

Precautionary Method Statement	
For:	North Park (Birchenclyffe) Ltd.
Site:	Lumb Lane Nurseries, Lumb Lane, Huddersfield, HD4 6SZ
Report Date:	23 rd of March 2026
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Client:	North Park (Birchencliffe) Ltd.
Site Name:	Lumb Lane Nurseries, Lumb Lane, Huddersfield, HD4 6SZ
Grid Reference:	SE 16329 14299
Report:	Precautionary Working Method Statement
Reporting Ecologist:	Marie McAvan BSc (Hons) MSc

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Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this report and its contents, in view of potential ecological constraints to development or the likely presence or absence of species, it must only be viewed as a snapshot in time and therefore not be viewed as definitive. Due to external factors, such as seasonality, weather etc, having the potential to affect survey results no liability can be assumed for omissions or changes that may or may not occur after the date this report was produced.

1 Introduction and Background to the Site

- 1.1 Estrada Ecology Ltd was commissioned to develop a Precautionary Working Method Statement in respect of protected species presence at Lumb Lane Nurseries, Lumb Lane, Huddersfield, HD3 6SZ, henceforth known as 'the site' ahead of development commencing.
- 1.2 It is understood that the current development proposal pertains to the redevelopment of the site to include four dwellings and associated infrastructure.
- 1.3 The site is 0.3 ha in total and is a former plant nursery situated on the western outskirts of the village of Almodbury.
- 1.4 The survey site's central OS grid reference is SE 16315 14301.
- 1.5 The wider site is predominantly a rural landscape with agricultural fields, scattered small villages and farms, pockets of various types of woodland and multiple hedgerows and roads. The nearest town is Huddersfield, approximately 3 km northwest of the site.

Figure 1: The survey site within its wider setting.



2 Precautionary Method Statement

- 2.1 Due to the suitable habitats on site, the proximity of the survey area to a small ditch 5 m north of the site and known protected species activity on and adjacent to the site, a precautionary method statement has been recommended to ensure that any impacts are mitigated towards protected species using the site (*Estrada Ecology (2025) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Lumb Lane. SQ-3705*). The following mitigations should be adhered to, to ensure there are no impacts to amphibians, reptiles, badgers, or any other protected species.

2.2 The objective of this report is to set out the responsibilities regarding compliance with current legislation and the implementation of any ecological mitigation measures which have been recommended. This is to offset planning condition 14 (2025/62/92440/W) Kirklees Council, which states:

“14. Prior to the commencement of development, a detailed Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) in respect of reptiles and amphibians shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. In order to minimise risk and avoid harm to reptiles and amphibians, the PWMS shall include (but not be limited to) toolbox talks provided by a suitably qualified ecologist, attendance of an ECoW (Ecological Clerk of Works) as required, and careful hand search around potential reptiles and amphibians features. In the event of encountering a reptiles or amphibians, all work must cease until the ecological clerk of works and Natural England are contacted for advice on the best way to proceed lawfully. All contractors working on site should be made aware of this advice and provided with the contact details of the ecological clerk of works.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity and in accordance with Policy LP30 and Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.”

2.3 The document should be read in conjunction with:

- Estrada Ecology (2026) Construction Environmental Management Plan. Lumb Lane. SQ-4243.B
- Estrada Ecology (2025) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Lumb Lane. SQ-3705
- Estrada Ecology (2025) V2 BNG Report. Lumb Lane. SQ-3751.B
- Estrada Ecology (2025) Badger Survey Report. Lumb Lane. SQ-3705
- Environmental Statement – Badger Walkover. Lumb Lane. SQ-4243

2.4 **Amphibians and Reptiles**

2.5 Habitats suitable for amphibians and reptiles (herptiles) are present on and adjacent to site. The ephemeral vegetation, tall forbs, bramble scrub on site and the adjacent hedgerow along the western boundary provide suitable refugia for herptiles. The ditch 5 m beyond the site's northern boundary provides a water source as well as creating a commuting and foraging habitat for herptiles. This ditch is densely covered with bramble scrub and ephemeral vegetation, further increasing its suitability.

