



- the scheme for surveying Jersey's pondlife!

Dr John W. Wilkinson

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation



Pondwatch – ID:

- Amphibians (eggs, tapoles, metamorphs and adults)
- Grass snake
- Fish



Amphibian eggs

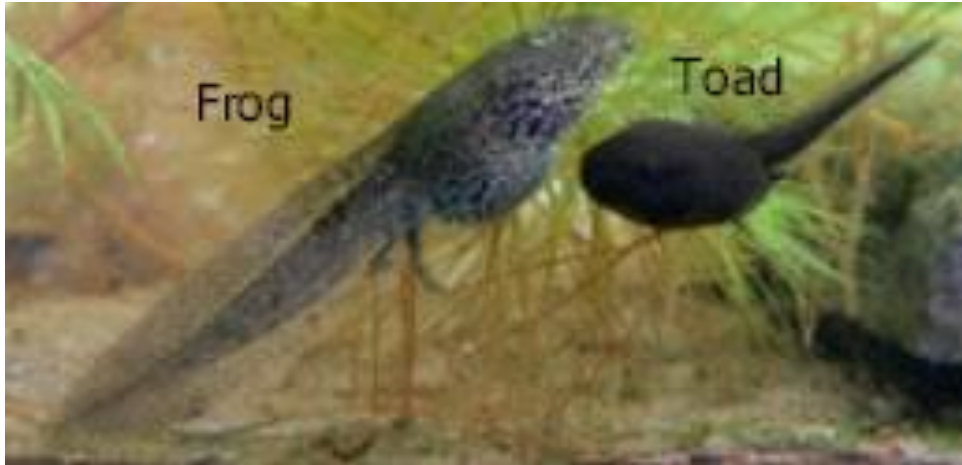




Palmate newt eggs



Amphibian tadpoles



Frog and toad metamorphs

When tadpoles grow all four legs and leave their ponds, they are known as “metamorphs”. Even though very tiny, some features allow you to tell them apart – smooth skin and athletic legs, for example, can be seen in a metamorph frog, and metamorph toads are perfect versions of their parents. Spot the tiny parotoid glands on the toad, below!



