

Research into phylogeography and conservation of Jersey's

Wall Lizards *Podarcis muralis*

Wall lizards (*Podarcis muralis*) on the island of Jersey are near the northern limit of their geographical range. Wall lizards have a wide distribution in continental Europe, occurring almost throughout France, Italy and northern Spain. The Jersey population of wall lizards is typical of other northern European localities in that the species is generally restricted to old fortifications and castle walls, creating small, isolated populations. These lizard populations are fully protected under the Conservation of Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2000.

Issues surrounding the origins of the Jersey wall lizard are contentious and uncertain. The lizards live in relatively small, fragmented populations and the structure of their populations/sub-populations is unclear. In order to assign conservation priorities and address the conservation needs of these Jersey lizard populations, it is important to clarify their (possibly separate) origins, assess their total distribution in Jersey and investigate the viability of their populations.

This research project integrates current fieldwork that the States of Jersey Environment Department already carries out each year. The research will assess the levels of genetic diversity in the Jersey populations and compares these to levels of diversity in other populations in Europe, including those from the UK, France and Switzerland. The research will allow decisions to be made regarding the species ongoing conservation and management in Jersey.

This project is being carried out under the direction and supervision of the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology at the University of Kent, and is being funded by the Jersey Ecology Fund and States of Jersey. This study builds upon previous research on the Jersey herpetofauna that has received considerable international exposure and provides an excellent model for demonstrating how applied molecular ecology and conservation genetic research can feed directly into conservation management.

Jersey Lizard Watch

As part of the research we need to collect tissue samples from lizards found on the Island. Therefore we are collecting dead WALL LIZARDS, GREEN LIZARDS AND SLOW WORMS across the island. As part of this research and ongoing conservation efforts we want to use these dead specimens to gain knowledge of their origins and cause of death. To do this we need as many samples as possible.

If you are able to collect any dead individuals that you come across please notify us by phoning 441624 / 441600, and collect it, following the instructions below and contact us at;

Environment Department
States of Jersey
Howard Davis Farm
Jersey JE3 5JP
Tel: 441600 or 441624
Fax: 441601

Instructions for collection of dead Lizards

- Place the body in an air tight bag and tie it securely. The easiest and most hygienic way to do this is to put your hand inside the bag to grab the body as if you were using a plastic glove. Then, by turning the bag inside out the animal will end up in the bag.
- Place this closed bag in a second bag and include a note with the following information:
 - Contact name and phone number or e-mail
 - Location where body was found. (Address or Street name, for instance)
 - Details on the circumstances it was found. For example: brought in by cat, found dead by side of road or public foot path. Please include how many bodies were found.
- Only put bodies from the same location in one bag.
- Close the second bag and keep it the FREEZER until it is collected or dropped off.

Without your help we could not carry out this important research study of Jersey's lizards. We appreciate your help and assistance.