2.6 Due to the suitability of the habitats on site and within the wider landscape, it is recommended that vegetation clearance at the site adopts a precautionary approach.

2.7 For any vegetation proposed to be removed, a precautionary fingertip search is recommended to be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist. This will ensure that any protected species taking refuge in vegetation (such as reptiles, amphibians and hedgehog) are not within vegetation to be cleared. Only when deemed clear by a suitably qualified ecologist may vegetation clearance commence.

2.8 Any areas of dense or long vegetation should be subject to a stage cut using handheld tools such as brush cutters and strimmer's etc, in which the sward height is reduced to 200 mm from the ground to allow a thorough fingertip ecological search for hedgehogs or herptile species. A walkover survey should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist immediately in advance of stage cuts.

2.9 Site clearance will be undertaken in a directional manner which will lead to the ditch

to the north, which will be protected during the construction phase of development, allowing any animals to escape to safety.

- 2.10 Any brash piles should be removed and disposed of offsite if possible. Piles of cut vegetation and debris which could provide potential refuge for small animals which cannot be disposed of offsite should be covered by a tarpaulin to prevent use by reptiles. The integrity of the tarpaulin should be checked each morning to ensure it is intact.
- 2.11 Any brash piles left overnight should be dismantled by hand to ensure there are no impacts to species within refugia.
- 2.12 Any open excavations will be covered overnight or have sloping ends installed to prevent animals becoming trapped or injured. Any open excavations will be checked each morning for animals, prior to works commencing. If any animal is found, a suitably qualified ecologist must be notified. A suitable means of escape such as a plank of wood which can bear weight should be placed within any open excavations to provide a means of escape.
- 2.13 During the work being conducted should any protected species be found then all works should cease immediately, and the appointed ecologist notified.
- 2.14 In the unlikely event of great crested newt being recorded, all works must cease with immediate effect and Natural England must be consulted via a suitably qualified ecologist to obtain a licence to facilitate the works.
- 2.15 Amphibian and reptile proof fencing should be incorporated around the site to ensure that no herptiles can enter the survey area during the site works. The CEMP (*Estrada Ecology (2026) Construction Environmental Management Plan. Lumb Lane. SQ-4243.B*) outlines suitable fencing that is to be installed on site after vegetation has been cleared.
- 2.16 These precautions are under the current knowledge that common amphibians are present on site. Image and video data compiled as part of the Badger survey for this site (*Estrada Ecology (2025) Badger Survey Report. Lumb Lane. SQ-3705*) recorded presence of common frog (*Rana temporaria*) and common toad (*Bufo bufo*).
- 2.17 **Hedgehog**
- 2.18 No field sign evidence of hedgehog was recorded within the site during the survey. However, due to the suitability of habitats within the site and the surrounding area, it is deemed necessary for a precautionary method statement to be adopted to ensure European hedgehogs are not impacted.
- 2.19 The above methodology for amphibians regarding refugia and vegetation clearance is deemed suitable to also mitigate against any potential impacts towards hedgehogs.
- 2.20 Any permanent boundary features (such as fences or walls) proposed as part of the post-development of the site should incorporate passages for small mammals, specifically European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europeaus*). An arch shape, no more than about 15 cm wide x 12 cm high, is adequate for hedgehogs.
- 2.21 **Badger**
- 2.22 Badger surveys conducted in November 2025 and March 2026 (*Estrada Ecology (2025) Badger Survey Report. Lumb Lane. SQ-3705, Environmental Statement – Badger*

Walkover. Lumb Lane. SQ-4243) located badger latrines within the northwest corner of the site and one inactive hole 5 m north of the site.

