

Toolbox Talk - Biodiversity

Roman snails

What?

- The largest species of land snail in the UK
- Normally found in chalky areas of the south-east of England especially the Chilterns, Cotswolds and North Downs.
- Large snails (the adult shell can be 40-50mm across or roughly golf-ball sized)
- The shells have a ridged texture. They can be a variety of colours; brown/beige/cream
- Empty shells may be present on the site
- The snails hibernate and have a solid, white door called an 'epiphragm' across the shell in winter

Why?

- Roman snail are protected by law (The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) from being killed, injured or taken (which includes handling).
- Avoid prosecution: it is a criminal offence to kill, injure or take the species (this includes handling).
- Prosecution can lead to fines of £5000 and/or a sentence of six months

What to do:

- ✓ Seek expert advice from route ecologist or environment specialist to assess impact and plan works safely
- ✓ Postpone work that will not have an impact on safety
- ✓ Roman snails will not necessarily stop any work from going ahead. It may be possible to use a precautionary method of work or if the snails have to be moved a licence from Natural England may be required
- ✓ Use EcoReporter app to log the sighting



Juvenile and adult (handled under licence)



Don't:

- ✗ Handle or move Roman snails
- ✗ Kill or injure Roman snails

For further information please contact a member of the Environment & Sustainable Development Team

