

**SARG Guide**

**Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group**



## **SARG Reptile Surveyor's Guide *Using SARGWEB***



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# The SARG Reptile Surveyor's Guide to SARGWEB

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Since 2007, SARG has been setting national standards for reptile survey. We hold the largest set of controlled data for reptile survey, with in excess of 15,000 data points, each tagged with full meteorological data and negative records being recorded as thoroughly as sightings.
- 1.2. This wealth of data is helping us to define reptile detectability, and has led us to be the first ARG to be able to calculate probable absence for any reptile species from survey results.
- 1.3. At the heart of the SARG system is a cadre of trained and motivated volunteers who conduct reptile surveys to the SARG formula, from an enjoyment of seeing the animals in the wild and in the certain knowledge that the data they collect will be used by land managers for their habitat management plans and for the species conservation at local, regional and national levels.
- 1.4. We work closely with the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARC, formerly HCT) who have adopted SARG as their reptile survey arm within the Weald.
- 1.5. This guide describes the use of the online direction, guidance and reporting system used by SARG (and other) reptile surveyors.

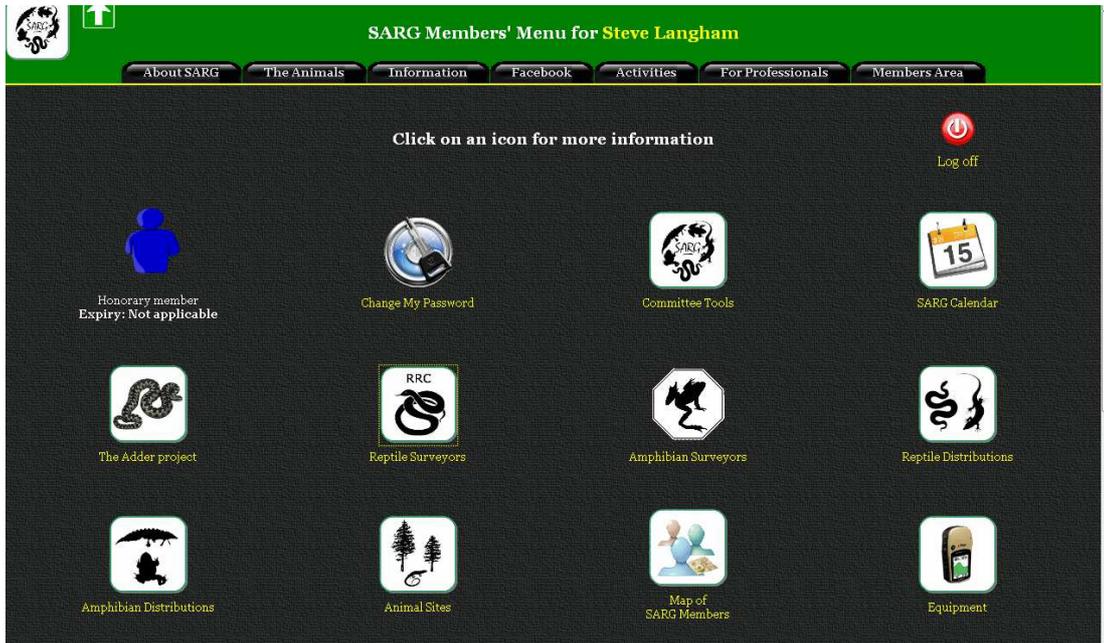
## 2. Where and when to survey

- 2.1. To deal with the *when* question first, you can survey any of the core survey sites at any time of the year, and in any meteorological conditions. The data you collect (including negative records) will help to build our picture of reptile activity and detectability. Of course you will only reliably see reptiles at certain times of the year, and in certain weather conditions, however; negative surveys are still very important to us.
- 2.2. At the time of writing, the SARG survey system comprises around 70 sites across Surrey, Berkshire, East Hampshire and West Sussex. Surveyors can choose whichever site they prefer to survey, but should be guided by the SARG reptile survey web pages, so that we do not over-survey some sites, at the expense of others. Over survey can also cause damage to the habitat and undue disturbance to the animals.