Newt metamorphs



Agile frog



< 9 cm



Krissy Le Feuvre





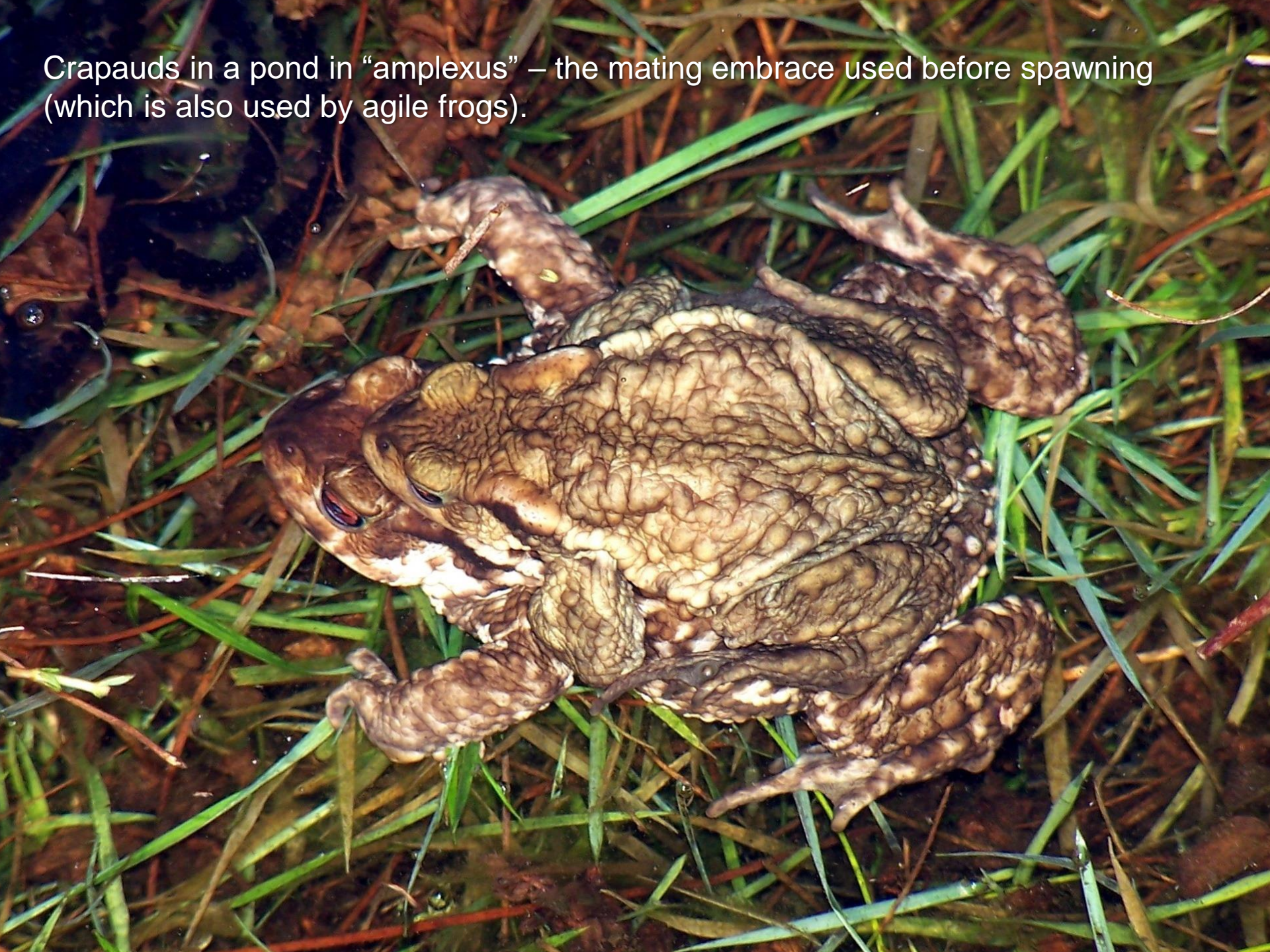
Western common toad / crapaud

< 8 cm (males)

< 12 cm (females)



Crapauds in a pond in “amplexus” – the mating embrace used before spawning (which is also used by agile frogs).

