

Natrix maura

Taxonomic Authority: (Linnaeus, 1758)

Synonyms:

Region: 7

Common Names:

Viperine Snake	English
Vipernatter	German
Culebra Viperina	Spanish
natrice viperina	Italian

Order: Ophidia

Family: Colubridae

Notes on taxonomy: Guiking et al. (2002) and Joger (in press) show three different genetic groups one in Europe, one in Morocco, and one in Tunisia/Sardinia.

General Information

Biome

Terrestrial

Freshwater

Marine

Geographic Range of species:

In Europe, this species ranges from Portugal and Spain through much of France, to extreme southwestern Switzerland and northwestern Italy. In North Africa it is present in most of Morocco, northern Algeria, northern and central Tunisia and northwestern Libya. This species is also present on the Mediterranean islands of Sardinia (Italy), Corsica and Iles d'Hyères (France) and La Galit (Tunisia). It has been introduced to the islands of Menorca and Mallorca in the Balearic Islands of Spain. The species can be found from sea level up to 2,250 m asl.

Conservation Measures:

This species is listed on Annex III of the Bern Convention, and is protected by national legislation in Switzerland. It is present in many protected areas.

Habitat and Ecology Information:

This diurnal species is generally found close to, or within, waterbodies such as streams and ponds. Often these habitats are in meadows and open woodlands. It has also been recorded from areas of brackish water. The species lays between three and 20 eggs.

Threats:

It is threatened in parts of its range by aquatic pollution, especially through the loss of prey species (eg. fishes). It is threatened in Switzerland, and presumably other parts of the species range, by channalisation of rivers and other waterbodies. As with many snake species, Individual animals are occasionally killed by people, as they are often confused with venomous vipers.

Species population information:

It is an extremely common species, but perhaps declining locally in some parts of North Africa.

Country Distribution

	Native - Presence Confirmed	Native - Presence Possible	Extinct	Reintroduced	Introduced	Vagrant
Algeria	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
France	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Italy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Morocco	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Portugal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Switzerland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tunisia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

FAO Marine Habitats

Native - Presence Confirmed	Native - Presence Possible	Extinct	Reintroduced	Introduced
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Major Lakes

Major Rivers

Upper Level Habitat Preferences

	Score
1.4 Forest - Temperate	1
3.4 Shrubland - Temperate	1
3.8 Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation	1
5.1 Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Rivers/Streams/Creeks (includes waterfalls)	1
5.2 Wetlands (inland) - Seasonal/Intermittent/Irregular Rivers/Streams/Creeks	2

Lower Level Habitat Preferences

Score

5.4	Wetlands (inland) - Bogs, Marshes, Swamps, Fens, Peatlands	1
5.5	Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Lakes (over 8ha)	2
5.7	Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Marshes/Pools (under 8ha)	1
5.8	Wetlands (inland) - Seasonal/Intermittent Freshwater Marshes/Pools (under 8ha)	1
10.3	Coastline - Estuarine Waters	1
10.5	Coastline - Intertidal Marshes (includes salt marshes)	1
11.2	Artificial/Terrestrial - Pastureland	1
12.1	Artificial/Aquatic - Water Storage Areas (over 8ha)	1
12.2	Artificial/Aquatic - Ponds (below 8ha)	1
12.3	Artificial/Aquatic - Aquaculture Ponds	1
12.7	Artificial/Aquatic - Irrigated Land (includes irrigation channels)	1

Major threats

Code	Description of threat	Past	Present	Future
1	Habitat Loss/Degradation (human induced)	✓	✓	✓
1.8	Other causes	✓	✓	✓
5	Persecution	✓	✓	✓
5.2	Other	✓	✓	✓
6	Pollution (affecting habitat and/or species)	✓	✓	✓
6.3	Water pollution	✓	✓	✓
6.3.1	Agriculture	✓	✓	✓
6.3.2	Domestic	✓	✓	✓
6.3.3	Commercial/Industrial	✓	✓	✓

Conservation Measures

Code	Conservation measures	In place	Needed
1	Policy-based actions	✓	☐
1.2	Legislation	✓	☐
1.2.1	Development	✓	☐
1.2.1.1	International level	✓	☐
1.2.2	Implementation	✓	☐
1.2.2.1	International level	✓	☐
4	Habitat and site-based actions	✓	☐
4.1	Maintenance/Conservation	✓	☐
4.4	Protected areas	✓	☐
4.4.2	Establishment	✓	☐
4.4.3	Management	✓	☐

Utilisation of Species

Purpose/Type of Use	Subsistence	National	International	Other purpose:
Primary forms removed from the wild	100%	>75%	51-75%	26-50% <25%
Source of specimens in commercial trade	100%	>75%	51-75%	26-50% <25%

Trend in wild offtake/harvest in relation to total wild population numbers over last five years:

Trend in offtake/harvest produced through domestication/cultivation over last five years:

CITES:

Red Listing

Red List Assessment: Least Concern (LC) Possibly Extinct

Red List Criteria:

Rationale for the Red List Assessment: Listed as Least Concern in view of its wide distribution, presumed large population, and because it is unlikely to be declining fast enough to qualify for listing in a more threatened category.

Current Population Trend: Stable

Date of Assessment: 12/17/2004

Assessor(s): Jose Antonio Mateo Miras, Marc Cheylan, M. Saïd Noura, Ulrich Jogger, Paulo Sá-Sousa, Valentin Pérez-Mellado, Benedikt Sch

Notes on Red listing: This species is categorised as Critically Endangered in Switzerland (Monney and Meyer, 2005).

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