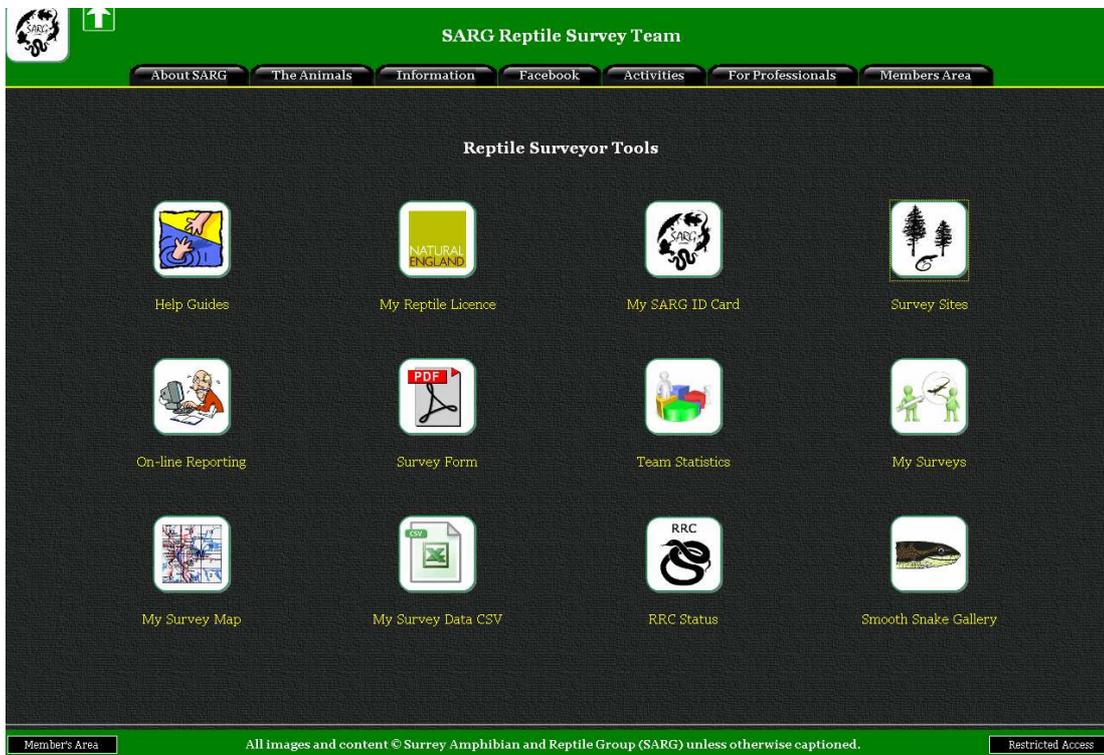
## 3. Survey Direction on the SARG Reptile Survey Web Pages

- 3.1. On any SARG web page (<http://surrey-arg.org.uk>), click on the *Members Area* tab on the menu bar. You will need to log on to the system, which will also check your membership status.

