

# SLOW WORM

(BLIND WORM)

## ANGUIS FRAGILIS

### DISTINGUISHING MARKS:

Limbless lizard, which separates from the snake by mobile eyelids, blunt type tongue, long and easily breakable tail, clumsy moving and copper shimmering colour. Female has often dark back stripe in its back, males have often bright blues mottles in their back and flanks. Length usually 35 cm.

### PREVALENCE:

Slow worm lives under the 63°30' parallel of latitude, but is missing from many regions even in the southern Finland for the example the regions of Satakunta and Etelä-Savo.

### HABITAT:

Slow worm is fond of groves and coarse standing cropped terrain, where soil is sufficiently moist with ample forest litters and full undervegetation.

### LIFE STYLES:

Moves during the dim time, though in our conditions in spring and in autumn active also in daytime because of the low temperature. Slow worm is an easy prey to many predators because of its sluggish moving habit and weak means of defence.

### NOURISHMENT:

Snails, worms, spiders and insect maggots. Slow worm approaches its catch slowly and carefully and pulls the victim to its sharp teeth.

### BREEDING:

Mating season in May-June. Slow worm is viviparous, eggs develop in the oviduct of the female. Gestation lasts for 3 months. Usually 6-12 youngs are born, lengths in birth 7-10 cm. After childbirth, female doesn't take care of its kids, they just start soon to search for food by themselves.

### SPECIAL FEATURES:

Replaces its skin twice a year, youngs more. The hibernation lasts in average from September to April in boulder soil, under stump or leafbed. Can live about 30 years. Not poisonous.

### PRESERVATION:

Protected on the basis of conservation law.

