

## 1. CURRENT STATUS

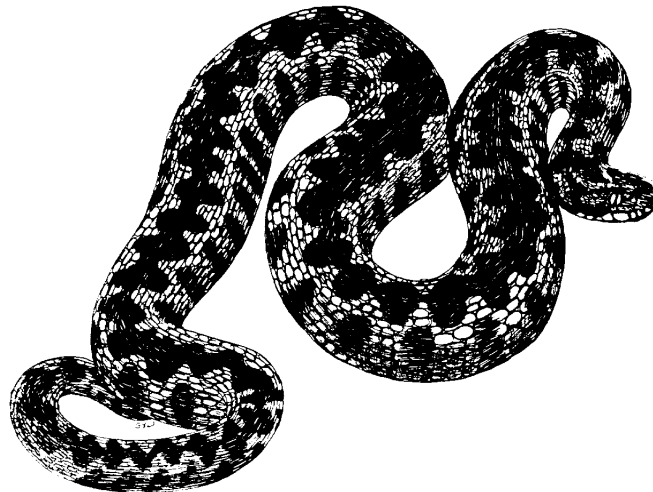
### 1.1 Legislation and priority status

International	Berne Convention ( <i>Appendix III</i> )
UK and Wales	Wildlife and Countryside Act ( <i>Schedule 5</i> ) SoCC <sup>b</sup>
Gwynedd	None known

### 1.2 Status in Wales and beyond

The adder<sup>c</sup> is the most northerly occurring snake, being the only species found inside the Arctic Circle, and occurs southwards from Scandinavia throughout much of Europe and northern Asia. In the British Isles the adder is found within England, Scotland and Wales, right up to the extreme north of mainland Scotland, but is absent from Ireland and the Isle of Man.

Currently the distribution and population trends of the adder in the British Isles are not precisely known, in part because the species is notoriously difficult to survey and monitor .



### 1.3 Status in Gwynedd<sup>d</sup>

There are 11 confirmed 10km squares with adders present within Gwynedd but outside the Snowdonia National Park. It is likely that more sites exist.

<sup>a</sup> Only part of sub-section 9(1) and all of sub-section 9(5) apply; these prohibit the intentional killing and injuring and trade (i.e. sale, barter, exchange, transporting for sale and advertising to sell or to buy).

<sup>b</sup> UK Species of Conservation Concern List

<sup>c</sup> *Vipera berus*

<sup>d</sup> Within this document the term "Gwynedd" refers to areas outside the Snowdonia National Park area, except where specified otherwise

## 2. FACTORS AFFECTING THIS SPECIES IN GWYNEDD<sup>e</sup>

- Isolation of populations due to habitat loss and fragmentation.
- Loss, degradation and destruction of breeding and hibernation sites.
- Reduction in numbers of prey due to habitat degradation caused by high levels of fertilizer use and intensive grazing.
- Persecution may be an occasional problem due to people's fear of snakes.

## 3. ASSOCIATED GWYNEDD SAPS / HAPS

Cloddiau, Lowland heathland, Upland heathland, Lowland dry acid grassland, Lowland meadows and pasture, Hedgerows, Transport corridors, Coastal sand dunes, Rhos pasture, Wetlands

Newts

## 4. CURRENT ACTION IN GWYNEDD

### 4.1 Site and habitat protection

- Some adder populations may fall within areas identified as potential Wildlife Sites, designated as LNR, SSSI, NNR or candidate SAC, or managed as public footpath / cycle track.

### 4.2 Management and programmes of action

- A North West Wales reptiles and amphibians conservation group has recently been set up.

### 4.3 Survey, research and monitoring

- None identified

## 5. ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES

1. To establish the current status and distribution of adder in Gwynedd.
2. To protect, maintain and enhance existing adder populations and related habitats.
3. To restore and enhance other suitable sites in order to increase adder population and distribution.
4. To increase the public's understanding of the adder.