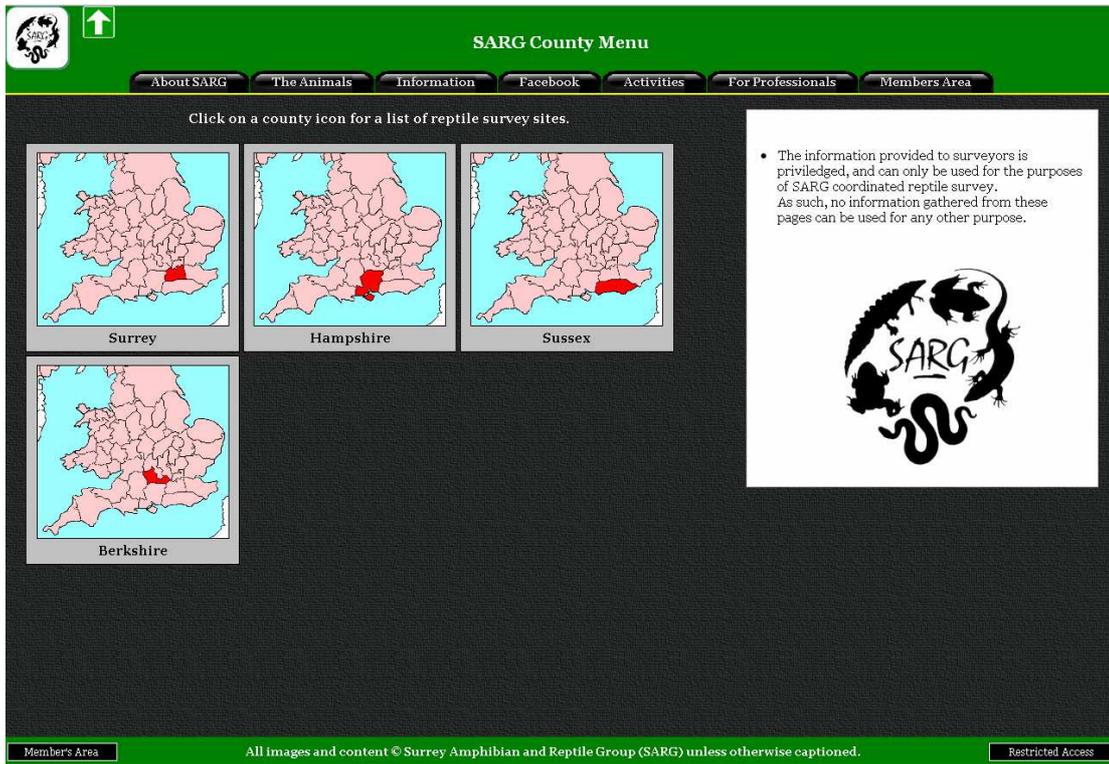
- 3.2. Once you have logged on, you will see your membership menu. If you are recorded as a SARG reptile surveyor, you will see a *Reptile Surveyors* icon. Click this to enter the *Reptile Survey Menu*.



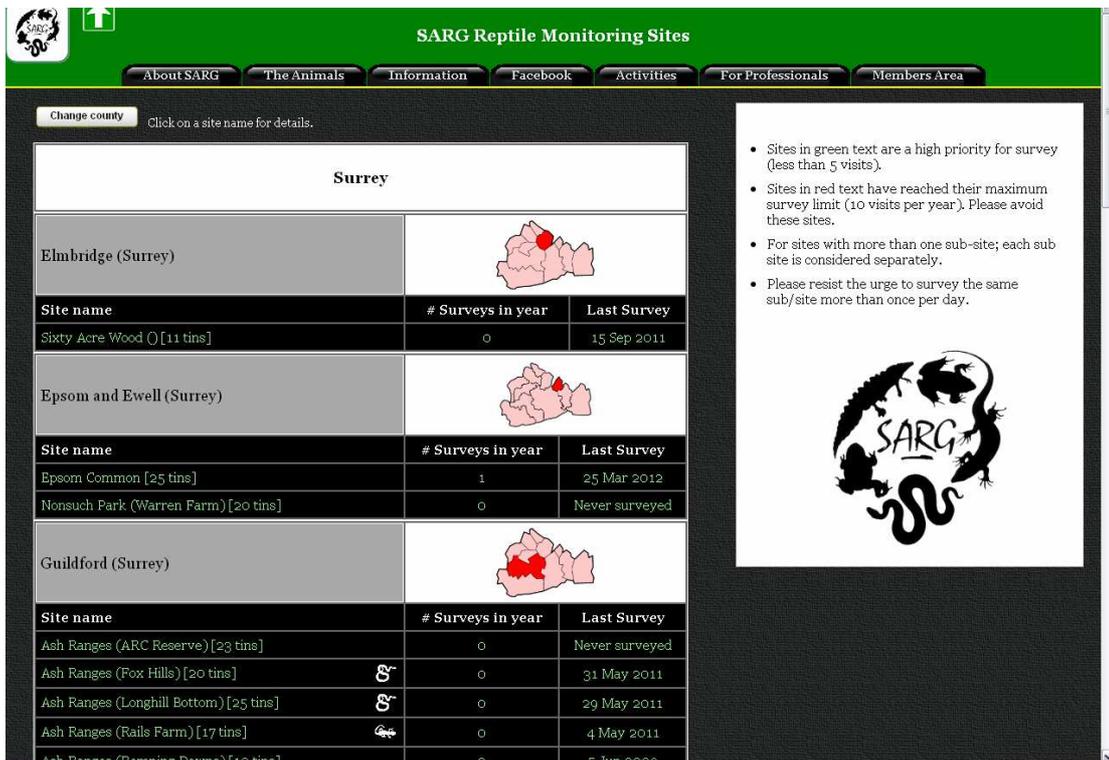
- 3.3. Your *Reptile Surveyors Menu* will look different to the image below if you do not have a rare reptile licence, or are not an accredited agent on the SARG rare reptile licence.