- 2.23 Badgers are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence: to wilfully, or attempt, to kill, capture, ill-treat or injure any badger; to obstruct, destroy or damage a badger sett or to disturb a badger whilst within its sett; to sell or offer for sale a live badger, or have possession or control of a live badger; and marking a badger or attaching any ring, tag, or other marking device to a badger.
- 2.24 During construction works, if any new, unrecorded badger setts are recorded within 30 m of the development zone, then all works will cease immediately, and a suitably qualified ecologist consulted.
- 2.25 Any excavations on site and piping over 200 mm in diameter should be fenced off, or covered overnight, to prevent entrapment of badgers and small mammals.
- 2.26 Holes and or excavations that cannot be covered should offer a means of escape for any animal, including badger, which may fall into them. This can be a simple measure, such as creating a wooden ramp of a suitable width and strength to provide a means of escape.
- 2.27 Prior to the commencement of works each morning, holes and excavations must be checked by a designated member of staff to ensure no badgers have become trapped overnight.
- 2.28 If a badger is found and or field signs to indicate that badger has dug temporary cover within any excavations overnight, then all works must cease immediately, and a suitably qualified ecologist consulted.
- 2.29 Cleared vegetation should be removed and disposed of offsite. No piles of cut vegetation which could provide potential refuge for badger should be left on site. No hardcore should be retained on site. All excavated material should be either stored within skips or removed from site to prevent creating potential refuge areas which badgers could utilise.
- 2.30 The impact of vehicles and machinery should be minimised where feasible.
- 2.31 Working should be restricted to daylight hours only. Should any artificial lighting be required then it should only illuminate the intended source. Care should be taken to not allow overspill on adjacent habitats which badgers could utilise or badger setts themselves.
- 2.32 Further detail is provided with the CEMP document (*Estrada Ecology (2026) Construction Environmental Management Plan. Lumb Lane. SQ-4243.B*) on suitable hoarding and silt fencing proposed on site which will limit the likelihood of badger presence on site during construction.

3 Construction Works / Phase

- 3.1 A construction footprint has been identified, and works will be restricted to this area.
- 3.2 Any hydrocarbon materials should be stored suitably to avoid contamination of surrounding habitats outside the site boundary. Where possible the use of non-toxic and other hazardous materials should be avoided. If such materials are to be used on the site, they should be stored appropriately following manufacturer's guidelines and a relevant COSHH risk assessment produced and stored on site. Use and disposal of such substances should adhere to the product's hazard label, and a copy of the

Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDA) should be available at the site office and all operatives informed of such substances during site induction.

- 3.3 Any holes or trenches dug on site should contain means for any trapped fauna to escape. A small wooden ramp should be placed within the trench each evening and left overnight as a means of escape.
- 3.4 The impact of vehicles and machinery should be minimised, where feasible, with most of the works being undertaken from pre-designated areas.
- 3.5 All vehicles, where feasible, should incorporate catalytic converters and particulate filters. Any spillages should be reported to the site manager, and a spill kit should be retained on site throughout the programme of works.

4 Environmental Working Practices and Staff Awareness

- 4.1 Due to the proximity of the site to Seckar Wood (SSSI and LNR), protected species may be encountered on site. Staff should be made aware of their duties in respect of legally protected species. Site staff should be informed of the residual possibility of amphibians, reptiles, hedgehogs, bat, badger, and breeding birds and, whilst a low risk, the risk remains that they could be encountered on site.
- 4.2 Staff should be made aware that, if encountered, the favoured option is to leave the animal in situ and consult a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 4.3 **Sympathetic working practices should include:**
 - Working during daylight hours only. Should any artificial light be used, care should be taken to follow the lighting recommendations set out within the document that is produced to offset condition 13 and avoid light splay onto adjacent vegetated habitats that badgers, bats or birds could utilise.
 - Should areas of vegetation / debris be required to remain on site, suitable measures should be employed to prevent access by herptiles. Sheets of tarpaulin can be erected over the piles with the bottom sealed to prevent entry.

4.4 **Staff awareness training:**

- 4.5 All site staff and contractors should be made aware of the residual possibility of amphibian, reptile, hedgehog, badger and breeding bird presence via a toolbox talk (See Appendix One).

