



Toads on Roads

Patrol Pack

Important information for Toad Patrollers

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Patrol Pack

CONTENTS

Contents.....	2
Background	3

For all Toad Patrollers

1. What does toad patrolling involve?	4
2. Staying Safe.....	7
3. Patrolling with children and vulnerable people	9
4. Note on your personal information.....	10
5. Roles.....	10

For Toad Patrol Managers

The Patrol Manager Role	13
Safety information for Patrol Managers.....	14
What is the Legal Position?	18
How do I get Insurance?.....	19
Recruiting volunteers	20
Media and your Toad Patrol	21
Annual Checklist for a busy patrol	23

Blank Forms and Posters

PLEASE SEND ALL REGISTRATION FORMS TO

TOADS@FROGLIFE.ORG

Any other enquiries email info@froglife.org

BACKGROUND

Common toads are very particular about where they breed and follow the same migration route back to their ancestral ponds each year. If something is constructed in their path, they carry on regardless. Unfortunately, if this something is a road then the toads are at risk of being killed by traffic or becoming trapped in drains.

To save these intrepid travellers there are various steps that can be taken - including displaying road warning signs to make drivers more aware, lowering kerbs and setting up a Toad Patrol. A Toad Patrol is a group of volunteers who help local toads and monitor the stretch of road that they are crossing.

Froglife holds the database of amphibian migratory crossings for The Department for Transport. A manager of a toad crossing that features on this database is able to apply to the local authority for road warning signs to be installed during the migration period (February to April) or for dropped kerbs to be installed along the stretch of road the toads are using.

Monitoring by Toad Patrols over the last 30 years has shown significant population declines in common toads over the last 30 years. In 2016 we released a report showing on average toads in the UK have declined by 68% in the last 30 years, and the decline has been greatest in the south east of England. You can read the report here <http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0161943>.

Information for all Toad Patrolers

1. What does toad patrolling involve?

HOW DO I PATROL A TOAD CROSSING?

Patrollers are volunteers who take on the task of saving toads by seeing them across the road in spring at their habitual crossing. This usually involves picking each toad up around the middle and placing in a bucket on one side of the road then transporting them across to a safe release site on the other side.

You need to bring a clean bucket, a high visibility jacket, a strong torch, and any other equipment noted by your Patrol Manager. Most patrols are co-ordinated locally by a volunteer Patrol Manager, who works to ensure a rota, and to understand and communicate safety constraints on site.

Safety is paramount, and we ask that as a patroller, you **read the safety briefing** here, and take responsibility for following it, along with any additional briefings from the Patrol Manager. Please note, if the road is too busy or has poor visibility, DO NOT attempt to rescue toads.

Some patrols are very busy and intense with up to a thousand toads crossing over a month, needing many volunteers, others are slower, with rainy nights bringing toads in their tens rather than hundreds. Crossings can be long - a couple of miles; and complex - there may be several ponds in the same area. Toads may also be migrating *along* a road not across it.

For new patrols it may not be known exactly where the crossing is. Sometimes the toads are clearly heading in a particular direction, and just watching them for a few minutes will reveal it. Others may take more time, and a bit of ingenuity. Asking passers-by, looking on maps and peering over hedges might reveal an answer - just remember, toads are not necessarily heading for the pond that is nearest!

When you have read the safety briefing, please fill in and send back the Patroller Registration Form, this will ensure you have status as a registered, insured volunteer, and help with long term communication if there are problems locally.

If you are planning to patrol with child volunteers, we are delighted. However, please note that for safety reasons, anyone under 18 must be accompanied by their parent or guardian, please read the section on patrolling with children below and consider for yourself if you are happy with the risks in your locality.

WHEN SHOULD I PATROL?

Toads tend to start moving around dusk and will continue into the night, depending on how cold it gets; usually you only really need to patrol during the first part of the evening when there is a high likelihood of them encountering traffic.

Toads can emerge from hibernation any time from January onwards, depending on local weather conditions; they tend to emerge a little later than frogs. The patrol can then last through until May.

