

Slow-worm Compost Survey

...a survey of slow-worms in compost heaps

Please join our survey of Britain's most secretive reptile, the slow-worm, and its apparent attraction to compost! Drawn by the abundance of slugs and other food, slow-worms are the original gardener's friend. These shy and harmless animals look like small snakes but are in fact legless lizards. We hope you can help us to build up a picture of how important compost heaps are to slow-worms, and what sort of conditions suit them best. By taking part in our slow-worm compost survey, you are also helping our wider initiative - the National Amphibian and Reptile Recording Scheme (www.narrs.org.uk).

Your details

Name (print) _____ Address _____

Phone number _____
Email _____ Post code _____

Where is your composting site?

Location _____ City/Town/Village _____
Post code _____

If you are familiar with using grid references (e.g. in the form SP 123 456) then please provide.

Grid reference _____

Information on grid references can be found on the Web:

www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/freefun/nationalgrid/nghelp1.html

Other information about your composting site

What type of site is the compost heap located in?

Allotment, primarily cultivated Allotment, primarily uncultivated Garden
Farm Waste disposal Park/nature reserve
Other Please describe _____

Indicate the nature of the site setting

Urban Suburban Rural Suburban/rural boundary

Information about your slow-worms

How many times have you found slow-worms in your compost?

Never Once Twice Several times Often

If known, give the most recent date you found slow-worms e.g. June 2005 _____

If seen in previous years, list the years you found them _____

What is the greatest number of slow-worms you have you found in your compost at any one time?

One Two to five Six to ten More than ten

Where in the compost do you find slow-worms?

On top of the compost In the middle of the compost At the bottom of the heap

What was the condition of compost where the slow-worm(s) were found?

Fresh, undecomposed material Other, please describe: _____
Well-rotted material, earthy smell _____
Anaerobic, smells like bad eggs or hair perming lotion _____

What other amphibians or reptiles have you found in your compost? e.g. frog, toad, grass snake, etc.

What other amphibians or reptiles have you found in your garden or allotment? e.g. slow-worm, frog, toad, newt, grass snake, common lizard, etc.

Type of compost bin/heap in which slow-worms found

Plastic bin	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manufacturer and/or model	_____
Wooden construction (manufactured)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manufacturer and/or model	_____
Wooden, home-made using pallets	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Heap (not within a bin or sack)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Compost in plastic bags/sacks	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Describe	_____

Floor to compost heap

Plastic (sealed within bin)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Brick/concrete/tarmac	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Open to ground	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Cover to compost

Open	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Carpet	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Plastic	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

What is the capacity of the compost heap (litres, cubic metres or dimensions in cm)? _____

How long has the compost bin/heap been in place? _____

How the compost is managed

Material continually added to top, heap not turned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Material continually added to top, heap turned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Material composted in batches and turned frequently	<input type="checkbox"/>

If material composted in batches, give age of batch when slow-worm(s) found _____

What material is being composted? Tick relevant boxes – **emphasise the predominant material(s)**.

Grass cuttings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vegetable/fruit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leaf	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wood chip/bark	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kitchen waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Describe	_____		

Is the compost heap in a Sunny location Shaded location ?

Data protection and copyright agreement

I understand that the information I provide on this form will be entered onto a computer database. My name and contact details will be used only in relation to this survey. I agree to share any intellectual property rights that may pertain to the data submitted on this form.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please return completed forms to:

The Herpetological Conservation Trust, 655A Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH1 4AP, UK.

Or contact us by email: chris.go@herpconstrust.org.uk

Thank you for your help!

NARRS, the National Amphibian & Reptile Recording Scheme (www.narrs.org.uk), is a new collaborative project coordinated by **The Herpetological Conservation Trust** (www.herpconstrust.org.uk), with the close involvement of the Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom and many other partner organisations. To get involved with local surveys and conservation projects concerning slow-worms, or other reptiles and amphibians, contact your nearest Amphibian and Reptile Group (you can find details at www.arg-uk.org.uk).