5 Summary

- 5.1 The site is proposed to be developed subject to the discharge of conditions.
- 5.2 Precautionary methodology outlined within this report will be adhered to in order to minimise risks to potential protected species on site.
- 5.3 The toolbox talk will include reference to features in the works area that have the potential to support protected species, the legislation relating to protected species; measures that will be used to protect them; good working practices; signs of protected species presence, activities where supervision will be required, and what to do in the event that protected species are found.
- 5.4 A copy of this method statement must be kept up to date and must be present on site at all times and all new staff on site must be given a toolbox talk and must read this method statement document.

Appendix One: Toolbox talk posters can be found on the following pages.



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Toolbox Talk: Amphibians

What are they and how are they recognised?

There are seven native amphibian species in the UK:

- 1 **Common toad**
- 2 **Common frog**
- 3 **Smooth newt**
- 4 **Palmate newt**
- 5 **Great crested newt (GCN)**
- 6 **Natterjack toad**
- 7 **Pool frog**

In England, Wales and Scotland the first four species are fairly widespread. These widespread species may be found living with the fully protected GCN or the natterjack toad.

Where are they found?

Common toad, common frog, common newt and palmate newt are frequently found on construction sites, both in or around water (including temporary pools and on land among grass, scrub, woodland and under logs and rocks.

When are they found?

Ponds contain the highest number of amphibians in the spring when they are used for breeding but are still likely to contain some numbers throughout the year.

Young amphibians remain in the water as tadpoles or larvae until they change into tiny miniature adults and then move onto land from April onwards.

Adults and juveniles can be found on land at any time. Most amphibians hibernate on land during the winter months, and the common frog can also hibernate in mud at the bottom of ponds.

What should be done if an amphibian is found on site?

The first four species on the list are of conservation concern and they are all protected against sale or trade.

When conducting works the following should be adhered to where possible:

- Protect and remove amphibians from danger.
- Amphibians, particularly when hibernating or young are likely to be injured during vegetation clearance using strimmers etc. Where possible this should be undertaken in autumn when animals are active, but not breeding.
- When clearing sites dismantle all sheltering places, such as rock piles and logs etc by hand and place any animals in a cool, damp, sheltered place away from danger. Take particular care in winter when animals may be hibernating within rock piles and vegetation and are highly vulnerable to killing and injury.

If great crested newts are found on site, then all work should cease, and a suitably qualified ecologist be consulted.

What else may be seen?

Several non-native reptiles have been introduced into the UK, sometimes released as unwanted pets. Such species cause damage to UK wildlife and are considered pests. If these species are found do not let them go again. Release of certain species is illegal. Put the animals in a cool container with some shelter and consult a suitably qualified ecologist.

In England, Scotland and Wales, any of these species can be found in ponds with the GCN or, occasionally, the natterjack toad. Both these species are fully protected. It is illegal to capture, injure, kill or disturb GCN or natterjack toads, or damage or obstruct their habitat.

GCN are almost twice the size of smaller species, reaching up to 19cm. Natterjack toads have a distinctive yellow stripe running along the length of their back.



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Toolbox Talk: Amphibians



Great crested newt
(female)



Palmate newt

(Ref: froglife.org)



Smooth newt

(Ref: wild-facts.com)



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Toolbox Talk: Badgers

Badgers are the UK's largest mammal. Badgers and their setts are protected by law.

It is illegal to carry out construction works close to a badger sett without an appropriate licence.

It is illegal to disturb, handle, harm or kill a badger or in any way damage or disturb their setts.

It is no excuse, in the eyes of the law, to be unaware of the presence of badgers.

Identification

Fully grown badgers can be up to 1 m in length and weigh 14 kg.

Badgers have striped black and white faces and brown, black or occasionally creamy white (albino) bodies.

Their setts have a D shaped entrance, 300 mm wide and larger than a fox or rabbit hole. There may be freshly dug earth outside the hole or bedding material such as straw, leaves or grass. There may be multiple entrances to the same sett and there may also be several small setts surrounding the main sett.

Where are they found?

Badgers inhabit a wide variety of habitats including rural and urban areas. They can have large territories that include several habitats for foraging.



When are they found?

Badgers are generally nocturnal but can be seen at dawn, dusk and sometimes during the day.

What else may be seen?