Amphibian movements are very dependent on weather so it's crucial to check local forecasts; key signs to look out for are: first mild temperatures (at least $>5^{\circ}\text{C}$), together with rain.

When these conditions have been identified it's a good idea to start monitoring the site - if you can, check the site every evening or at least during/after appropriate patches of weather. It may be easiest to have one person coordinating who can draw up a rota so not all volunteers are out all the time; if a Patroller discovers a particularly busy crossing one night they can then call on reinforcements.

WHY SHOULD I RECORD NUMBERS?

We ask Toad Patrollers to record the numbers of toads and other amphibians they help across the road, and how many they see killed, then give this to the Patrol Manager to collate for the season. The Patrol Manager then returns the numbers to us at Froglife. This data feeds into national monitoring projects and helps us determine how the UK's toad population is faring as a whole. The numbers can give you a good idea of how successfully your patrol is helping local populations, but bear in mind there can be various other influences on toad numbers such as the weather causing them to move later at night when they're not seen.

In 2017 over 82,000 toads were helped across the UK's roads. A recording form is available at the end of the pack. **Please return your form at the end of the season!**

2. Staying Safe

Your own safety is the primary concern, if the road is clearly dangerous, or has poor visibility, **DO NOT** attempt to rescue any toads. Likewise if you have any health conditions that might make you more vulnerable to traffic, please keep yourself safe and do not take on any exposed patrolling without support.

ROAD SAFETY:

- Where there is no footway or verge, walk in single file along the right hand side of the road.
- Cross busy roads in a group, and if applicable, at the point designated by the Patrol Manager.
- Wear reflective clothing -- *when picking up toads, kneel sideways on to the road so to ensure that the high visibility strips are visible to both sides of traffic, and where possible make sure that your reflective clothing is not covered by coats and bags.*
- Wear good, solid shoes on so you don't slip or trip.
- Carry a torch and take spare batteries or a spare torch – to find toads and to warn approaching traffic.
- Be sensible and remain aware of your surroundings.
- Keep your ears open - do not use headphones or your mobile in the road.
- If traffic is coming towards you and a toad; encourage the driver to slow down with your torch, before rescuing the toad. If the driver does not slow down, please move out of the road.
- Please remain courteous and professional to drivers, neighbours, and each other.

BIOSECURITY

Due to their permeable skin, amphibians can absorb chemicals and other substances from your skin. If possible, please use disposable gloves when handling amphibians. If you are unable to obtain these please ensure that you do not use hand sanitiser or liquid soap prior to handling amphibians.

OTHER SAFETY MEASURES

- Make sure you have someone with you, or that someone knows where you are.
- Stay in touch - If possible carry a mobile phone and the numbers of other patrollers if you are in a group.
- Wear a warm waterproof coat and trousers, with gloves, if it is cold – *toads like wet weather more than we do.*
- Make sure you know where the safe place to release toads is.
- Keep safe from germs – *You may want to wear disposable gloves when handling amphibians. Wash your hands thoroughly afterwards.*
- Be careful of cuts and scratches, and avoid contact with dirty water. If patrolling away from home, carry a first aid kit.
- Some patrols may find it appropriate to place advance warning signs for drivers to help protect both the toads and yourselves – these might be provided by the Council, or homemade. Please see the Patrol Managers section on signage.

Follow any additional safety instructions from your patrol manager, which may be verbal, or may be written here.

Make sure you fill in and return the Patrollers Registration Form, which will ensure you are insured. Please return to toads@froglife.org

*You are under **no obligation** to undertake or take part in a Toad Patrol. If you are uncertain or have concerns about undertaking or taking part, under no circumstances should you continue.*

3. Patrolling with children and vulnerable people

Froglife welcomes and endorses children who volunteer at Toad crossings, this is a rewarding way of supporting nature for a stronger future, moreover, children bring sharp eyes and toad-rescuing energy.

However, we cannot ask children to take the same responsibility for themselves that adults do, nor can we ask them to decide if a patrol is safe for them – this is entirely down to the parent or guardian. You are the best person to make these decisions as you know your child and his or her capabilities. We thus ask that anyone under 18 is accompanied by a parent or guardian, and that they are registered by the parent or guardian too. On the other hand, we suggest parents listen to the advice of Patrol Managers, who know the area and the hazards well.