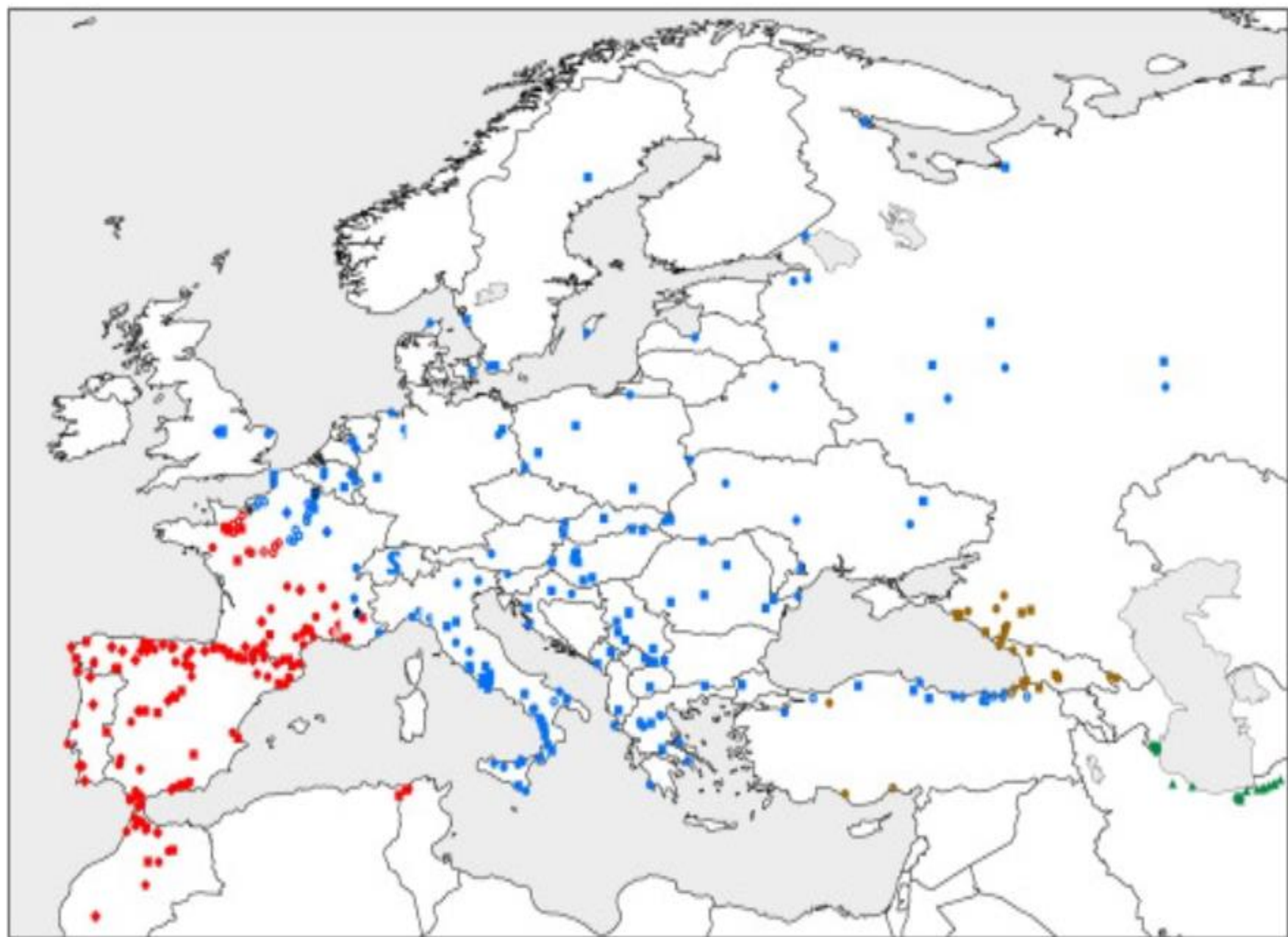


Sexing adult frogs and toads

Female toads and frogs are usually bigger and fatter than the males. In the breeding season (spring), roughened, dark pads can be seen on the forefingers and thumbs of males (“nuptial pads”) – they are used for grasping females during mating. This feature is also found in male frogs but is not always so easy to see.