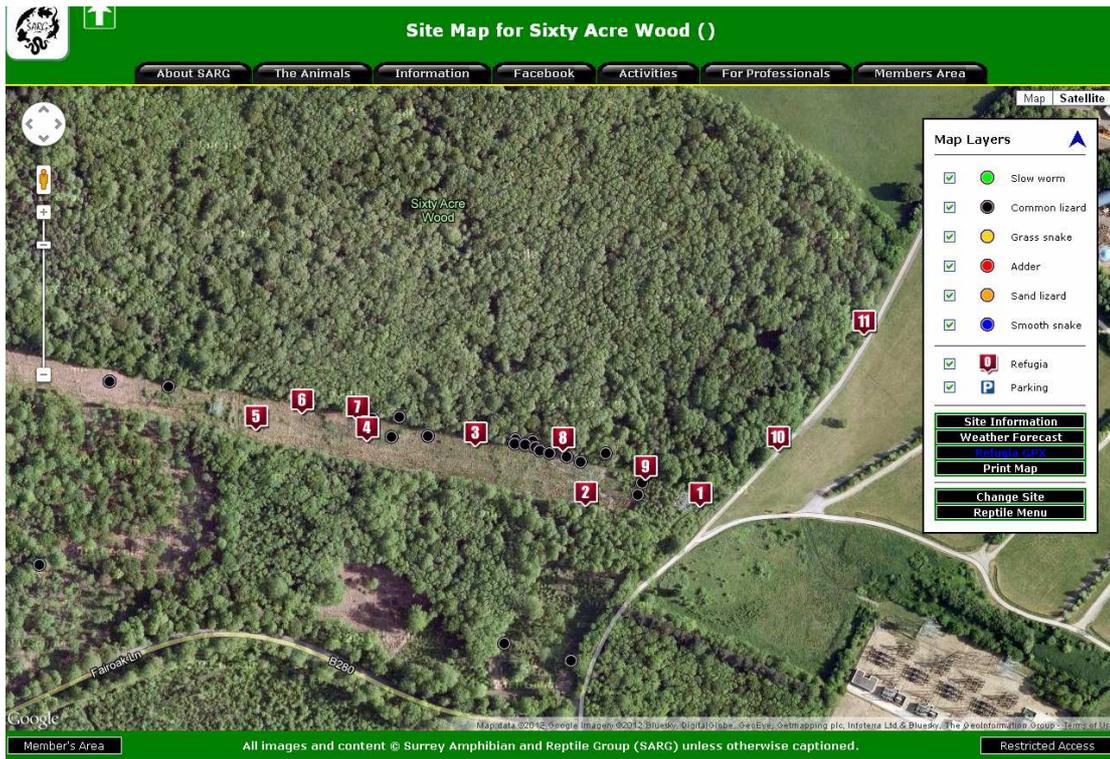
3.4. Click on the county of interest icon.



3.5. You will see a list of reptile survey sites, listed by County District. Site names in red have been heavily surveyed, and you should avoid surveying these sites if possible. Site names in green have been lightly surveyed, and please treat these sites as a priority.



3.6. Click on the site name to see the site map.



3.7. The map shows refugia locations and the known reptile distribution for the site. You should always click on the *Site Information* button of the site map, to see whether there are any access restrictions or special sensitivities for the site.

