

Snakes of the Bridgend Coast

The coastline of Bridgend county is not just popular with people, in places, it is also home to two of the UK's snake species, the grass snake and the adder as well as their cousin, the slow-worm.





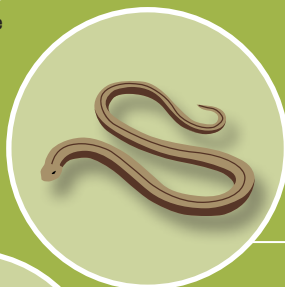
male adder



female adder



grass snake



female slow-worm



male slow-worm

The coastline of Bridgend county is not just popular with people, in places, it is also home to two of the UK's snake species, the grass snake and the adder as well as their cousin, the slow-worm.

The **adder** is easily recognised by the 'zig-zag' stripe along its back. They can grow to around 60cm in length and have a rather stocky appearance. Males' 'zig-zags' are black, females' are brown. On occasion, completely black (Melanistic) specimens are seen. Adders prey on lizards and rodents. Rodents can defend themselves with sharp teeth, which is why the adder is venomous. However, they are shy and not aggressive. The chance of being bitten by an adder is exceedingly low. Most bites result from deliberate handling, antagonisation or accidental encounters.

The **grass snake** is a longer, more slender snake and can grow to a meter. Females are bigger than males and the colour is usually olive green, sometimes with a grey or muddy brown tinge. There can be black bars or flecks along the sides of the snake and there is usually a distinctive yellow collar behind the head. Sometimes the collar can fade with age, but in such cases there are always two black triangles present behind where the yellow collar usually is. Grass snakes feed predominately upon amphibians and fish, and so are not venomous.

Often confused for a snake, the **slow-worm** is in fact a legless lizard. They can reach 35-40cm and often occur in gardens where they can be found sheltering beneath objects. Males are a uniform grey/pale brown with broad heads and thick necks, whilst females have smaller heads, are a coppery brown with black sides and often have one or more thin dark stripes running the length of the body. Slow-worms feed on small slugs, grubs and worms and also not venomous.



IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN HABITATS LIKE THESE, CONSIDER WEARING TROUSERS AND STOUT BOOTS!

Photo: Pete Hill

Where do snakes live?

They are generally found in coastal habitats such as vegetated sea-cliffs and sand dunes, but also inland at open 'wild' habitats such as heathlands, commons, moorland and woodland rides. Whilst slow-worms and sometimes grass snakes use gardens, it is very rare for adders to do so, except when gardens may be adjacent to suitable habitat.

When will I encounter snakes?

Spring and summer are the main periods when snakes are active. They hibernate from October to mid February. Snakes are generally seen basking in the sun, but as long as it is above 5°C and not heavily raining they can be encountered in most weather conditions.

What is safe conduct in adder country?

If walking in adder country, always stick to well-used paths or open areas like the beach, ideally wear stout foot-wear and keep dogs under control. Bites are very rare, but when they do occur it is usually when people walk through long vegetation with little protection on their feet. Pay particular attention to edges of tracks and car-parks that receive sunlight, where reptiles like to bask.

If you are lucky enough to see an adder, stop, step back, admire it but give it the space it needs. An adder's first line of defence is to disappear into nearby vegetation rather than bite something much larger than itself.



Photo: Mark Barber



Photo: Tony Phelps

Dogs and adders

Most reported bites are in dogs. An unfortunate event with neither animal to blame, this generally happens when a dog investigates an adder, and the snake feels threatened. Although the bites are painful they are rarely fatal and most dogs make a full recovery. If you are in good adder habitat it is advisable to keep your dog under control both for its own safety and to prevent disturbance to ground nesting birds and other wildlife. If your animal is bitten by an adder (or you suspect that it may have been) you should seek prompt veterinary attention. Do not wait for symptoms to appear. Try to calm your dog and reduce its movement, and if you can, carry it rather than let it walk.

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Protection under the law

All British reptiles (including the adder) are protected by law. It is illegal to injure, kill or sell them (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981). They are also priority species (section 7) under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, requiring all public bodies to take all reasonable steps to maintain and enhance them and encourage others to take such steps.

Conservation

All amphibian and reptile species are declining and under threat. One of the biggest issues is fragmentation and loss of habitat.

The adder is considered one of the most vulnerable widespread species, as it is not very mobile and populations can become isolated.



Photo: Pete Hill

LET US KNOW!

Have you seen a reptile?

To help understand reptiles it is important to know more about their distribution.