The same applies to vulnerable adults in need of support, in which case we would ask that a keyworker or parent accompanies the adult participating.

While the final decision is down to the parent, we would suggest that patrols with children will be safer and more satisfying in some of these circumstances:

- If the collection area is wide and level and with space for children to rescue toads away from the road.
- The road is a minor road with slow traffic and good visibility.
- In ideal circumstances: the edge of the road is fenced, or a temporary fence is erected.
- Children collect toads into a bucket on one side of the road, then are escorted across the road by an adult for release.
- Children are briefed not to follow toads onto the road, and not to rescue toads from the road or its verge.
- All parties follow the safety instructions

Occasionally we have enquiries from groups such as scout groups about helping with a patrol. Unfortunately Froglife cannot take liability for children without their parents or guardians if they are working at the roadside, however it may be that the group's own insurance covers you for this activity.

4. Note on your personal information

Froglife commits to hold your data securely and only for the purposes it was given.

When you volunteer with us as a toad patroller, your contact details automatically pass to the Patrol Manager, and Area Co-ordinator where there is one. We request that the Patrol Manager, and Area Co-ordinator, also holds your information securely and only for the purpose it was given.

In most cases, the Patrol Manager and Area Co-ordinator are volunteers. In a small number of cases, they are professional or voluntary representative of an organisation, for example a Wildlife Trust, Amphibian and Reptile group, County Council, or local city farm. In all these cases, the organisation will only keep the information for the purpose it was given and will not share it.

5. Roles

Patroller – A volunteer who helps toads across roads. They must read the safety information and fill in a registration form for official status.

Patrol Manager – Co-ordinates the local patrol. In some cases they are the only patroller. Responsible for risk assessment, communication, general support, and data recording at the end of the season. Usually a volunteer, occasionally a professional.

Area Co-ordinator – supports all patrols in an area. Not all areas have one. The Co-ordinator will usually help with volunteer co-ordination, liaison with the council and profile raising across the area. In some cases, they will stand in for Patrol Managers when absent.

Council – Is responsible for making decisions about signage. In some areas, they have an ecologist who can help and champion Toads on Roads crossings. They may be able to provide other help.

Froglife – Co-ordinates the overview of all crossings across Britain, and updates the official Department of Transport database of crossings. This work is currently unfunded and we are seeking support to develop it to provide more.



PATROLLER DECLARATION FORM

Please **read the Patrollers Health and Safety Information Sheet**, before filling in this form.
Further copies can be downloaded from the website or posted on request.

Froglife provides free insurance to cover Patrollers for Public Liability Insurance and Personal Accident Insurance.

To be covered, all patrollers must sign one of these forms (or the Patrol Manager form) and return it to us before patrolling. However, you only need fill it in once unless any circumstances change, and you may put members of the same family on one form.

Your details

Name(s)

Address

Email address

TOAD CROSSING (1) SITE ID

TOAD CROSSING (2) SITE ID

I confirm that, I will be patrolling at these sites. I understand the risks associated with Toad Patrolling and will take responsibility to follow the Patrollers Health and Safety Information, and any further instructions from the local Patrol Manager.

I will take responsibility for the following children, under 18s, and vulnerable persons in my family.

Name..... Age.....

All named persons must sign in the box below, or note 'returned by email'

Signed:

Date:

I would like to be kept up to date with news and information from Froglife. Yes / No

Email: toads@froglife.org

Additional Information for Toad Patrol Managers

The Patrol Manager Role

Thank you for volunteering to take the lead with a patrol, and joining over two hundred people around the country who co-ordinate one or toad patrols. You might be running a large patrol on a busy road, moving toads single handed on your evening stroll from your door, managing several patrols with experienced patrollers on hand at each of them, putting up signs every year and taking them down again, or even fishing toads out of land drains every night.