**Site Information: Ash Ranges (Fox Hills)**

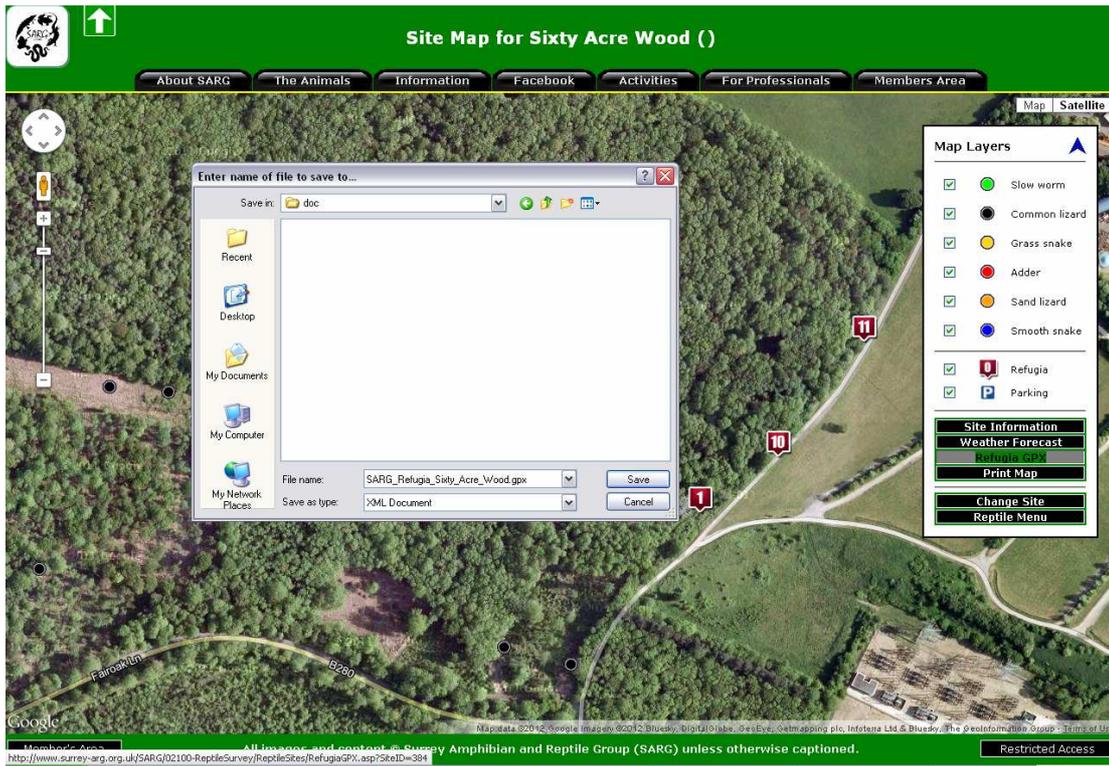
**Site Name:** Ash Ranges      **Site Key:** ASHPH  
**Sub-site:** Fox Hills      **Site Owner:** MoD Defence Estates  
**County:** Surrey      **Site Manager:** MoD DE (Firing ranges) and SWT (inside stock fences)  
**Vice County:** 17      **Manager Contact:**  
     • **Name:** James Adler (Ranger)  
     • **Email:** jamesadlerewtcs@hotmail.com  
     • **Tel:** 07968-832605  
**District:** Guildford

Site Access:	Site Sensitivities:	Survey Focus:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active MoD firing range with limited public access - Range is normally closed to the public during weekdays (except after 4pm), with access restricted to Weekends and Bank holidays.</li> <li>All surveyors must contact James Adler prior to survey, even during public access periods. See above for contact details.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific sensitivities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smooth snake survey and monitoring</li> <li>Sand lizard survey and monitoring</li> <li>Reptile distribution mapping to support site management</li> </ul>

**Site Information:**

Reptile species known to be present at Ash Ranges (Fox Hills)				
Species	Status	Number seen	Last sighting	Surveyor
Slow worm:	Present	1	12 September 2010	Daniel Carter
Common lizard:	Present	2	20 August 2009	Ed Penridge
Grass snake:	Not Recorded	0	N/a	N/a
Adder:	Present	2	01 May 2011	James Adler
Sand lizard:	Not Recorded	0	N/a	N/a
Smooth snake:	Present	3	10 May 2011	James Adler

- 3.8. If planning a future survey, you can click on the *Weather Forecast* button of the site map menu to judge the best survey times.
- 3.9. You can click on the *Refugia GPX* button to download a GPX format file that will allow you to upload the grid references for each tin to a hand-held GPS unit. See the *SARG GPS Guide* for more details. Uploading grid references this way ensures that you have the latest grid references, and that there are no transcription errors when typing the coordinates into your GPS unit. Additionally, it saves you a lot of time and effort.