Other signs of badgers may include trees with scratch marks, worn trails through long grass and scrub as well as latrines on the edges of badger territory.

What should be done if a badger or badger sett is found on site?

All works that may affect badgers are illegal without a licence. No works should begin until an appropriate licence has been obtained and all works are aware of the conditions within that licence. Should any new setts be found or any badgers be encountered, all works must cease, and a suitably qualified ecologist consulted.

DO NOT carry out any works that are likely to disturb, damage or destroy a badger sett unless a line manager has categorically instructed to proceed further to a competent ecologist's recommendation to do so.

Any excavations on site and piping over 200 mm in diameter should be fenced off, or covered overnight, to prevent entrapment of badgers.

Prior to the commencement of works each morning, holes and excavations must be checked by a designated member of staff to ensure no badgers have become trapped overnight.





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Toolbox Talk: Bats

The UK has 18 species of bat, all of which are protected by UK and European law. The Regulations prohibit: the deliberate killing, injuring or taking of bats; the deliberate disturbance of any bat species in such a way as to be significantly likely to affect:

- their ability of to survive, hibernate, migrate, breed, or rear or nurture their young, or the local distribution or abundance of that species.
- damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place (roost).
- the possession or transport of bats or any other part thereof.

Breaking the law can lead to a fine of up to £5000 per bat and/or up to 6 months in prison.

Identification

Bat roosts may be found in holes in buildings, under bridges, in caves, cracks in buildings or trees and roof spaces. Any space larger than 15 mm can be used as a bat roost.

Bat droppings may be found near roost entrances, these can look like mouse droppings but crumble easily when crushed and can have a dark glittery appearance due to their diet of insects.

Bats can roost in rural or urban spaces, commuting along linear features such as lines of trees, hedges or railway tracks to their feeding grounds.



When are they found?

Bats are most active between May and August and hibernate over the coldest winter months. They may be seen in winter on warmer evenings. They are mostly nocturnal and become active after the sun has set, when they use echolocation to hunt insects.

Bats can have up to 50 different day roosts they use throughout the summer months. They also roost together in hibernation roosts over winter and have their offspring in maternity roosts. All of these roosts are heavily protected.

What should be done if a bat is found on site?

If a dead, live or injured bat is found on site, all works must immediately cease, and a qualified ecologist should be consulted.

The ecologist will remove the bat from site and work should only recommence when the ecologist has returned and confirmed no further bats are present.



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Toolbox Talk: Hedgehogs and other ground dwelling animals

Many species of animal and bird feed, sleep, hibernate and sleep on the ground and often make use of dense or thorny vegetation to protect themselves from predators.

Hedgehogs

Hedgehogs are protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. IUCN Red List for British Mammals - vulnerable to extinction.

Identification

Hedgehogs are small mammals covered in short thick spines. They are between 150 – 300 mm long and weigh 2 kg.

Where are they found?

Hedgehogs inhabit long grass, bushes and scrub. They are common in parks and gardens, using bushes as cover during the day and feeding on invertebrates at night. This puts them at risk from brush cutters, lawn mowers and hedge trimmer and even from being burnt in bonfires, which make great hibernation habitat.

When are they found?

Hedgehogs are most active between April and November and hibernate over the winter months. They may be seen in winter on warm days. They are mostly nocturnal and become active after the sun has set.



What should be done if a hedgehog is found on site?

Areas of dense vegetation should be subject to a stage cut using handheld tools such as brush cutters and strimmer's etc, in which the sward height is reduced to 200 mm from the ground to allow a thorough fingertip ecological search for hedgehog.

Once all areas have been checked and the ecologist is confident no hedgehogs are present, all vegetation can be removed. It is then required that all vegetation is removed from site immediately to ensure no hedgehogs utilise the cut vegetation as a day bed or as hibernacula.

In the unlikely event a hedgehog is encountered, all works must stop and the ecologist on site is to be consulted. The ecologist will remove the hedgehog from site.

All boundary treatments should be designed to allow passage for small mammals. Any close board fencing or gravel boards along the site boundary should have an arch shape, no more than 150 mm wide x 130 mm high in each alternate panel to provide passage for small mammals including hedgehogs between the site and land outside the site boundary.