The basic role as a Toad Patrol Manager will include the following:

1. Taking care of safety of yourself and other Patrollers including assessing the site for risks and communicating these to the patrollers.
2. Recruiting volunteers, registering their details, and keeping their personal information safe.
3. Counting numbers of amphibians crossing each night, along with numbers of volunteers, collating this and passing to us at the end of each season.
4. Understanding the site, the local amphibian population, and sometimes working with the local council on improvements such as safety signs, or road closures.
5. Letting us know if you change your contact details or need to stop your role as a patrol manager, and if possible helping to find and induct a replacement.

Froglife send out updates to patrol managers three or four times a year, and we may occasionally need to contact you to ask about local circumstances. We do value your privacy and we don't bombard you with information.

If you would like more info, please do sign up for our 'croaks' email updates.

Safety information for Patrol Managers

Toad patrolling is an immensely rewarding and important activity however, it does take place in the dark, and wet, on roads, and for these reasons we ask that you take safety very seriously. Do not start patrolling until you have read and implemented these guidelines.

We have included a basic list of 'Staying Safe' guidelines in the information for all patrollers above. This is unlikely to be enough on its own because local circumstances vary so much. You should carry out your risk assessment then add any information you need to give patrollers before passing out the list.

Every year you should:

- Review Froglife's 'Staying Safe' list in the information to All Patrollers.
- Always visit the site in daytime before the start of the season, even if you think you're relatively familiar with the site. Check how easy it is to walk along the collection and release areas; clear vegetation if necessary.
- Then carry out a Risk Assessment based on local needs such as those above. You can invite other patrollers to join you and do it together if it helps. Review the Risk Assessment every year.
- You can write any additional instructions from the Risk Assessment onto the 'Staying Safe' list. E.g gathering point, instructions for calling for help, etc. Then make sure each of your patrollers receives a copy of the revised list, along with the information to all patrollers.
- Please show that you are taking a healthy attitude to safety, explain any points that need clarification, dress well and make sure your patrollers do the same.

SOME POINTS ON MANAGING SAFETY

- If your crossing is particularly large, try to make sure you have one or more experienced Patrollers around to help manage each evening. Try to get volunteers booked in advance so you have an idea of numbers.
- Try to have a car park/meet point away from the road and toad crossing where you can safely brief and equip your volunteers. Sign a safe route (off the carriageway) from here to the toad crossing; if this isn't possible, make sure you walk as a group on the roadside facing oncoming traffic, wearing your hi-vis clothing.
- Think about setting up additional road signs - 'Toad Patrol', 'People on the road', etc. Make sure they are at a distance that gives motorists plenty of warning; if possible have two sets - one in each direction. You may need to seek the Council's and landowner's permission to display signs, check first.
- Make sure all volunteers have their own safety equipment and are sensibly dressed with torch, hi-vis, phone, etc.
- Count your volunteers in and out - we don't leave our Toad Patrollers behind!
- The patrol coordinator should carry/have access to a fully charged mobile phone and, ideally, a first aid kit. If no mobile coverage and you are all away from home, consider and make sure everyone knows, how to get help in an emergency.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

Before starting a Toad Patrol it is vital that you identify the risks involved by doing a Risk Assessment and share any modifications from this with your patrollers. If you do not undertake this we cannot prove to insurers that you have taken all reasonable steps to manage safety in the patrol should an accident occur.

The Patrol Pack contains a sample Risk Assessment which outlines some example dangers that might occur at a toad crossing and which you need to control for. You must visit the site and fill in the blank Risk Assessment (also provided), being specific about how you will control for site dangers that might occur there. The risk assessment should be re-checked every year.

With your local site knowledge you will be able to consider safety issues including:

- whether the road is busy, fast, slow, quiet with occasional fast drivers etc.
- whether there is a nasty bend people should avoid.
- where the safe gathering areas are, and where not.
- where there might be overhanging bushes.
- if there are any potholes or trip risks.
- cars –a few patrols use their own car as protection, in some places this is not appropriate and any cars should be parked off site. Where would this be?
- Emergencies -some sites are a mobile phone blackspot, so please consider how to get help if necessary.
- Strangers - some patrols are very locally based, in others where patrollers are coming in there may be misunderstandings with locals, or passersby that warrant a minimum number for patrolling.
- There may be other local issues – these are all examples to help you consider.

