

The future of our native amphibians and reptiles are under threat. An HLF-funded initiative called Dragon Finder is looking to restore and conserve their dwindling habitats.

A recent assessment of European species carried out by the IUCN (International Union of Conservation of Nature) found that 59% of amphibians and 42% of reptile species are in decline. The main reasons behind this are habitat loss and disease. Over the last 50 years one-third of the ponds in the UK have disappeared.

However the amphibians and reptiles living in the River Nene, the country's 10th largest river, have been boosted with the news that HLF has backed Dragon Finder to conserve their habitats.

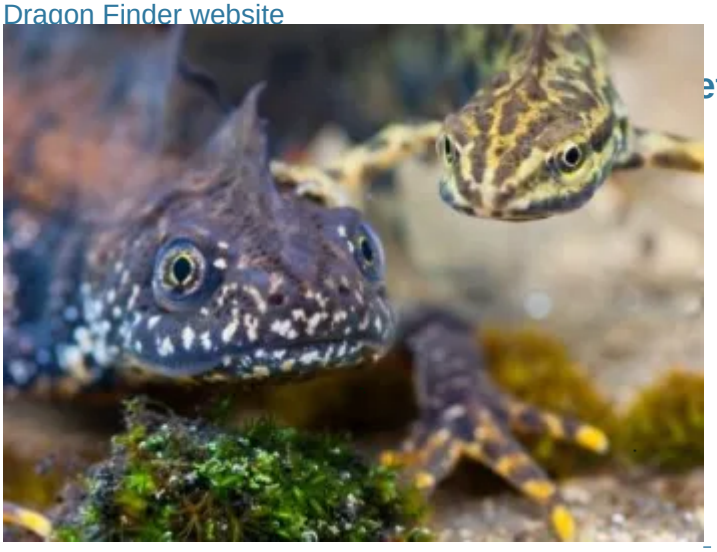
[quote]"The project has the potential to make a real difference in the area".[/quote]

'Dragon Finder' which will be run by Froglife, a wildlife conservation charity, who have received a £472,400 grant. Over the next four and a half years hundreds of people will be brought together to work on improving, restoring and creating over 150 habitat sites alongside the river.

The Nene stretches for 88 miles from Northampton to the Norfolk coast and local people are invited to take part.

From joining a 'Dragon Boat Tour' or swimming with the 'dragons', to farmers and landowners being offered workshops on how to make their land more wildlife friendly, there are loads of activities planned to get people outdoors and learning about nature.

Dragon Finder website



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Male great crested newt with smooth newt Photo Dave Kilbey

River Nene’s ‘dragons’ boosted by Lottery support