Example of small mammal passage



Ground Nesting Birds

Some birds such as Curlew, Lapwing, Skylark, Nightjar and Hen Harriers may nest on the ground. These can range from nests in dense vegetation, rubble or even on bare earth.

In addition to in trees or on the ground, birds can also nest on the eaves of buildings, in equipment, amongst materials or behind drainpipes.

It is illegal to kill or disturb birds or damage their nests or eggs. Each bird may be deemed a separate offence.



What should be done if a bird's nest is found on site?

Always plan to work outside of the breeding season if possible (March-August). However, some species of bird can nest all year round.

Carefully check that no nesting birds or active nests are present before the onset of works.

If a bird's nest is found, DO NOT disturb the nest or remove any eggs. All works must stop and the ecologist on site must be consulted.



Other animals

Rabbits, rats, stoat, weasel, pine martin, squirrels, mice and voles can also be found in similar habitats to hedgehogs.

Hazel dormice are protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. It's a Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework and is listed as a European Protected Species under Annex IV of the European Habitats Directive. Any sightings should be reported to the on-site ecologist.



Don't leave injured animals – seek advice from:

- RSPCA 0300 1234 999
- SSPCA 03000 999 999



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Toolbox Talk: Reptiles

Six British land-dwelling reptile species receive a degree of legislative protection. The native species are present in England are:

Smooth Snake and Sand Lizard are very rare reptiles and are heathland specialists largely restricted in distribution to the sandy heaths of Dorset, Hampshire and parts of Surrey. Neither of this species is likely to be present within the site.

Grass Snake may be found in a wide variety of habitats that include grassland, open woodland, hedgerows and marshland. They can grow up to 750mm in length and are olive-green or grey with small black lines and spots and a yellow or orange collar at the neck.

Adder is our only venomous reptile. They grow up to 550mm long and have a dark zigzag stripe all the way along their body. The background colour may be rust, grey or sandy coloured. It generally prefers dry localities ranging from heath and open woodland to upland moors.

Common or Viviparous Lizard is the most widespread of the British reptiles. It can be found in a range of habitat types including heaths, grasslands, woodland clearings and gardens. They grow up to 135mm long and are various shades of brown with small bars or spots. Young lizards are black or dark copper

Slow Worm is a legless lizard that inhabits a wide range of habitats. The young are born alive, and Slow Worms hibernate in the ground between October and February. They can grow up to 400mm long. Males are various shades of grey or brown; females are brown or copper with dark brown sides. Young slow worms are light silver or gold in colour with darker stripes on the sides or back.

Where are they found?

Reptiles can be found throughout the UK, including in urban areas, in vegetation on railway embankments, churchyards and in hedgerows, sheltering under logs, rocks and compost heaps, or basking in open sunlight. Typical habitats are dense grassland or scrub with open areas where they can get sunlight. Grass snakes are often seen near or in water but are also found in drier habitats as are adders.

When are they found?

Reptiles are active during the day in spring summer and autumn. Mating takes place between April and June and young hatch between July and October.

What should be done if a reptile is found on site?

All native reptiles are protected by law throughout the UK. In England, Wales and Scotland, it is illegal to kill or injure common lizards, slow worms, grass snakes and adders. All works that may affect sand lizards and smooth snakes are illegal without a development licence. Should these be encountered, all works must cease and a suitably qualified ecologist consulted.

What else may be seen?

Several non-native reptiles have been introduced into the UK, sometimes released as unwanted pets. Such species cause damage to UK wildlife and are considered pests. If these species are found do not let them go again. Release of certain species is illegal. Breaking the law could lead to similar penalties as for protected species. Put the animals in a cool container with some shelter and consult a suitably qualified ecologist.



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Toolbox Talk: Reptiles



Slow worm

(Ref: wyreforest.net)



Grass snake



Slough (discarded reptile skin)



Common lizard

(Ref: glaucus.org.uk)



Adder (variations in colour)

(Ref: thejunglestore.blogspot.com)