If you have concerns about safety on a busy road, under no circumstances should you undertake a Toad Patrol.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Please keep this, do not return it to



TOAD PATROL:

TOAD PATROLLER:

DATE:

Hazard	Nature of Risk	Degree of Risk	Prevention/control measure	Adjusted degree of risk
Your local issues				
Issues common to most patrols – please add detail where relevant				
Cold wet and windy weather	Cold and chill, potential for hypothermia and confusion. Slips on wet roads.	Moderate	Advise all patrollers to wear warm waterproof clothing and sturdy shoes or boots and read 'Staying Safe' section.	Low.
Dark	Risk of walking into potholes, brambles, steep slopes and other hazards, risk of getting lost	Moderate	Advise all patrollers to carry a strong torch and visit the site during the day to check for hazards	Low
Traffic	Risk of road accidents, either with a car or causing a collision.	High	Advise all patrollers to wear hi vis clothing and carry a torch. Take care crossing the road, read the 'Staying Safe' section. Other local advice – added above. Park safely in pre-designated area – above	Moderate
Infections	Risk of tetanus and other infections from water, soil, amphibians etc.	Moderate	Cover cuts with waterproof plasters. Carry first aid kit.	
Strangers	Risk of verbal abuse, or attack	Low	Note any concerns above. Advise all patroller to remain professional and courteous.	

I(insert volunteer name), have read, understand and will take action to prevent/control for the above risks and I understand that I am not obliged to undertake this voluntary work. Signed: (OR CONFIRM BY EMAIL) (Word version of this document is available from Froglife)

<http://www.froglife.org/toadsonroads>



What is the Legal Position?

All toad patrols registered with Froglife are approved by the Secretary of State as a Migratory Toad Crossing point included within the Department of Transport's official database on toad crossings. This means that you are entitled to request signage and other safety measures from your council. While your council should consider this, they are not obliged to provide any mitigation. There is further detail on signage and the legal position in our advice note on signage.

All of the UK's rare amphibians and reptiles; Natterjack Toad, Pool Frog, Smooth Snakes, Sand Lizard and Great Crested Newts, are fully protected by UK criminal law from intentional killing and injury; their habitats (ponds and terrestrial habitats) are also protected. Unfortunately the other widespread, more common species, are only legally protected against trade or sale.

Often patrols move other amphibians along with the toads they are rescuing, frogs and newts are not as specific as toads regarding their return to their spawning pond, but they are still vulnerable. We would suggest handling any newt species in a separate bucket to the frogs and toads.

Great Crested Newts and other amphibians can be collected and moved across the road without breaking the law so long as you are removing them from an area of danger where they are at immediate risk of being killed. This only applies where animals are being moved across the road to an area of safety in the immediate vicinity (confirmed 2016 by Natural England, Natural Resources Wales (previously Countryside Council for Wales), and Scottish Natural heritage). This does not apply when they are being removed off the road to another site (translocation).

Common toads *Bufo bufo* are recognised as being of priority importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. Therefore, legislation requires that planning authorities need to ensure that common toads are protected from the adverse effects of development. Installing signs would be seen as supportive of a council's general biodiversity duties under (Section 40) the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC).

How do I get Insurance?

Froglife are insured to a total of £5,000,000 for any one incident, so long as we, and you, and your registered volunteers operate responsibly- which is why we ask you to consider risk and complete a risk assessment.

All you need to do is **ask each Patroller to read the 'Staying Safe' section above, adding any detail from your Risk Assessment, and then ask them to sign the volunteer declaration form.**

We are only covered for registered Patrols, volunteers we have forms for, and registered Patrol Managers, so if you find a new site that needs help, please register it with us.

The insurance covers you, and your volunteers, for personal accident, and third party liability (if you inadvertently cause an accident to someone else). It doesn't cover you for your belongings, for travel to the patrol area, or for wider issues like reputation. We tend to find that being part of a registered and insured patrol gives a stronger credibility with any potential detractors too.