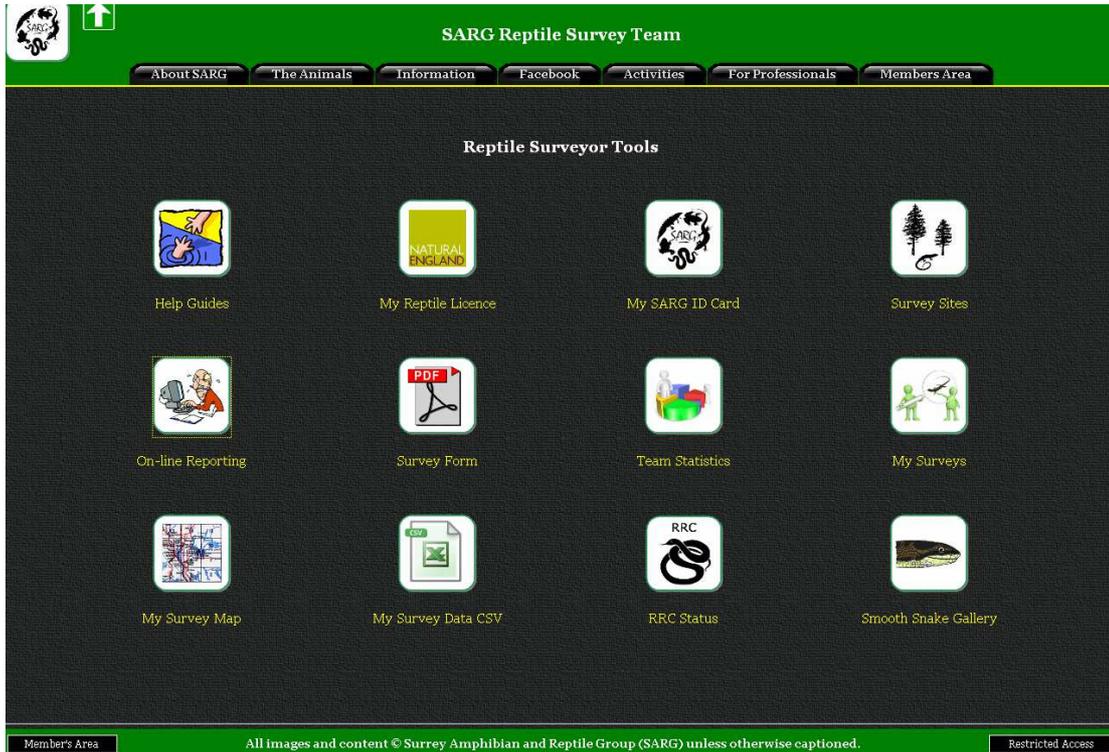
## 4. Conducting the Reptile Survey

- 4.1. Guidance on how to conduct and record your survey can be found in the companion guide: *SARG Reptile Surveyor's Guide, Conducting a Reptile Survey*.

## 5. Reporting your Survey Results

- 5.1. The data you generate can only be used for the conservation benefit of the species if it is reported. By reporting your survey via the SARG web reporting system, we can automatically add data such as weather conditions, and use your information to improve our statistics and distribution maps. This added value is vital for land managers when drafting their site management plans. Without suitable habitat, we would have no wild reptile species.

5.2. On the reptile surveyor's menu, click on the *On-line Reporting* icon.



5.3. This will bring you to the site details reporting page. The system should know who you are (as you are logged in), and you will need to select the site you surveyed from the pull-down list. Using the icon next to the date entry, select the date that you surveyed the site. Enter your time *on* (the time you started the survey) and the time *off* (end of survey). These times are important, as we need them to calculate the weather conditions, and to generate the survey effort statistics, which allow us to calculate observability of reptile species at the site.

The screenshot shows the 'Reptile Survey Reporting' form, Step 1 - Enter Survey Description. The form is titled 'Step 1 - Enter Survey Description' and includes the following fields and instructions:

- Name of Surveyor:** Steve Langham
- Email of Surveyor:** steve@surrey-arg.org.uk
- Name of Site:** A pull-down menu.
- Date of Survey:** A date input field with a calendar icon and the text '<= Use this button'.
- Start time of Survey:** A time input field with the text '(24hr Local) Eg 10:15'.
- End time of Survey:** A time input field with the text '(24hr Local) Eg: 14:45'.