Go to www.recordpool.org.uk to submit a sighting. If you are interested in getting involved in conserving your native 'herpetofauna' please contact:

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation www.arc-trust.org or your local Amphibian and Reptile Group www.arguk.org



Photo: Pete Hill

If you think that you may have been bitten by an adder:

DO:

- ✓ Stay calm and do as little walking as possible.
- ✓ Go straight to your nearest A&E department or call 999.
- ✓ Remove any jewellery and watches from the bitten limb.

DO NOT:

- ✗ Tie a tourniquet.
- ✗ Try to cut or suck the venom out of the bite.
- ✗ Attempt to catch or kill the snake.

Around **70% of adder bites result in no symptoms or local pain, swelling and inflammation, which are easily treated.** Most people recover quickly. However, all suspected bites must be treated as medically serious since reactions vary. Occasionally, bites can be life-threatening or cause problems for several months.

Human deaths are extremely rare, much rarer than deaths as a result of wasp or bee stings.

There have been no reported fatalities due to adder bites in Britain since 1975.



About Amphibian and Reptile Conservation

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation is a national wildlife charity (Registered Charity 1130188) committed to conserving amphibians and reptiles and saving the disappearing habitats on which they depend.

744 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6BZ
t: 01202 391319 e: enquiries@arc-trust.org www.arc-trust.org

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Front cover photos:
Main photo: © Bridgend County Borough Council | Adder: © Pete Hill | Grass snake: © Pete Hill | Slow-worm: © Brett Lewis

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Mae'r pamfflied yma wedi'i gynhyrchu am y prosiect Dunes 2 Dunes, sydd wedi ei gefnogi trwy raglen cymunedau a datblygiad gwledig llywodraeth Cymru 2014 – 2020

744 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6BZ
t: 01202 391319 e: enquiries@arc-trust.org www.arc-trust.org

Ychydig am gadwraeth amffibiaid ac ymlusgiaid
Elusen bywyd gwylt genedlaethol yw cadwraeth amffibiaid ac ymlusgiaid (elusen gofrestrdedig 1130188) sy'n ymrwngymeddig yng nghadwraeth amffibiaid ac ymlusgiaid, ac arbed y cynefinoedd maent yn ddibynnol arno, sy'n diffiannu.



Mae tua 70% o frathladau wiberod achosi dim symptomtau, oni bai am boen lleol, chwydd a lliid sy'n hawdd eu trin. Mae'r mwyafrif o bobl yn gwella'n tuan. Serch hynny rhaid i unrhyw amheuaeth o frathladau gael ei drin fel problem meddygol diffirol, oherwydd bod ymatebion yn amrywio. Yn anaml mae brathladau yn gallu pryderu bywyd neu achosi problemau am fisoedd. Mae marwolaethau dynol yn brin iawn, llawer yn fwy prin na marwolaethau oherwydd pigladau gwenynnod. Does dim marwolaeth wedi achosi gan wiber wedi bod ym Mhrydain ers 1975.

- ✗ Gwisgo dal neu ladd y neidr.
- ✗ Drio torri, neu sugno'r fenom allan o'r brathiad.
- ✗ Gilymu rhwymyn tynhau.

PEIDIWCH:

- ✓ Tynwch unrhyw gemwaith oddi ar yr aelod sydd wedi'i frathu.
- ✓ Ewch i'r ysbty agosaf, neu ffoniwch 999.
- ✓ Arhoswch yn dawel, a cherdwch cyn lleied a phosib.

GWANEWCH:

Os ydych yn meddwl eich bod wedi brathu gan wiber:



Photo: Tony Phelps

Cŵn a gwiberod

Mae'r rhan fwyaf o frathladau adroddiadol yn digwydd i gŵn. Digwyddiad antffodus gyda nall anfai ar fai, mae fel arfer yn digwydd pryd mae ci yn ymchwilio gwiber, ac mae'r neidr wedi'i fygwth. Er bod brathladau yn boenus maent brin yn farwol ac mae'r rhan fwyaf o gŵn yn gwella'n llawn. Os ydych mewn cynefin wiber dda mae'n gynghori i gadw cŵn dan reolaeth er diogelwch ei hun ac i atal affionddwch i adar sy'n nythu ar y llawr ac i fywyd gwylt arall. Os yw'ch anfai yn cael ei frathu gan wiber (neu eich bod yn drwgdybio ei fod wedi) dylech gymryd i'r milfeddych yn brydlon. Peidwch ag aros i weld symptomau. Ceiswch dawelu'ch ci a rhystrwch ei symudiad. Os yn bosib cariwch yn lle adael i'r ci gerdded.

