

Name:

Great crested newt

Triturus cristatus

UK status:

[UK BAP Priority](#). Widespread but declining (rare in Scotland); European stronghold.

London status:

Widespread but vulnerable in outer London; historic and continuing decline.

Protected status:

- W&CA, Schedule 5 (full protection)
 - Habitats Regulations, Schedule 2
 - Habitats Directive, Annex II, IV (European protected species of animals)
 - Bern Convention, Appendix II
- 'Species of principal importance for the conservation of biological diversity in England' (CRoW Act, 2000)

Relevant London HAPs:

Ponds, Lakes & reservoirs, Meadows & Pastures, Parks & Green Spaces, Private gardens

Citation:

Due mainly to its highly protected status in planning control and ability to survive relocation, the iconic "GCN" has become something of a *cause célèbre* within the wildlife versus development arena.

Thankfully it is still a reasonably common animal in England and Wales, sometimes achieving exceptionally large populations in suitably undisturbed habitats. Beyond nature reserves however, and because of its far-ranging behaviour and dependence on the integrity of both aquatic and terrestrial habitats, it is always extremely vulnerable.

Declines and widespread local extinction across its global range has bestowed a special responsibility for the newt's conservation upon the UK. In Greater London there are several exceptional populations on protected sites (mostly Metropolitan and Borough SINC) in boroughs including Bromley, Hillingdon, Bexley, Havering, Greenwich and Enfield. Many other populations have either declined or disappeared completely over the last two decades, however. A regional re-survey to update the status of the species is currently ongoing, undertaken by the London, Essex & Hertfordshire Amphibian & Reptile Trust. The managing agencies responsible for great crested newt conservation in Greater London are many; principal amongst these are the Borough Councils, respective county Amphibian and Reptile Groups and Wildlife Trusts, and Froglife.



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Conservation priorities:

- Monitor and maintain all known populations through sympathetic habitat management
- Review and attempt habitat restoration & re-introduction where appropriate [addresses UK SAP targets T3, T4]
- Co-ordinate and distribute management guidance to private sector managing agencies
- Protect and maintain any new populations emerging from further surveys

References:

- Atkins W & Herbert C (1996). *Status of the crested newt Triturus cristatus in Greater London in 1995*, in the London Naturalist No. 75, pp.67-74 (LNHS)
- Langton, T E S (1991). *Distribution and status of reptiles and amphibians in the London Area*, in The London Naturalist No. 70, pp. 97-123 (LNHS)