If anything does go wrong please do make sure you get names and details of any other parties, take a photo if possible (e.g. if an accident involves a vehicle) and contact us at the earliest opportunity.

Our ultimate aim, of course, is to make sure there are no accidents.

A few of our patrols are run by professionals within their separate employment- for example as part of a day's work as a conservation officer. If this is the case, you should also be covered by your employer's liability insurance, issued by your employer.

Likewise, if you are running the patrol as part of your active volunteering for a charity you may be covered by their insurance scheme. Do check with your representative to find out if your group is covered for this.

Recruiting volunteers

Many patrols are more efficient and friendly for involving a wide range of volunteers, and some patrol managers are very good at this. Please read this section if you would like any help.

You may have friends and family you can involve as volunteers. Once you are registered, any individuals volunteering through Froglife's website will be passed straight on to you by email, do please reply and encourage them, even if it is low season.

Putting together a list of interested people is helpful, and this should be kept away from your personal and other professional information so you can easily pass it on if you ever move away. Registering your volunteers with Froglife means that we can also pass them on if you stop patrolling for some reason.

If someone takes an interest, do get their details straight away. From here-on, try and keep the group focused in the run-up to the toad migration season via phone calls or group emails. Some patrollers like to arrange a site visit for all volunteers, during the daytime, sometime before the migration starts.

Remember we are all responsible for keeping volunteers personal information safely and not sharing it with others or using it inappropriately.

ADVERTISING FOR HELP

Posters are available (at the end of the Pack) for displaying in the local area (shops, pubs, notice boards, car windows etc). You may also use these if the road is too dangerous to patrol or if you have no/few volunteers, in which case being able to warn local people that toads might be on the road is vital.

If there is a local event/fete in your area, consider having a stall with posters and pictures to promote your Toad Patrol. This often proves a good way to raise support and awareness. Get in touch with Froglife if you would like any promotional material or colour posters. If there are no organised events, think about holding your own! Set up a stall in your local town/village centre; though remember you may need to seek permission.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

You could also consider contacting local schools. Some children may be too young to take part but they might be interested in hearing about the project; get them involved by designing their own toad crossing sign or thinking about how they could help toads in their garden or school conservation area. Visits like this help raise awareness amongst the local community.

Don't forget to contact local wildlife groups who may be able to help. If there are any nature reserves nearby ask if you can put posters up on the notice boards promoting your cause. Useful starting points may include the local ARG (www.arguk.org), Wildlife Trust (www.wildlifetrusts.org) or your local authority's Biodiversity Officer.

Media and your Toad Patrol

Over the years, toad migrations and toad patrols have been featured regularly on regional TV, radio and in newspapers. You might decide that you'd like to raise awareness of your toad crossing in this way – if so the following might be of use...

DOES YOUR SITE REALLY NEED PUBLICITY?

In some cases, media exposure can have a positive effect on a toad crossing: it can make drivers drive more slowly; it can raise awareness of the site to the local council, increasing the likelihood of required action (e.g. sign installation); or it can attract volunteers to help. All of these have positive implications for your toads.

On the negative side, media exposure can sometimes lead to anti-social repercussions, where signs are stolen, or where toads (or worse, patrollers) suffer abuse - a situation which unnecessarily affects your safety.

These are issues you must weigh up before publicising your toad crossing.

WHO DO I TELL?

Should you decide to publicise your toad crossing, there is a draft press release in this pack, which you can use as a template. Send this to local media outlets. A good place to start is by phoning up your local newspaper and asking for the newsroom, where you can then speak to a journalist about your toad crossing. Another good idea is to get in touch with your local BBC news office - the email will be: 'county name'@bbc.co.uk (e.g. Devon would be devon@bbc.co.uk). This could then lead to both BBC radio and TV coverage. If you would like a copy of this template emailed to you just get in touch: toads@froglife.org



BE PREPARED!