## 6. PROPOSED ACTIONS

Code	Action	Partner(s) <sup>f</sup>
<b>Policy and legislation</b>		
1	Use planning conditions to ensure developments in sensitive locations are compatible with adder conservation TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>GC</b> , Relevant partners
2	Consider designating suitable sites of importance for adder as Wildlife Sites TARGET/TIMESCALE: Start process of designation, By 2005	<b>GC</b> , CCW, NWWT

<sup>e</sup> See also associated HAPs for more general factors affecting this species' habitats

<sup>f</sup> Lead partner for this action is indicated by bold typeface, see section 7.2 for explanation of abbreviations

<b>Species / habitat management and protection</b>		
3	Promote and support grant schemes including Tir Gofal, Llŷn ESA and / or use management agreements where appropriate to secure favourable habitat management of sites with established adder populations, and adjacent areas which could provide linkages between isolated populations, taking into account the needs of other associated LBAP species and habitats TARGET/TIMESCALE: To be set, Ongoing	<b>CCW, CLA, DEPC, FUW, FWAG Cymru, GC, NFU Cymru, NT</b>
4	Seek funding for land management by developing a biodiversity grant scheme, which would include grants for appropriate management, restoration and / or creation of adder habitat TARGET/TIMESCALE: By 2005	<b>GC, Relevant partners</b>
5	Ensure that the potential presence and management requirements of adders are considered within any relevant management plans or grant schemes (including SSSI management plans, NWMPs, WGS, Tir Gofal, ESA) by liaison (including consultation and provision of comments) between key organisations TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>CCW, DEPC, FC, GC</b>
<b>Advisory</b>		
6	Provide management advice and guidance on adders to land owners and managers TARGET/TIMESCALE: As and when requested, Ongoing	<b>CCW, GC, NWWT</b>
7	Distribute available advice and guidance on adder conservation, habitat management and the law to key landowners and relevant organisations TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>CCW, GC, NWWT</b>
<b>Survey, research and monitoring</b>		
8	Carry out a desk based study of historical adder records and, together with Phase One and other habitat survey data, use to develop a strategy for further survey work in areas of potential adder habitat and / or areas with historic records TARGET/TIMESCALE: By 2005	<b>CCW, CEH, GC, NWWT, UWB</b>
9	Carry out surveys based on above, involving volunteers where appropriate TARGET/TIMESCALE: To be set	<b>CCW, CEH, GC, NWWT, UWB</b>
10	Create and maintain a database of adder records TARGET/TIMESCALE: By 2005	<b>CCW, GC</b>
<b>Communications and publicity</b>		
11	Distribute information leaflets on adders, their biology and conservation (including those produced by British Herpetological Trust, CCW) to landowners and managers at local events and shows. TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>GC, CCW, FWAG Cymru</b>
12	Raise awareness among landowners and managers of the legal protection afforded to this species, and of the potential impact on adders of inappropriate habitat management, through publishing articles in relevant publications and giving talks to relevant groups (e.g. publications and local meetings of farming unions) TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>GC, CCW, DEPC, FWAG Cymru, NWWT</b>
13	Raise awareness among members of the public of the legal protection afforded to this species, of its biology and lifecycle, of the magnitude of risk to humans from the species, and of the correct course of action if bitten, through submission of press releases to local newspapers on an annual basis, and the provision of detailed advice on request TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>GC, CCW, NWWT</b>
14	Encourage the recording of adder sightings by the general public, to be passed to CCW for collation, through submission of press releases to local newspapers on an annual basis, and the provision of detailed advice on request TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>GC, CCW, NWWT</b>

## 7 PARTNERS & OPPORTUNITIES

### 7.1 Overall lead partner for SAP

Gwynedd Council (GC)

### 7.2 Key partners

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH)

Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)

Country Land and Business Association (CLA)

Department for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Welsh Assembly Government) (DEPC)

Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group Cymru (FWAG Cymru)

Farmers Union of Wales (FUW)

Forestry Commission (FC)

National Farmers Union Cymru (NFU Cymru)

National Trust (NT)

North Wales Wildlife Trust (NWWT)

University of Wales, Bangor (UWB)

### 7.3 Opportunities

Students, volunteers, farming unions, landowners and managers

## 8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## 9. ABBREVIATIONS

BAP: Biodiversity Action Plan, ESA: Environmentally Sensitive Area, HAP: Habitat Action Plan, LBAP: Local Biodiversity Action Plan, LNR: Local Nature Reserve, NNR: National Nature Reserve, NWMP: Native Woodland Management Plan, SAC: Special Area of Conservation, SAP: Species Action Plan, SSSI: Site of Special Scientific Interest, WGS: Woodland Grant Scheme

Version 1, 2004