ER BOD BRATHIADAU YN BOENUS MAENT BRIN YN ANGHEUOL AC MAE'R RHAN FWYAF O GŴN YN GWELLA'N LLAWN



Photo: Pete Hill

Mae holl amffbiaid ac ymlusgiaid yn dirywio ac o dan fgythiad. Un o'r problemau fwyaf yw darnio a cholled cynefinoedd. Mae'r wiber yn adnabyddus fel un o'r rhywogaethau 'cyffredin' mwyaf bregus, gan nad yw'n symudol iawn ac mae poblogaethau yn gallu cael eu hynysu.

Cadwraeth

Mae holl ymlusgiaid Prydeinig (gan gynnwys y wiber) wedi gwarchod gan y gyfrath. Mae'n anghyfreithion i anafu, lladd, neu werthu nhw (Deddf Bywyd Gwylt a Chefn Gwlad 1981). Maent hefyd yn rhywogaeth wedi' fhaenoriaethi (adran 7) o dan y ddeddf amgylchedd (Cymru) 2016, sy'n gofyn i bob corff cyhoeddus i gymryd holl gamau rhesymol i gynnal a gwella nhw, ac i annog eraill i gymryd camau tebyg.

Gwarchodaeth dan y gyfrath

Ydych chi wedi gweld ymlusgiaid?
I helpu deall ymlusgiaid mae'n bwysig gwybod mwy am eu dosbarthiad. Ewch i www.recordpool.org.uk i argymhell cofnod. Os oes gennych ddi-ddordeb mewn gwarchod eich ymlusgiaid ac amffbiaid lleol cysylltwch â Chadwraeth Amffbiaid ac ymlusgiaid – www.arc-trust.org Neu eich grŵp amffbiaid ac ymlusgiaid lleol www.arguk.org



Photo: Pete Hill

GADWCH I NI WYBOD!

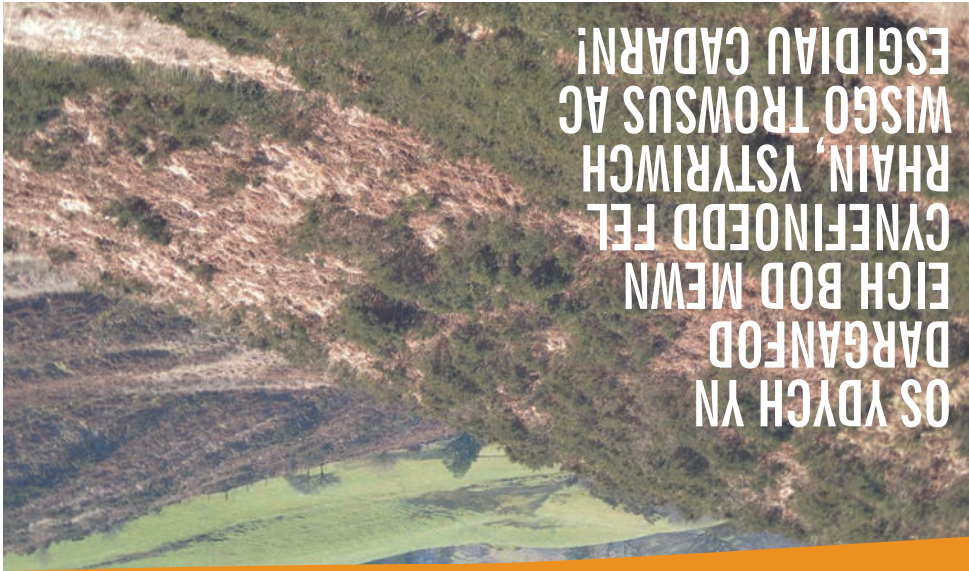
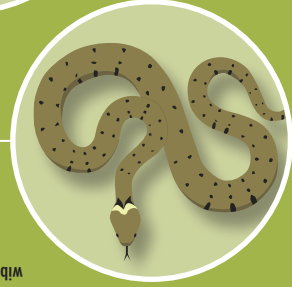
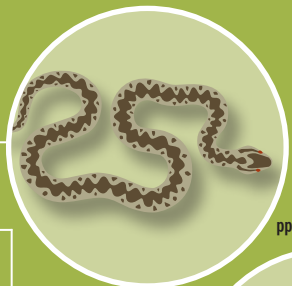
Nid yn unig yw arfordir sir Pen-y-bont yn boblogaidd gyda phobol mewn llefydd, mae hefyd yn gartref i ddau o rywogaethau nadroedd y Deyrnas Unedig, llefydd, mae hefyd yn gartref i ddau o neidr y glaswellt a'r wiber yn ogystal â'u cefnder y neidr defaid.