At the bottom of the form is a green button labeled 'Enter Sightings'.

- 5.4. Click on the *Enter Sightings* button to progress to the page where sightings (and negative records) can be recorded.
- 5.5. For each entry: either an animal sighted, or a tin checked, a separate line should be completed. This may mean recording multiple lines if you have more than one animal under a tin.
- 5.6. The first entry is the location. This is either a tin number or a grid reference (for animals sighted between tins). The default setting is for a tin number, which can be selected from a pull-down list. If you need to enter a grid reference instead, then click on the *Vis* (visual sighting) radio button. The line boxes will then change to allow you to enter an OSGB grid reference.

The image shows two screenshots of the SARG Reptile Survey Reporting web form. Both screenshots have a green header with the SARG logo and navigation buttons: About SARG, The Animals, Information, Facebook, Activities, For Professionals, and Members Area. The main heading is 'Reptile Survey Reporting' and the sub-heading is 'Enter details of animals observed - include negative records'. Below this, it says 'Records from the survey of Sixty Acre Wood () by Steve Langham (steve@surrey-arg.org.uk) on 14/04/2012 between 12:40 and 13:40.'

The top screenshot shows a form with the following fields: Tin (radio button), Vis (radio button), Tin No. (dropdown menu), Tin Status (dropdown menu), Species (dropdown menu), Gender (dropdown menu), Life Stage (dropdown menu), Comment (text box), and Ins (green button) and Del (red button). The Tin No. dropdown menu is open, showing a list of tins from SAW-001T to SAW-011T. A green 'Submit Sightings' button is visible below the form. A note at the bottom says '[ Do not submit sightings until all survey records have been entered ]'. A link says 'Click 'Ins' button to add another entry for this survey.'

The bottom screenshot shows the same form with 'OSGB LGR:' selected and the value 'SU8453478554' entered. The 'Submit Sightings' button and note are also present.

- 5.7. The *Tin Status* box is for recording whether you found a tin that you looked for. If we get successive not found reports, we assume that the tin has been removed and we will replace it.
- 5.8. The *Species* box is to record the animal species sighted. You can select the species from the pull-down menu, or you can select items such as *unidentified lizard* or *snake*. Where a tin has been checked, and no reptiles were observed, you should select the *No Reptiles* option.
- 5.9. The *Gender* and *Life Stage* boxes are for recording additional details for your sighting, if you are comfortable with your identification. If you are unsure, then there is an *Unknown* option. In the *Life Stage* box, you may

also record items such as sloughed skins, burrows or eggs. Usually, for such items the appropriate *Gender* entry is *N/a* (not applicable).

- 5.10. The *Comment* field is a free-format box where you can record anything of interest, or wish to bring to SARG's attention. Typical entries are behavioural notes, such as breeding colours, gravid, courtship etc, to inform us that a tin has become infested with ants, or a fire has destroyed the habitat within the vicinity. Currently, this is the best place to record biometric information such as weight or length.
- 5.11. To add a new line to the report, click on the green *Ins* (insert line) button. To remove an extra line that you don't need, click on the red *Del* (delete line) box. A completed survey report would like something like the image below.

The screenshot shows the 'Reptile Survey Reporting' interface. At the top, there is a green header with the SARG logo and navigation tabs: 'About SARG', 'The Animals', 'Information', 'Facebook', 'Activities', 'For Professionals', and 'Members Area'. Below the header, the main title is 'Enter details of animals observed - include negative records'. Underneath, it says 'Records from the survey of Lower Puttenham Common () by Steve Langham (steve@surrey-arg.org.uk) on 14/05/2011 between 12:50:00 and 14:00:00.' The main content is a table with 10 rows, each representing a sighting. Each row has columns for 'Tin No.', 'Tin Status', 'Species', 'Gender', 'Life Stage', 'Comment', 'Ins', and 'Del'. The 'Ins' and 'Del' columns contain green and red buttons respectively, with numbers 1 through 10. The 'Species' column has dropdown menus with options like 'Slow worm' and 'No Reptiles'. The 'Gender' column has dropdown menus with options like 'Male', 'N/a', and 'Female'. The 'Life Stage' column has dropdown menus with options like 'Adult' and 'N/a'. The 'Comment' column is a text input field.

