

16 Worms

Hirudo medicinalis medicinal leech

Regionally extinct

Current status WCA 5; rare RDB (GB).

Known in Europe but very scarce in France and Belgium and probably extinct in Ireland. Formerly widespread in the UK, now very rare – a few scattered sites remain. Last recorded in this region from York in 1951. Lives in warm shallow lakes, feeds mainly on large mammals as well as amphibians. Reduced by over-collecting and changes in land-use surrounding suitable lakes and drainage ponds.