Mae'r wiber yn hawdd i'w adnabod gan y llinell 'igam-ogam' ynghyd ei gefn. Maent yn gallu tyfu i tua 60cm o hyd ac mae ganddyn

ymddangosiad cadarn. Mae llinellau 'igam-ogam' y gwryw yn ddu, a'r benwod yn brown. Ar achlysur mae sbesimen hollol ddu (melanedd) yn cael eu weld. Mae gwiberod yn ysglyfaethu madfallod a chnoflod. Mae cnoflod yn medru amddiffyn eu hun gyda danedd minnog, a dyna pam mae'r wiber yn dilyn o lawio pwrpasol, gwrthio neu gyfarfoddydd damweiniol.

Mae'r neidr y gwair yn neidr hirach ac yn fwy tenau ac mae'n tyfu i hyd fetr. Mae benwod yn fwy na'r gwrywod, ac maent fel arfer yn wyrdd o lewydd, weithiau gydag arlliw llwyd neu frown mwdlyd. Gellir cael bartau neu frychau du ar hyd ochrau'r neidr, ac mae fel arfer coler melyn nodedig tu ôl i'r pen. Weithiau mae'r coler yn collu llwydgydag oedran, ond yn yr achosion yma mae wastad ddau driongl du i'w weld tu ôl i le mae'r coler melyn fel arfer i'w weld. Mae nadroedd y gwair yn bwydo yn bennaf ar amffibiaid a physgod, felly nid ydynt yn fonomig.

Yn aml wedi'i chymysgu gada nadroedd, mae'r neidr defaid mewn gwirionedd yn fadfall heb goesau. Maent yn tyfu i 35–40cm ac aml yn bwy mewn gerd, lle rydych yn gallu darganfod nhw'n cuddio o dan wrthrychau. Mae gwrywod yn llwyd neu frown unlliw gyda gyddfau trwchus, a phennau llydan, tra bod pennau llai gan fenywod, ac maent yn llw copr gydag un neu'n fwy o leiniau tywyll yn rhedeg hyd y corf. Mae nadroedd defaid yn bwydo ar willthod, pryfed, a mwydod a hefyd ddim yn fonomig.



Ble mae nadroedd yn byw?

Maent fel arfer i'w gweld mewn cynefinoedd arfordrol fel clogwyni mor lledfywliol a thwyni tywod, ond hefyd mewn cynefinoedd agored mewndirol, fel rhosdir, tiroedd comin, gweundir a rhodfeydd coedwig.

Fryd tyddai'n cyfarfod nadroedd?

Gwanwyn a haf yw'r prif amser y mae Gwanwyn yn actif. Maent yn gaatgysgu rhwng mis Hydref a chanol Chwefror. Mae nadroedd fel arfer i'w gweld yn torheulio; serch hynny ond dim bod y tymheredd dros 50C ac nid yw'n glawio'n drwm rydych yn gallu cyfarfod un yn y rhan fwyaf o amodau tywydd.

Beth yw ymddygiad diogel yn cynefin y wiber?

Os ydych yn cerdded yn cynefin y wiber, cadwch at lwybrau neu ardal oedd agored fel y traeth, yn ddefnyddol gwisgwch esgidiau gwych a chadwch wn dan reolaeth. Mae brathiadau yn hynod o brin, ond pan maent yn digwydd mae fel arfer prydd mae pobl yn cerdded trwy llystyfiant heb amddiffyniad ar eu traed. Sylwch yn benodol ar ochrau llwybrau a meysydd parcio sy'n derbyn golau'r haul, lle hoffai ymlusgiaid dorheulio. Os ydych yn ddigon ffodus i weld gwiber, stopiwch, camwch yn ôl, edmygwch ond rhwch y lle sydd angen arno. Amddiffynnant llystyfiant agos yn lle brathu rhywbeth llawer yn fwy na'i hyn.



Nadroedd arfordir Pen-y-Bont

Mae arfordir sir Pen-y-Bont ddim yn unig yn boblogaidd gyda phobl mewn llifydd, mae hefyd yn gartref i ddau o rywogaethau nadroedd y Deyrnas unedig, y neidr gwair a'r wiber, yn ogystal â'u cefnder y neidr defaid.