It's notoriously difficult to tell how much publicity your site might get: it might be that you hear very little, or it might be that you are overcome with enquiries. One thing that's really important is that you have some key messages ready for when the journalists ring: (e.g. "we want volunteers", "we want the council to listen to us", "we want to help our local toads" etc.) this way you can get your message heard clearly, before the interviewer takes you off the subject with other questions.

OTHER RESOURCES

There might be other people you could forward media enquiries to should you need: your County Coordinator (if there is one in your county, find out from Froglife) or your local Amphibian and Reptile Group (www.arguk.org), will be good contacts for local enquiries. For more national information on Toads on Roads, contact Froglife on 01733 602102 or email toads@froglife.org. Information on free photos is available in the notes section of your press release template.

FEEDBACK TO FROGLIFE

Keeping track of where your Toad Patrol has appeared in media is really useful for a number of reasons - it means you can re-contact journalists should you need the following year, plus it means you have a public record of the site's importance, which could be useful if the site should become threatened in future years. Please also send photocopies (or web links) of any coverage to Froglife, who will insert this information into your Toad Crossing file, and feedback the level of publicity the Toads on Roads project has received nationally each year.

Annual checklist for a busy patrol

As the run-up to the migration season begins, you might find this checklist useful to make sure you are adequately prepared!

- ☐ Get in touch with all your Patrollers and advertise for new ones if necessary. There are posters available for you to display in local shops / community centres / etc. When you hear back from potential Patrollers, find out their availability, experience and get their contact details (daytime and evening).
- ☐ It's a good idea to arrange for all the Patrollers to visit the site in daylight to familiarise themselves well in advance of the migration season. Perhaps organise an informal meeting and then use this opportunity to ensure all new patrollers are briefed on their task and understand the recording forms, road conditions and safety.
- ☐ Carry out an annual Risk Assessment review and make sure everyone has the updated information.
- ☐ Have recording forms ready for volunteers so they can record the number of live and dead toads, frogs, and amphibians for collation and sending on.
- ☐ Toad migrations can start anytime between late-January (southwest England) and late-March (northeast England, eastern Scotland) with temperatures around 5-10 and upwards. Be sure to check the local weather forecast for the first run of consistently mild, wet nights and make sure all Patrollers are prepared. It will help to have someone nearby or who can check the road regularly to inform you when the toads are beginning to move.
- ☐ Websites that may be of use (remember to look at night time conditions not just day time): www.metoffice.gov.uk or www.bbc.co.uk/weather.
- ☐ Be prepared for a few toadless nights, especially on quieter crossings. Remember the toads will be most likely to move during or just after appropriate weather so the migration may happen in 'waves'.
- ☐ Once you have collected all the records, please send us your data either by filling in and returning the recording form or entering it online at the end of the season.
- ☐ Please pass on our thanks to all volunteers for all they are doing.

Blank forms and posters

PATROL MANAGER REGISTRATION FORM



I am volunteering to manage patrols for the following crossings:

TOAD CROSSING (1) SITE ID

TOAD CROSSING (2) SITE ID

Name Date.....

Address

Email address

I confirm that, when undertaking activities on behalf of Froglife, I will do so in accordance with the procedures contained in the Toads on Roads Patrol Pack.	Please tick or initial
I have read and understood the Health and Safety information contained in the Froglife Toads on Roads Patrol Pack	
I understand the risks associated with Toad Patrolling and have visited the site and undertaken a full Risk Assessment accordingly	
OR if taking over a functioning patrol, I have checked and countersigned the original Risk Assessment.	
I will look after volunteers' personal contact details passed to me and will only use these for the purpose of running the toad patrol.	
Signed (or agreed by email)	

The information you have given us on this form will be stored on a computer database at Froglife, but will not be shared with anyone else without your permission. In most cases volunteer's details will be emailed to you, but they will not see your details until you make contact.

Froglife sometimes has queries about toad patrols from other patrol managers, or journalists. If you are happy for these details to be shared please tick statement below. We will not give your details on to any other third parties.