1.	Tin No.	Tin Status	Species	Gender	Life Stage	Comment	Ins	Del
	LPC-002T	Present	Slow worm	Male	Adult		1	1
	LPC-003T	Present	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a		2	2
	LPC-004T	Present	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a		3	3
	LPC-015T	Present	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a		4	4
	LPC-005T	Present	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a		5	5
	LPC-006T	Present	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a		6	6
	LPC-011T	Present	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a		7	7
	LPC-012T	Present	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a		8	8
	LPC-001T	Present	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a		9	9
	LPC-016T	Present	Slow worm	Female	Adult		10	10

- 5.12. When you are happy that all record lines are accurate and complete, click on the large *Submit Sightings* button at the bottom of the reporting page.

The screenshot shows the bottom of the reporting page. A large green button labeled 'Submit Sightings' is centered. Below it is a green footer bar with the text 'All images and content © Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group (SARG) unless otherwise captioned.' On the left side of the footer bar is a 'Members Area' link, and on the right side is a 'Restricted Access' link.

- 5.13. The website will now process your data and add additional data, such as the weather conditions. This may take a few seconds to complete.



- 5.14. You will then be shown the final report table. This table will also be emailed to you at your registered email address (as shown on the report table).

ID	Species	Gender	LifeStage	Tin	Location	Time	Comment
1	Slow worm	Male	Adult	LPC-002T	SU9051445490	12:54	
2	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-003T	SU9054445420	12:58	
3	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-004T	SU9056945329	13:02	
4	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-015T	SU9073445231	13:06	
5	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-005T	SU9087545211	13:10	
6	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-006T	SU9096445367	13:14	
7	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-011T	SU9085545418	13:18	
8	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-012T	SU9092345409	13:22	
9	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-001T	SU9084545331	13:26	
10	Slow worm	Female	Adult	LPC-016T	SU9074745362	13:30	
11	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-014T	SU9073745322	13:34	
12	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-010T	SU9074945399	13:38	
13	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-009T	SU9074345508	13:42	
14	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	LPC-007T	SU9098545532	13:46	

## 6. Correcting Errors

- 6.1. The SARG survey reporting system allows you to view and correct any reports that you have submitted. On the *Reptile Survey Menu*, you will see an icon called *My Surveys*. Click this to see a full list of the surveys you have conducted.

- 6.2. Click on any survey to be shown the Report Table for that survey. At the bottom of the *Survey Record Table*, there is an *Edit this record* button. Click this to load the survey into the survey editor and amend as you would have at the time of first entry.

The screenshot shows a web page titled "Survey Record" with a green header. Below the header are navigation tabs: "About SARG", "The Animals", "Information", "Facebook", "Activities", "For Professionals", and "Members Area". The main content area is dark grey and contains the following information:

**Reptile Survey by Steve Langham  
at  
Frensham Common (Memorial Site)  
on  
13 April 2012**

**Meteorological Conditions**

Air Temperature 12.0°C	Air Pressure 1004 mbar	Relative Humidity 54 %	Cloud Cover 2 Octa
Wind Velocity 9 mph	Wind Direction East	Gust Velocity None mph	Visibility 10.0 km

**Sightings**

ID	Species	Gender	LifeStage	Tin	Location	Time	Comment
1	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	FMS-003T	SU8497841434	16:25	
2	Adder	Male	Adult	FMS-001T	SU8498141403	16:30	pre-slough
3	No Reptiles	N/a	N/a	FMS-002T	SU8501141359	16:35	

[Edit this record](#)

## 7. Additional Help

- 7.1. If you require any additional help with the use of the website for reptile surveyors, please contact either Steve ([steve@surrey-arg.org.uk](mailto:steve@surrey-arg.org.uk)) or Jamel ([jamel@surrey-arg.org.uk](mailto:jamel@surrey-arg.org.uk)).

## 8. Other Useful Guides for Reptile Surveyors

- SARG GPS User's Guide
- SARG Guide to Conducting a Reptile Survey
- SARG Smooth Snake Photo ID Guide

Downloadable at:

<http://www.surrey-arg.org.uk/SARG/07000-Publications/SARGdocsMenu.asp?DocType=Guides>