surface area of the habitat in km2 EU | 238.5 |
| Date of area estimation | 2005 |
| | |
| Quality of data on habitat area | Good |
| Habitat trend | Increasing (+) |
| Habitat trend period | 2001-2005 |
| Hab trend reasons 0 Unknown | False |

| | |
|---|--|
| Hab trend reasons 1 Improved knowledge | False |
| Hab trend reasons 2 Climate change | False |
| Hab trend reasons 3 Direct human influence | True |
| Hab trend reasons 4 Indirect anthropo or zoogenic influence | False |
| Hab trend reasons 5 Natural processes | False |
| Hab trend reasons 6 Other (specify) | False |
| | |
| Justification of % thresholds for trends | Not applicable |
| | |
| | |
| Future prospects | Good prospects_Species expected to survive and prosper |
| Favourable reference range | 4760 |
| Favourable reference range EU | 4760 |
| | |
| Favourable reference population | 395 |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Habitat name | This species is predominantly confined to dry lowland heath, but occasionally using woodland margins and bogs adjacent to heath. Generally attracted to features with sunny slopes and diverse vegetation structure (Gent & Gibson, 2003). |
| | |
| Other relevent information | Population units (not on EU standard list): Occupied 1-km squares See audit trail documents for further information. |

10 Species designations^{vii}

| Abbreviation | Reporting Category | Designation | Designation description | Year | Source | Comment |
|--------------|---|-------------|---|------|---|---------|
| HabReg:Sch2 | The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 | Schedule 2 | Schedule 2: European protected species of animals. | 1994 | The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 | |
| Bern:A2 | Bern Convention | Appendix 2 | Special protection (`appropriate and necessary legislative and administrative measures`) for the animal taxa listed, including: all forms of deliberate capture and keeping and deliberate killing; the deliberate damage to or destruction of breeding or resting sites; the deliberate disturbance of wild fauna, particularly during the period of breeding, rearing and hibernation, insofar as disturbance would be significant in relation to the objectives of this Convention; the deliberate destruction or taking of eggs from the wild or keeping these eggs even if empty; the possession of and internal trade in these animals, alive or dead, including stuffed animals | 1979 | Bern Convention | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|-------------------|---|------|---|---|
| | | | and any readily recognisable part or derivative thereof, where this would contribute to the effectiveness of the provisions of this article. | | | |
| HabDir:A4 | Habitats Directive | Annex 4 | Animal and plant species of Community interest (i.e. endangered, vulnerable, rare or endemic in the European Community) in need of strict protection. They are protected from killing, disturbance or the destruction of them or their habitat. Note that the contents of this annex have been updated in April 2003 following the Treaty of Accession. | 1992 | Habitats Directive | |
| England NERC S.41 | Biodiversity Lists - England | England NERC S.41 | Species “of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity” covered under section 41 (England) of the NERC Act (2006) and therefore need to be taken into consideration by a public body when performing any of its functions with a view to conserving biodiversity. | 2008 | Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 - Species of Principal Importance in England (section 41) and Wales (section 42) | Geographic constraint=Listing is for England only |
| BAP:2007 | Biodiversity Action Plan UK list of priority | Priority Species | The UK List of Priority Species and Habitats contains 1150 species and 65 habitats that have | 2007 | UK list of Priority Habitats and | not on former UK BAP list |

| | species | | been listed as priorities for conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). | | Species | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|------|--|--|
| WACA:Sch5_sect9.4b | Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 | Schedule 5 Section 9.4b | Section 9.4 Animals which are protected from intentional disturbance while occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection. | 1981 | Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants) | Geographic constraint=Designation does not apply in Scotland since 15/02/2007. |
| WACA:Sch5Sect9.4c | Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 | Schedule 5 Section 9.4c | Animals which are protected from their access to any structure or place which they use for shelter or protection being obstructed. | 2007 | Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants) | Geographic constraint=Does not apply to Scotland |
| WACA:Sch5_sect9.5a | Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 | Schedule 5 Section 9.5a | Section 9.5 Animals which are protected from being sold, offered for sale or being held or transported for sale either live or dead, whole or part. | 1981 | Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants) | Geographic constraint=Designation does not apply in Scotland since 15/02/2007. |
| WACA:Sch5_sect9.5b | Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 | Schedule 5 Section 9.5b | Section 9.5 Animals which are protected from being published or advertised as being for sale. | 1981 | Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants) | Geographic constraint=Designation does not apply in Scotland since 15/02/2007. |

UK BAP 2008 reporting^{viii}

(nb this only applies to species on the original 1997 UK BAP priority species list)

ENDNOTES

ⁱ An explanation of these criteria is included at Annex 3 of [UK Biodiversity Action Plan; Report on the Species and Habitat Review](#). BRIG (ed. Ant Maddock) 2007. This review was organised in two stages. Stage 1 looked at the scientific evidence for selecting the UK List of Priority Species and Habitats while stage 2 considered the conservation action needed for these species and habitats and provided signposts to the means of implementing action.

ⁱⁱ The information on evidence and the species distribution is as presented on the UK BAP website. Users can download a spreadsheet of the [Stage 1 species evidence](#) from the home page of the UK BAP website.

ⁱⁱⁱ Actions were assigned to each and every priority species by expert groups convened at Stage 2 of the Review process. These were subsequently categorised into “signpost categories”. This information is as shown on the UK BAP website See the link for [categorisation \(signposting\) of UK priority species](#).

^{iv} Where a species action is clearly linked to a BAP priority habitat, the name of the relevant habitat or habitats was identified by the stage 2 expert group.

^v This information has been derived from Stage 1 of the priority species review, and is presented in the “marine”, “terrestrial invertebrates” and “other terrestrial species” sheets within the spreadsheet of the [Stage 1 species evidence](#). The information presented here varies according to the taxonomic group. Please note that some of these data have been written for other Expert Group members and may not be of great value to a wider audience.

^{vi} This is only applicable to Species listed under the Annexes 2 4 and 5 of the Habitats Directive. The information presented here was collated by the UK Government in fulfilment of the requirement under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive. For further information see the [2nd UK Report](#) on the implementation of the Habitats Directive.

^{vii} Information on conservation designations has been extracted from JNCC’s collation of information on [species designations](#). The designations shown in version 2 of these pages are as at December 2010.

^{viii} As part of the 2008 UK BAP reporting round lead partners of national plans were asked to answer a number of specific questions. The data will be analysed and used for the UK and country level reports. All of the responses provided through BARS as part of the 2008 reporting exercise are available to [download](#). Note that in the December 2010 version of these pages (version 2) includes corrections to previously truncated text fields.