- ☐ Yes, I am happy for Froglife to pass on my contact details directly to volunteers & journalists. Please circle or delete which contact details you are happy for us to share:

Email address

THANK YOU

Patroller press release template

[insert date here]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Volunteers step up to save local toads at [insert site name]

Local toads are to be helped across a busy road at [insert site name], as part of a national campaign to help save the Common Toad from disappearing in the region.

Volunteers from [insert town/village] are gearing up to visit the site over the next [week/days] and will help carry the toads over the busy road to help the toads as they move towards their breeding ponds following the recent run of milder spring weather.

[insert quote here, example below:

“Our Toad Patrol has been going x years, and over this time we’ve rescued x toads. It’s really good fun and great to know we’re helping the plight of toads in the area.” Said [insert name]. “We’re eager to get more people volunteering though, and we want to hear from people with an interest in helping an unusual and charismatic amphibian for a few nights this month.”]

The common toad -a charismatic amphibian with warty skin and waddling gait- is thought to be experiencing declines in the UK, in some cases caused by the effect of road traffic as toads travel slowly back to breeding ponds, often used for generations.

These local volunteers are part of a national campaign called ‘Toads on Roads’, coordinated by the national wildlife charity Froglife, and supported by ARG UK, a national network of volunteer groups concerned with amphibian and reptile conservation. Over the coming weeks, one thousand volunteers will be gearing up to help toads across the UK’s roads, in a coordinated effort to help save the charming animal from further declines.

Other Toad Patrols exist in [insert county], details of which can be found on the Froglife website (www.froglife.org) – for more details: toads@froglife.org

-ENDS-

Editor’s Notes:

1. Press enquiries:

Toad patrollers: [insert your details here – mobile number helps]

Froglife: Kathy Wormald, Froglife: kathy.wormald@froglife.org; 01733 602102

Toads on Roads photos: toads@froglife.org

Please credit: ‘Froglife – www.froglife.org

2. Notes

Facts about common toads:

IDENTIFYING FEATURES

- Adults grow to around 8cm long.
- Dry, 'warty' skin.
- Body colour is generally brown-green-grey and can have some dark markings on the back. Like the common frog a toad's colour can change depending on the environmental conditions it experiences.
- Has a gland behind each eye that secretes toxins, making it distasteful to predators.
- Moves by crawling but can do small hops.
- The eye has a bronze/gold coloured iris and horizontal slit pupil.
- Belly is a light colour and can be spotted.

Toads feed on slugs, worms and insects, mostly at night, and may be found around the garden hiding under plant pots, logs and bins during the day. They return to the same ponds year after year to spawn. They prefer large ponds often with fish (unlike other amphibians) - fish do not like to eat toad tadpoles because they find them distasteful.

The common toad is widespread in England, Scotland (except the Northwest, where it is rare or absent) and Wales. They're not found in Ireland.

Current status: There have been declines in toad numbers in much of lowland England and similar decreases are thought to have occurred in Wales and Scotland. This appears to be partly due to the effect of road traffic during the breeding season and also due to loss of breeding ponds. Common toads are a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species.

Further information on Toads on Roads and Toad Patrollers: www.froglife.org

- In addition to death by cars themselves, Common Toads also fall foul of badly designed road features like high kerbs which steer toads towards drains, where they are then trapped and die.
- Many of the toad crossing registered under the 'Toads on Roads' scheme, have the iconic 'Toad Crossing' signs approved by the Government's Department for Transport.
- One third of the world's 6,000 amphibians are officially threatened with extinction. For further information: www.amphibianark.org



WHY DID THE TOAD CROSS THE ROAD?

Common toads are declining in the UK. Thousands are killed crossing roads each spring as they make their way to breeding ponds that they have used for generations.

Can you spare some time to help local toads cross a road?

Volunteers are needed to help a local 'Toads on Roads' patrol on mild, wet evenings in February and March.

If you are interested in helping please contact:

All you'll need for patrolling is warm clothes, something reflective, a bucket and a torch. You can take part as little or as often as you like!



www.froglife.org/toadsonroads

Photo: Cheryl Frost



Toads crossing

on mild, damp evenings.

Please drive carefully!

Watch out



Toads about!



I AM A REGISTERED FROGLIFE TOAD PATROLLER