

SAND LIZARD

(*Lacerta agilis*)



Identification:

- Adults up to 20 cm in length (including tail).
- Short-legged and stocky with a short, deep head.
- Colour is variable: shades of grey and brown.
- Dark band down centre of back (may contain dark or light blotches). Usually two strong stripes down the back.
- Dark spots, ocelli (marking that resembles an eye) or mottling on sides.
- Males develop bright green flanks during the breeding season.



Photo: Tracy Farrer

Distribution:

- Native to the UK.
- One of the UK's rarest reptiles. Patchy distribution with populations found in coastal areas in the south and west of the UK. Small population found on Isle of Coll in Scotland.
- Found across most of Europe, Mongolia, southern Russia, northern China, and northern Turkey.
- Reintroduced to sites in North Wales, Devon, Cornwall and West Sussex.



Photo: Silviu Petrovan



Froglife is a UK wildlife charity committed to the conservation of amphibians and reptiles - working with people, enhancing lives together for a healthier planet. Find out more about our education projects and activities at www.froglife.org

INFORMATION
SHEET

Ecology:

- UK's only native egg-laying lizard.
- Lives on sandy heathland and coastal sand dunes.
- Requires sandy ground in sunny spots in which to dig burrows for egg-laying and shelter.
- Feeds on fruit and flower heads as well as insects, slugs and spiders.



Lifecycle:

- Adults emerge from hibernation in spring and breeding takes place in April and May.
- Males often fight during breeding season and will guard females after mating.
- Females lay eggs (12-20 mm in length) in late May or early June, which are buried in warm sand for incubation.
- Eggs hatch between August and early October.
- Hibernate between November and March.

Predators and other threats:

- Can drop its tail if caught by a predator.
- Threatened by degradation and loss of heathland and coastal habitats.

N.B. Sand Lizards have full legal protection under UK law making it an offence to kill, injure, capture, disturb or sell them, or to damage or destroy their habitats. This applies to all life-stages.



**INFORMATION
SHEET**

Froglife is a UK wildlife charity committed to the conservation of amphibians and reptiles - working with people, enhancing lives together for a healthier planet. Find out more about our education projects and activities at www.froglife.org