

Manor Woods Valley Local Nature Reserve



Reptile Report

2020

**Survey and Report by Leah Cutts
Manor Woods Valley Group**

Introduction and Methodology

The surveyor, Leah Cutts, was a second year Wildlife Conservation student at the University of The West of England and member of Manor Woods Valley Group. Four reptile surveys were conducted in five different locations within Manor Woods Valley Local Nature examining Slow-worms (*Anguis fragilis*) during September and October 2020.

There was already a large population of Slow-worms in Manor Woods Orchard. The aim of this survey was to determine if Slow-worms were present elsewhere within the reserve.

These were the five locations where the surveys were conducted:

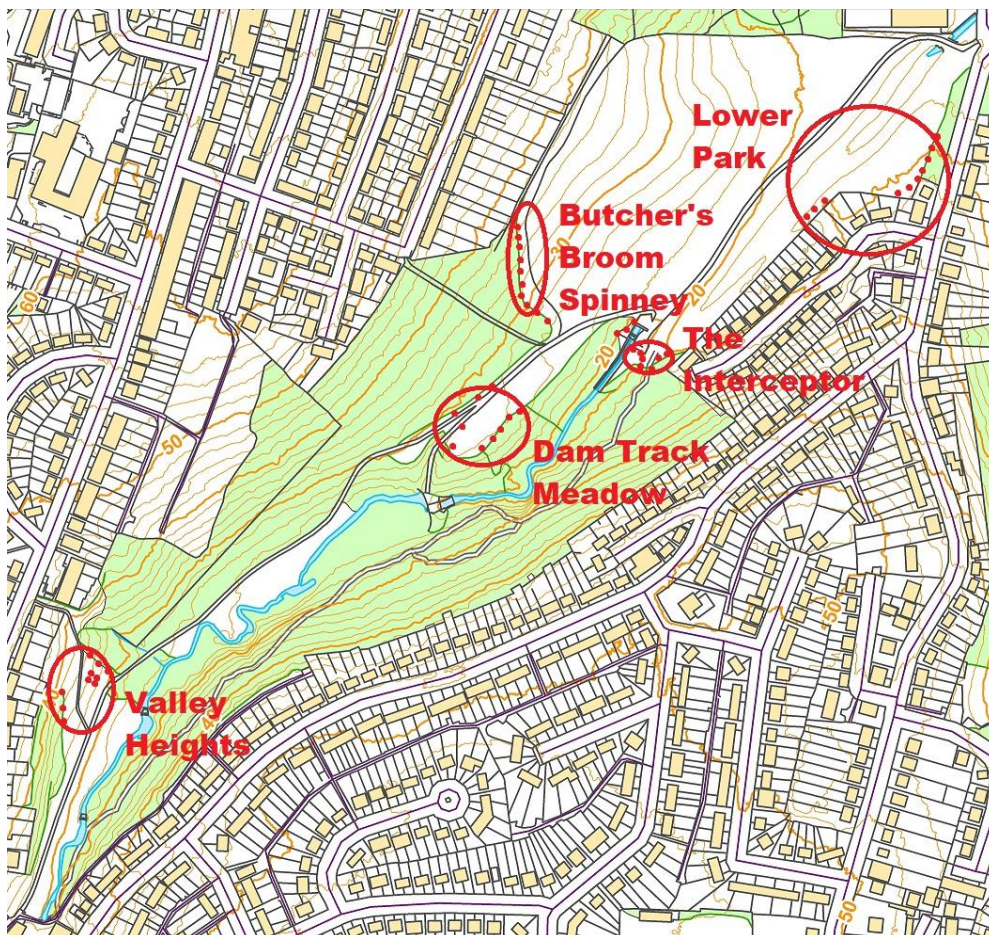


Figure 1: Survey locations in Manor Woods Valley

Fifty roofing-felt mats in total were used for the survey. Ten mats were placed in different areas of each location and left to settle for two weeks prior surveying commenced, to break down the flora underneath and expose the

soil. Field recording sheets were used for each location, where species and numbers were annotated.

Results

Four surveys were conducted during September and October 2020.

The first survey was conducted in the morning on the 15th September. The weather was sunny. A total of three Slow-worms were recorded; an adult female, a juvenile, and a youngster of the year. They were observed at The Interceptor and Butchers Broom Spinney.

The second survey was conducted in the evening of the 22nd September. The weather was scattered cloud. Two Slow worms; a juvenile male and an adult male were recorded at Butchers Broom Spinney.

The third survey was conducted in the morning of the 29th September. The weather was sunny. An adult female Slow-worm was recorded in the Lower Park.

The fourth survey was conducted in the afternoon of the 14th October. The weather was 4/10 cloud. No reptiles were recorded.

Additionally, other wildlife was observed under the mats too, including ants, slugs and woodlice.

Discussion

This is the first reptile survey that has been conducted within Manor Woods Valley in different locations. The only known area where reptiles were spotted previously in the reserve was the Orchard. This survey, although short in duration, has provided some very positive results; with Slow-worms having been identified in three different locations within the reserve: Lower Park, Butchers Broom Spinney and The Interceptor. As the cold weather approached, fewer individuals were observed. This was expected as reptiles are ectothermic and Slow-worms hibernate during the winter months.

Another survey will be conducted in the springtime of 2021, to further evaluate abscess/presence across the site.