The nuptial pads on a
crapaud's front foot ©
John Wilkinson



Comparing frogs and crapauds



Palmate newt

< 9 cm,
often much smaller

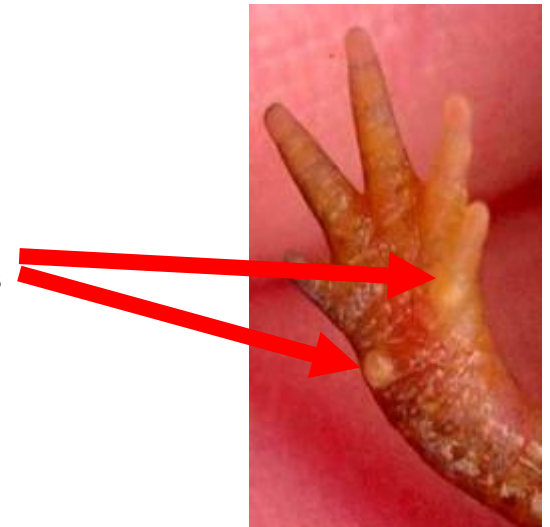


Palmate ♂

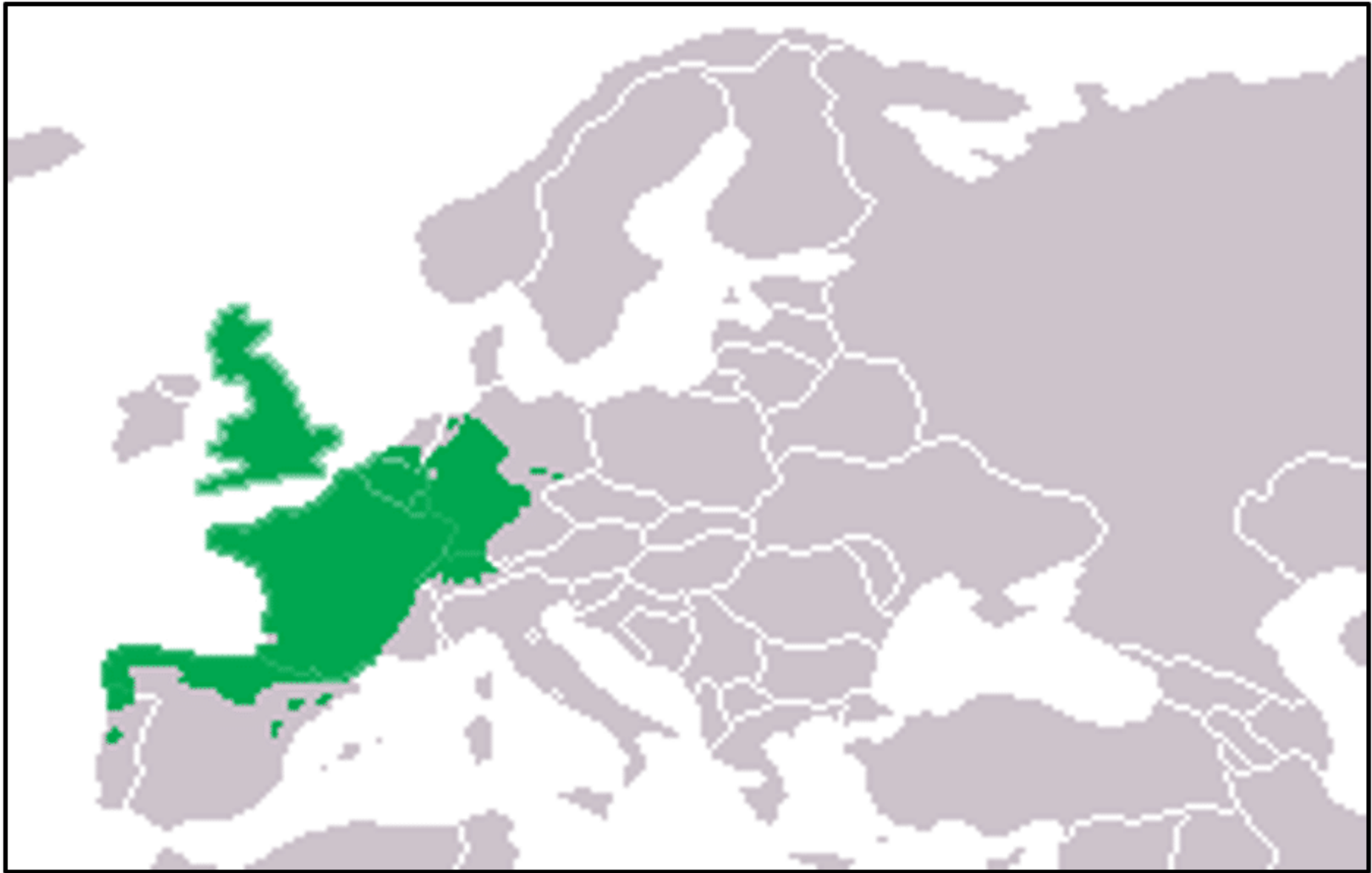


Palmate ♀

Two pale
tubercles/nodules



Palmate Newt Range Map



Comparing newts and lizards



Alien amphibians

common frog



green frog



fire-bellied toad



Japanese fire-bellied newt



great crested newt



GRASS SNAKE



Grass snake

Typically olive-green (sometimes more brown or greyish), 16-100cm+. Large eyes with obviously round pupils. Rare in Jersey, most sightings from the west coast dunes. This is the same species found in England and Wales, but Jersey animals often lack a yellow collar (especially older ones).

In brief:

Grows to 100 cm in length or more

Rare and secretive

**Lays eggs in compost heaps,
manure piles and rotting vegetation**

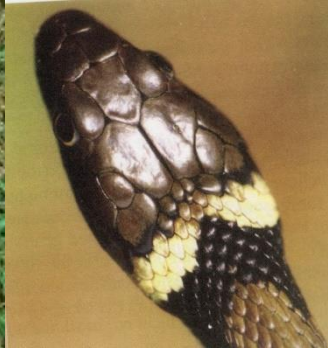
Found near water, eats amphibians



Grass snake – males and females



Males: smaller, thinner, but longer tails. Narrow heads with protruding eyes.



Females: get bigger, but shorter tapering tails. Broad arrow shaped heads, eyes recessed.



Grass snake – eggs and juveniles



Eggs are usually laid in manure/compost; their texture is leathery.



Tracy Farrer

Hatchling juveniles are exact replicas of adults!

Grass snake – egg-laying sites



One of the reasons for the scarcity of Jersey's grass snakes could be a reduction in the availability of egg-laying sites. They prefer compost, manure heaps or other rotting vegetation that generates heat as it decomposes, this helps to incubate the eggs. Such places are good places to start looking!



