

Appendix C

This is made up of the email chain relating to the discover of the Great Crested Newt and a photo of the Newt.

This is John Dickson's report to EAD Consulting who are carrying out the wildlife/conservation survey for Persimmon at Coldharbour Farm.

Andrew

----- Original Message -----

Subject: ColdHarbour Farm, Ilminster.

Date: Sat, 19 Apr 2014 15:00:29 -0400 (EDT)

From:

To:

CC:

Dear Lauren

As you will know, Andrew Warde alerted me to the presence of a great crested newt at Coldharbour Farm recently. I visited the site last Thursday to see whether I could determine where it might have come from. Not being local, I was unaware at the time that development was being planned in the vicinity, or that a survey was underway.

Andrew explained that he had spoken to you and he passed your contact details to me in case you may be interested in my findings.

I only conducted a simple torchlight survey that lasted approximately an hour, during which I searched four water bodies: A large pond in a neighbouring garden on Park Lane at grid ref ST34303 14536, a much smaller pond in the same garden at ST34337 14502, the standing water east of the old railway line at the top of Park Lane (the western side of the line was completely dry although this is clearly not always the case) and a small pond in a maize field belonging to Coldharbour Farm at ST35045 14613.

The large garden pond contained abundant sticklebacks and is therefore not likely to be very suitable for GCNs and none were seen. However there were a large number of common toad tadpoles present.

The smaller pond in the same garden only has a couple of inches of water in it and is fairly thick with blanket weed. This pond is similarly unlikely to be suitable for GCNs, however it contained a number of Palmate newts.

The standing water East of the railway also appeared unsuitable for GCN's. The water is shallow and there appeared to be very little life of any sort in it; no plants or invertebrates. No amphibians were found in here.

In the pond in the maize field I found 2.1 GCNs along with a single male palmate newt. There was also a common frog sitting alongside one of your refugia on the pond bank! This might be worth bottle trapping as the trees make it difficult to gain access to much of the shoreline.

I have submitted all my findings to SERC.

Hope this helps and good luck with your survey. Perhaps you could let me know the fate of the GCN population.

Best wishes John Dickson

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This is the string which led to John Dickson's visit.
Andrew

----- Original Message -----

Subject:Re: Sighting of Great Crested Newt

Date:Sun, 13 Apr 2014 14:45:25 -0400 (EDT)

Hi Andrew

Thursday the 17th at 8.00 it is then.

Look forward to meeting you

Best wishes

John

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: Sat, 12 Apr 2014 8:54

Subject: Re: Sighting of Great Crested Newt

Hi John. Thursday 17th is fine. I look forward to meeting you.

Yesterday a near-neighbour (also a vet) popped in and I mentioned the newt sighting. She said that she had found a Great Crested Newt in her garden a few years ago. She did not record the sighting but I thought this was an interesting anecdote. I think the likeliest breeding grounds are the watercourses alongside the line of the former railway and a large pond in the garden of another neighbour, whose property is close to the river Isle. I will ask him if we could visit on Thursday.

Best wishes,
Andrew

On 11/04/2014 09:55, John Dickson wrote:

Hi Andrew

How does Thursday the 17th sound?

John

-----Original Message-----

From:

To:

Sent: Thu, 10 Apr 2014 21:43

Subject: Re: Sighting of Great Crested Newt

Hi John - I was away yesterday so sorry for the delay. I have spoken to Christina and she has left me to fix a date to meet you as her husband is often home rather late so she has to be home with her children. Apart from Monday (14th) I could join you any evening next week. I suggest you come a bit before dark so I can show you the lie of the land. Around 8pm is fine. I attach a file to show how to find us. Come to the conservatory door.

I look forward to meeting you,
Andrew

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On 08/04/2014 19:29, John Dickson wrote:
Hello Andrew

I could come over any week day evening next week. Unfortunately newts are nocturnal and best seen after dark which would mean me coming over after about 8pm if that's OK.

Let me know whether there is an evening that would suit you both.

Best wishes

John

-----Original Message-----

From

To:

Sent: Tue, 8 Apr 2014 9:53

Subject: Re: Sighting of Great Crested Newt

Dear John,

Many thanks for taking an interest in this sighting. From my reading about the newts it struck me as odd to find one in a relatively dry spot at this time of year. However, there are two sizeable and likely ponds not far distant, alongside the line of the former railway between Ilminster and Donyatt, now a long-distance cycle track and bridleway. I would estimate the distance at about 150m. These have a breeding population of frogs. Toads are also numerous around here. Even nearer is a rainwater holding tank, just below ground level, next to the yard in which Christina saw the specimen.

Both Christina and I would welcome a visit to try to establish the breeding site. Please let us know when you are able to come. Use my email or telephone 01460 57673.

Best wishes,

Andrew

On 07/04/2014 16:04, John Dickson wrote:
Dear Mr Warde

I can confirm that the animal is a great crested newt. An adult male in breeding condition. This is curious as in this condition it would normally be found in the breeding pond, yet the impression I get from your e-mail is that it was not in a pond?

Newts (particularly once they are adults) do not usually travel very far from their ponds, the 'normal' dispersal distance for a great crested newt is only about 500m with 1000m being a particularly long trek. Therefore it is likely that you have a population of these creatures somewhere close at hand. If you think you can identify a likely candidate for the breeding pond, feel free to get back in touch with me and we would happily arrange a time to survey the pond to confirm their presence.

Best wishes

John Dickson

-----Original Message-----

From: Serc Records <SercRecords@somerc.com>

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To: John Dickson <jdickson61@aol.com>
Sent: Mon, 7 Apr 2014 15:32
Subject: FW: Sighting of Great Crested Newt

Dear John,

Are you able to assist with this enquiry please?

Thanks very much for your help,
Best wishes
Cathy

Dr Cathy Horsley
Ecologist

Please note my working hours are 8.30-4.30 Monday to Friday
Somerset Environmental Records Centre
Tonedale Mill, Wellington, Somerset TA21 0AW
Direct telephone: 01823 652424
Switchboard: 01823 664450
Web: www.somerc.com

For information on how to submit your wildlife sightings, please visit our website: <http://www.somerc.com/recording/submitting+records/>
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-----Original Message-----

From:
Sent: 04 April 2014 08:41
To: Somerset Wildlife Trust Enquiries
Subject: Sighting of Great Crested Newt

On behalf of my neighbour, Christina Miller, I am sending you 2 photos of what we believe is a Great Crested Newt found last night in her farmyard. I have submitted a record according to your website instructions. The newt has been released in a safer place near to the yard (where it was in danger from cows, tractors, hens and ducks). We are rather excited about finding this rare species and would be grateful if you could confirm from the photos that our identification is correct and advise us how best to ensure that the breeding area is identified and protected.

Many thanks,
Andrew Warde
Coldharbour Farmhouse
Donyatt
Ilminster
Somerset
TA19 0RN

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