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....and this is?



FISH





By Bernard DUPONT from FRANCE - European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=40745254>



Robert F. Bukaty / Associated Press File



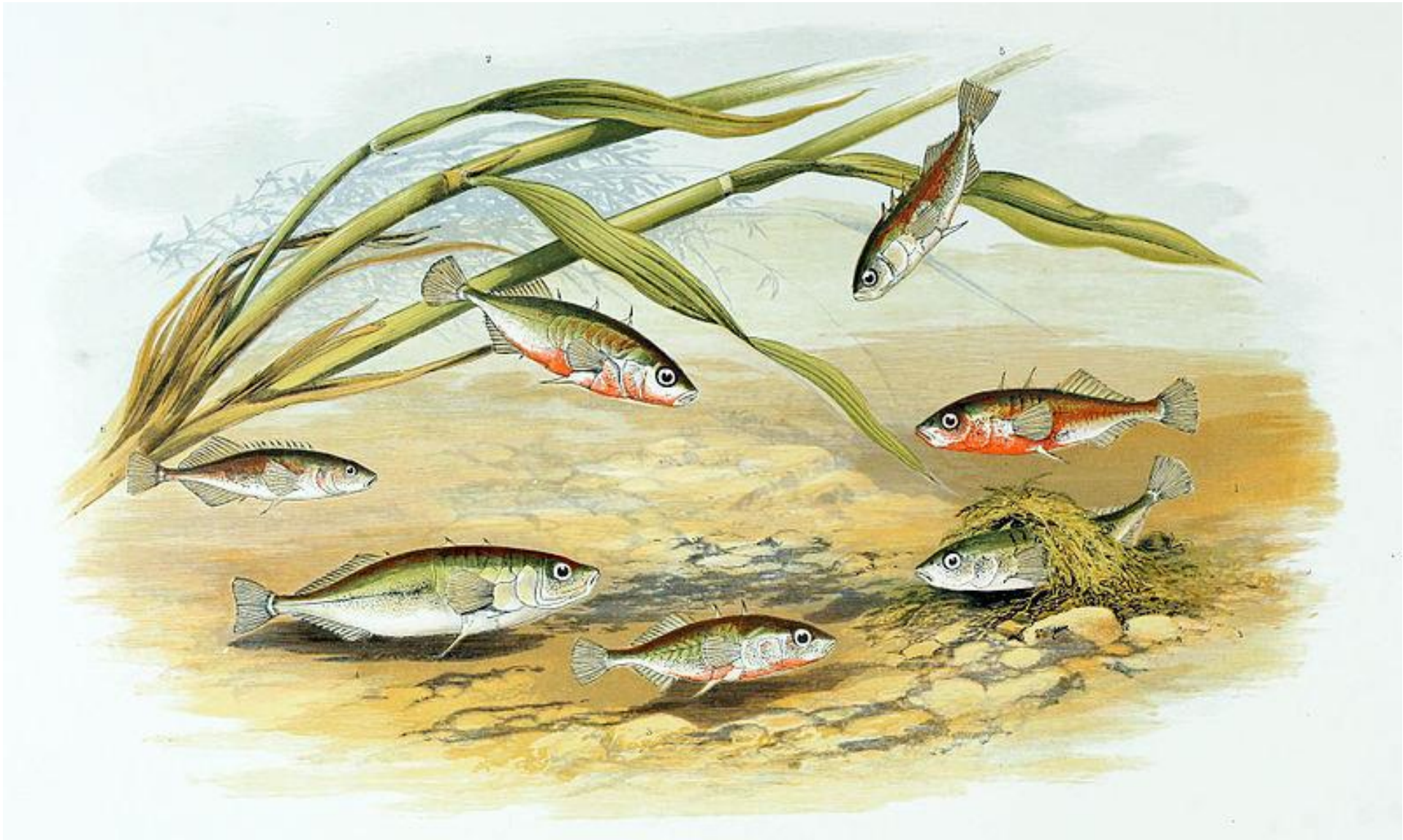
Pumpkinseed



Spined loach © Wim Rubers - Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported



Stone loach by OpenCage.jpg Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.5 Generic



Three-spined stickleback

...and larger fish in some reservoirs!



Thanks for listening!

